

**DRAMA, SPIRITUALITY AND HEALING:
TOWARDS A CONTEXTUAL EXPLORATION OF DRAMATIC
METHODOLOGIES FOR HEALING BLACK GAY MEN IN THE
GREATER PIETERMARITZBURG AREA.**

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in the Faculty of Arts
(Department of Drama Studies), University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.**

JULY 2000

The financial assistance of the Centre for Science Development (HSRC, South Africa) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the Centre for Science Development.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the interconnectedness of drama, spirituality and healing among an established group of black gay males in the Pietermaritzburg area who agreed to work with me towards self-empowerment through drama. It examines, through a synthesis of educational drama methodology, community theatre methodology and drama therapy methodology, an appropriate and contextual way to use drama as a means of educating (educational drama methodology), conscientising (community theatre methodology) and therapy (drama therapy methodology) to some of the dis-ease reported by members of this group.

Drama and therapy are closely interwoven (Moreno, 1970) and it is possible to create a dramatic context within which both individual and community development can be enhanced. Boal (1995) observes that our personal and corporate identities are ordered by a variety of oppressive social systems. Similarly, Graham (1992) argues that these social systems organise our psyches and our behaviours into patterns of domination and subordination.

There are many theorists and practitioners in the field of drama (educational drama, community theatre and drama therapy) who have researched, implemented and published dramatic techniques and methodologies, some of which are taught at various institutions and implemented with various groups of people. However, according to my knowledge, there are no drama practitioners who have focussed on using the medium of drama to bring about social change in the lives of black gay males in the Pietermaritzburg area. It is against this background that I undertook this experiential study which is primarily aimed at assisting black gay males to move away from personal and social alienation towards individual and communal integration.

This study is structured into two parts. Part I develops a theoretical overview of sexuality, spirituality and drama. It argues, in Chapter One that the Church has had a history of intolerance and judgement towards gays and continues to repress them from a traditional, negative stance on homosexuality. In Chapter Two, the issue of femininity and masculinity is examined, arguing that traditional patriarchal, and heterosexual masculinity [and femininity] is a socially constructed behaviour which is similar to the way in which gay masculinity [and femininity] is constructed. Chapter Three investigates the educational, conscientising and therapeutic origins

of drama, with an aim of implementing some of these dramatic methodologies with the drama group.

Part II concentrates on the application of the theory discussed in Part I to the practice of drama as an educational, conscientising and therapeutic means with a black gay drama group. It provides an analysis of the exercises and improvisations in practice; observations, evaluations and conclusions based on the drama practise with this particular group. Chapter Four provides a detailed summary of thirty black gay male's profiles in the Pietermaritzburg area. This portrait of black gay males provides one with a clearer contextual understanding of these gays, especially in the areas of culture, spirituality, identity and sexuality. Chapter Five provides a detailed outline of a sequence of exercises and improvisations for each of the nine sessions, which were tailored to engage the drama group in productive educational, conscientising and therapeutic activities. These activities may also have applicability to other groups of gays (i.e. Indians, Coloureds, Whites and multi-racial / multi-cultural groups), and/or black, and/or male persons in other localities. Chapters Five, Six and Seven, focus respectively on my experiences of planning, implementing and evaluating the drama workshops and the various drama methodologies that were introduced in Chapter Three and employed by the participants. These chapters, especially Chapter 6, focus specifically on the participants' evaluation of the actual workshops.

In conclusion, this study argues that drama, if contextualised, can offer a unique educational, conscientising and therapeutic potential among black gay males that I worked with in the Pietermaritzburg area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance and encouragement of many people. It is with sincere gratitude that I extend my special thanks to the following individuals and institutions:

- Professor Kathryn Kendall - my initial mother of inspiration for instilling a passion within me to take on this "controversial" study.
- Professor Hazel Barnes, my supervisor, for her invaluable support, guidance, endless encouragements and "gentle nudges".
- Psychologist Duncan Andrew for offering his services as a consultant to this project.
- The Hexagon Theatre staff (Peter, Marcus and Sandra) for their help with theatre space, costumes, props and equipment used for the drama workshops.
- The drama group whose participation, co-operation and interest in this project made this dissertation possible. *Ngiswela amaswi okubonga eningenzele khona. Nkosi inibusise njalo.*
- Sylvester Rankhotha for all his help, inspiration and insightful criticisms. *Kopano ke matla.* Thank you for your friendship.
- Bryan for his limitless patience, his invaluable statistical input, the final layout of this dissertation, his computer expertise and so much more.
- Phillip and Debbie for your friendship and help. Phillip, thank you for the graphs.
- My "brother", Rodgers and friends Erich, Jenny, Logan, Melissa, Neal, Kevin, Deon and Hloni who provided me with strength, encouragement and inspiration at different points in my journey.
- My family without whose love, support and patience this accomplishment would not have been possible.
- The Centre for Science Development and the University of Natal for financial assistance.
- Finally, to God who so graciously gave me the wisdom, knowledge and understanding that I required to take on the challenge of this dissertation. Yours is the glory.

DEDICATION

For the Kisten Naicker family,
who have never had the opportunity to pursue higher education,
especially my mother who has walked the tallest of us all,
and whose femininity is enfleshed in me,
in my symbols, images and words.

We have shared in each other's pains and suffering,
now let the joy of my success
be equally yours.

So many words are said,
so many words are left unsaid.

Bertolt Brecht

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**What we shared
is the strength
to be apart**

**What we seek
is the strength
to be together**

Liberation to love...

Donald W.Woods

INTRODUCTION

My motivation for this study, which involves using drama as an educational, conscientising and therapeutic methodology with a group of black gay males in the Pietermaritzburg area - a community which I call the "oppressed of the oppressed" and which is still affected by the social disorder (created by Apartheid) - was initially raised by my theological concern with issues of social injustice and oppression. For gays, especially black gays, their double oppression cannot be overlooked. They firstly face the oppressive issue of race (which is still in transition) and secondly, sexual orientation, which is fast becoming an overt and public issue of interest and concern, both to homosexual and heterosexual communities.

This concern, in turn, stirred up a desire within me to become a facilitator for human empowerment and development. Gradually, as the concern grew, I began recognising the need to make conscious choices about my future, which I decided was to be in the helping and caring profession, especially among oppressed groups of people. A few years ago, I would never have imagined researching the issue of gayness, purely because of the common negative stigma that the general heterosexual community attached both to gays themselves and to those who supported the plight of gay people. Fortunately, a recent breakthrough in our present constitution, which allows freedom of sexual orientation, has made it possible for me to plunge directly into this study as I firmly believe this area of study to be one of relevance and appropriateness to oppressed gays in contemporary South Africa.

Even though the constitution acknowledges that gays should be treated with human dignity and respect (and I believe that not only gays, but every human being should be treated in like manner), however, my studies in liberation theology and pastoral care [which were my immediate academic tools], have revealed that the Church's traditional teaching and negative stance regarding homosexuality has been and continues to be one of repression, judgement and intolerance, thereby forcing gays to feel like "aliens in the household of God."

This religious and social awareness of gay oppression inspired within me a need to acquire knowledge and skills in something other than theology, and in this case, drama, which I was very passionate about for years, and which I believed, would equip me to become an effective catalyst

for social change among gay people (and other similarly oppressed groups of people) in an active, democratic and experiential way, all of which, I am convinced, could be achieved through dramatic methodologies. Having gone through the above learning process, I discovered that drama and spirituality have common therapeutic elements (see Jung, 1966; Grainger, 1995). It is mainly for this reason that I began focussing on the intersection of Christian beliefs and gay lifestyles through the medium of drama, since most of the participants who actively participated in the drama workshops claimed to be Christians. The participants also manifested their church's overt and covert judgemental attitudes towards them and other gays in general, because of their sexual orientation. This information was gathered from them in earlier interviews that I conducted with them, prior to the actual planning and implementation of the workshops.

In view of the above, I agree with Boal's (1995) argument that by examining individual internalised oppression [whether it be spiritual, sexual, psychological or emotional], and placing them within a larger context, oppressed people (in this context, gays) can be empowered to transform their own lives therapeutically. This transformation would assist gays to move away from disharmony within themselves and others, towards personal and social integration. Boal's argument, as I see it (whether he was aware of this or not), is based largely on the natural systems theory which I have studied and successfully used within the following contexts:

- the pastoral therapy context (one-to-one and small group holistic growth and supportive counselling within the Church and also with various Christian mission organisations); and
- the dramatic context (working with local Pietermaritzburg social workers and parents of pre-school children on the issue of child abuse, and building self-esteem, hope and confidence with a group of street children from the Khayaletu Shelter in Pietermaritzburg).

Drama has a way of helping us make sense of our environment and the way in which we interact within it and with others. For this reason, I have deliberately chosen to use the Natural Systems Theory as the basic paradigm of ordering my own thoughts throughout this study. Graham (1992: 38) asserts that there is a complex interplay which exists between individual psyches and the environments that create and are created by them. Increasingly, more people are trying to gain

some way of understanding the relationship between themselves, others and their environment.

Most of the argument in this study are my own, but I am especially influenced and have used the works of Bowen (1994) and Graham (1992) in the empirical research undertaken for this study, which argue that the systems view of life can affirm many of the central concerns [of drama] for liberatory empowerment and development, while making a creative advance upon it. Gaining a basic understanding therefore, of the natural systems theory, is crucial before one attempts to plan and implement drama workshops from this context.

NATURAL SYSTEMS THEORY AS PARADIGM

This study focuses on the use of the natural systems theory as a paradigm, with an attempt to show that drama can help individuals within community contexts to move away from disharmony within themselves, one another and nature, to an open communion and creativity with and among themselves. My entire thesis revolves around this paradigm as a basic foundation, hence, my research and findings in this study will constantly reflect and rely on this theory. This section will firstly begin with an outline of the characteristics and principles of the systems theory. The systems world in context will follow, aiming to show this theory's relevance to all of life, including drama from a psychosystemic perspective. Because faith is an important factor which gives rise to liberating creativity (Grainger, 1990), I have chosen to conclude this section with God and the natural systems. An understanding of the natural systems theory may help one see that drama methodologies, when contextualised, can be used to help people develop ways of integrating personal and social healing. It is my contention therefore, that the use of this theory within a democratic, dramatic context can help one move towards a more holistic context for dramatic healing.

1. Natural Systems Theory

Throughout history, humanity has viewed itself as unique creations, always in authority and dominion over other forms of life. This way of thinking has caused distinct separations between humanity and nature. This immediately limits one's ability to know and understand the extent to which human beings are related to their environmental context. It is important for one

to understand that one's human behaviour "is significantly regulated by the same natural processes that regulate the behaviour of all other living things" (Bowen, 1994: 3). This theory assumes that *homo sapiens* [humans] have more common elements than differences with other forms of life.

Our present [westernised] way of life, according to Bowen emphasises separateness, isolation, individuality and division, but the systems theory postulates that there is a constant interplay between the forces of individuality and togetherness (1994: 59). The togetherness force, for the purpose of this study, depends on connecting and integrating with others and the environment, and is more realised in traditional African communities where each person receives his identity and responsibilities within a dynamic social matrix in which he exists. For instance, the Zulu proverb *umuntu ungamuntu ngabantu*, according to Msomi (1992), means that a person is a person by or through other persons. The concept of *ubuntu* which best explains the togetherness force implies that a human being is a being in community. In other words, a person is a person in relation to others in his community or in communal solidarity. However, this does not imply that individual interests and responsibilities are completely absent within the community (Msomi, 1992).

Tying in with the Msomi's concept of *ubuntu*, Bowen argues that systems thinking also emphasises togetherness and community, and this, he asserts, is something that is continuous and ongoing. Bowen's explanation is that the togetherness force:

is a biologically rooted life force [propelling one] to follow the directives of others, to be a dependent, connected, [entity, which inclines] him to function as part of a group (1994: 65).

This force to be connected allows one to act, think and feel like others and also to have others act, think and feel like oneself. Systems thinking focuses on co-operation, unlike our present way of life which emphasizes competition and is built on the negation of traditional African (and Indian) religious values and beliefs. Systems thinking affirms one's ongoing relationship to society, culture and nature, and concerns itself with wholeness, whilst the westernised way of thinking shapes one to rebel against social, cultural and religious values and beliefs, and focuses upon individualism.

Concerning people's active participation of experiencing the togetherness force as a community, there are many cultural ideologies and expressions that bind people together into an identifiable community. The collective identity of a group can be expressed in their common beliefs in relation to issues which group members may identify with. This can become a collective experience because of a special union which is shared by the group members for the duration of the workshops.

In order for one to better understand the systems theory context, it is important to understand the basic characteristics of natural systems as outlined by Graham (1992).

2. Characteristics of Natural Systems Theory

2.1 Reciprocal interconnection of all elements

Natural systems theory firstly affirms that all the elements of the universe are reciprocally interconnected and operate mutually to one another. These reciprocal relationships may not always be direct or tangible, but the interconnectedness exists and invariably influences the functioning of these relationships. As Graham argues, people do not have a choice about whether or not to be related. He argues that "we are related" and will "continue to be so" (1992: 39). In his opinion, he points out that whilst people are interconnected, they do however, have an option to choose ways in which they will or will not be related to others.

The way in which people reciprocally relate to one another sometimes makes it difficult to understand the way in which one functions outside the whole system. At the same time, the larger community very seldom sees itself reflected in the "problematic" person's functioning. Examples of relationship reciprocities include decisive or indecisive, and dominant or submissive forms of behaviour. For instance, when a particular type of functioning is seen in one individual, the most natural opposite mirrored effect takes place in the other. For example, a dominating lover will expect his partner to be submissive, failing which, he will go out in search of a reciprocal relationship that he will be comfortable with.

Another element of inter-connectedness, which supports people as a unit, is that of periodic phases of closeness and separation. Because society operates as an emotional unit, people are

forced to depend on one another for emotional support, which restricts them complete independence and total autonomy. This is true of most traditional African and Indian communities who believe in communal solidarity. For instance, it would be easier for a gay westerner to reveal his sexual orientation publicly because of the level of individuality and separation he has reached. Whereas, for a traditional African or Indian gay male, it would be socially unacceptable for him to identify himself as gay because of his *ubuntu* need to need to remain connected to and accepted by the community of which he is a part. In other words, an individual's thoughts, behaviour patterns and feelings reflect and contribute to what is happening within his systems' context (Bowen, 1994: 61).

2.2 Reality is organised

Secondly, systems thinking affirms that reality is organised. The universe is viewed as a system because its elements are interrelated. This system comprises of sub-systems, which are seen as a whole in relation to the parts making it up, and a part in relation to the larger whole. An example of this can be a person, who is a sub-system of his family. The person is a whole in relation to his family. He becomes a part of the sub-system in relation to his society. These sub-systems vary from one to the other, depending on contextual circumstances and influences, as Graham points out, "the organisation of a system occurs differentially with relative degrees of power, accountability and influence" (1992: 39).

These sub-systems differ from the whole within which they operate, displaying greater and lesser levels of power between the elements in the system. This may be seen as a hierarchical system, but hierarchies may exist without elements of oppression.

2.3 Homeostasis

A third characteristic of systems thinking is its focus on homeostasis, meaning a balance or self-maintenance. Balance may be maintained by creating opportunities for communication, negotiation and boundary management. These processes are reciprocal and help maintain stability and continuation of the system. The issues affecting people may be sustained by reciprocally connected elements and other internal or external influences. Once again, one must understand that because degrees of power exist, thus there will be varying levels of

responsibility (Graham, 1992).

2.4 Creativity in context

Fourthly, the systems view emphasises creativity in context, or finite freedom. Although “systems are self-maintaining, they are also self-transcending” (Graham, 1992: 40). Due to internalised and externalised pressures, the structural characters of these systems are changed. One's identities and functioning are always subject to change because of one's autonomy in relation to others. Change to any part of the system ultimately affects the whole system. For example, change in the government or Church constitution concerning gay rights, can cause dramatic shifts within the system, and relationships in the social order will be modified in a variety of ways. Thus, it can be argued that systems are more open to change (Graham, 1992).

Increasingly, the effects of westernisation have caused people to focus more on the processes within people, rather than the processes between people. Bowen points out that it is important to bear in mind the “inter-relationship which exists between what is occurring within people and what is transpiring between them” (1994: 72). Previously, more emphasis was placed on individual human behaviour because of the assumption that the human problem existed within the person. The most influential theory which argued this was Freud's (1959) psychoanalytical theory which attempted to explain the causes of human behaviour, whereas Bowen's theory differed from Freud in the following ways:

1. Freud's psychoanalytical theory focuses entirely on the individual as the problem, while Bowen's systems theory in contrast pertains to the community relationship system.
2. Freud's psychoanalytical theory focuses on humanity's uniqueness as a form of life, whilst Bowen's systems concept is developed on the assumption that people have some common behavioural patterns and relatedness to all of life (1994: 19-20).

Having gained a general and basic understanding of systems thinking, I wish to draw your attention to the psyche, which Graham refers to as “the creative centre of the human personality” (1992: 41). The psyche can be both conscious and unconscious, incorporating the body and personality, and also nature, culture, society, religion and family. The nature of the exchanges

between these systemic dimensions creates the psyche and the psyche's world. Thus, drama done from a therapeutic perspective, with the intention of bringing about some kind of healing to oppressed groups of people can be said to be psychosystemic.

3. The Human Psyche and the Natural Systems Theory

The emotional system concept is perhaps the most important in systems theory, providing one with a new understanding of the human family and society, and at the same time enhancing one's knowledge of the processes occurring within the natural system. Bowen's concept of the emotional system helps one see the close link between humanity and the animal kingdom (1994: 27).

The emotional system occurs in all forms of life, enabling organisms "to receive information", "to integrate that information and to respond on the basis of it" (1994: 27). This includes aspects of social interaction such as reproduction, finding food and seeking protection. It is evident that "the behaviour of all forms of life is driven and regulated by the same fundamental 'life forces'" (1994: 28). This concept also helps one move beyond the individual, towards a relationship system.

Together with the emotional system, systems theory sees feeling and intellectual systems as important influences on human functioning and behaviour. Bowen believes that feelings probably have a greater influence on the social process than thinking. It is assumed that we always react on an emotional level. The intellectual system, which is referred to as humanity's "thinking brain" (Bowen, 1994: 31), includes one's capacity to know and to understand life better in order to communicate complex ideas. This thinking capacity far exceeds that of any other animal.

Bowen argues that nature is neutral. It is a process of inter-related events which are neither right nor wrong, good nor bad. One reacts within emotional feeling and intellectual systems mutually, and both these influence people. It would be unwise to consider any of the above systems as a better one, for each system serves important functions within the macro system as a whole (1994: 33).

According to natural selection in socio-biology,

the physical structure and behaviour of all living things have gradually been shaped over the course of hundreds of generations by virtue of less adaptive structures and behaviours being "selected out" in favour of more adaptive ones (Bowen, 1994: 40).

This theory in evolutionary biology argues that the relationship process based on the understanding of the existing process of genes was carried from one generation to the next. Depending on how adaptive or not the relationship process is, systems theory places an emphasis on the function one's behaviour has in the broader context of the relationship process which must be seen within the emotional system (Bowen, 1994: 44).

4. Principles of Natural Systems Theory

The following are identifiable principles which apply to systems thinking and which I feel would benefit drama groups.

4.1 Simultaneity

There is firstly the principle of simultaneity which promotes change by responding to the relationships between individuals and their worlds simultaneously. In spite of changing group dynamics, one needs to bear in mind that there is an ongoing interplay between individuals and their system. An example of this could be when a minister who is in agreement with full acceptance of homosexuality, and encourages a church member to come out of the closet, must simultaneously be faced (and face the member) with congregational, legal and other social challenges (Graham, 1992: 46).

Most people are caught up in the trap of concentrating on certain details or persons outside the systems context. Although it is important to be aware of the details, one must be aware of the relationship process that occurs between them. Human behaviour is simultaneously influenced by both individuality and togetherness forces. By observing people's interaction with one another, one will be able to see how they choose to be independent or connected. People probably choose to live in groups because of emotional processes which attract them to one another. This emotionally based process can generate conflict as well as harmony, depending on

the functioning of the group members.

In general, most traditional African and Indian people have emotional significance to one another and are affected on an emotional / feeling and subjective level by other people's behaviour. Bowen refers to individuality as "a biologically rooted life force which causes people to follow their own directives, to be an independent and distinct entity" (1994: 64). Thus, people are allowed to function as separate persons. Like individuality, togetherness is also a biologically rooted life force that drives people away from individuality and independence to connect with others. The level of stability and cooperation in a group can be affected by the interplay of togetherness and individuality.

Within a group, people participate in both the individuality and togetherness processes simultaneously. This kind of interplay results in relationships becoming emotionally significant and at the same time existing in a state of balance. This balance is maintained because people are investing equal amounts of "life energy" in their relationships and in their own personal lives. This relationship balance is always in a state of dynamic equilibrium. One's functioning cannot be adequately understood without understanding the processes that underlie this functioning. Despite the complexities of human relationships, all living things are still assumed to be significantly governed by the same natural principles which regulate relationships.

Emotionally significant relationships exist in a state of balance, which is not the same in every relationship. The amount of energy invested in a relationship determines the balance in the relationship. The lower the level of differentiation in the relationship, the greater the energy that is relationship bound. The higher the level of differentiation, the more energy can be retained and directed to one's own functioning.

Well differentiated people can manage their own lives effectively and retain a sense of completeness. They do not need continual emotional reinforcement and their togetherness needs are met without their functioning being dependant on other's approval or their acceptance. Their relationships are more flexible and respond well to changing situations. Well differentiated people are not easily threatened by difference and can tolerate periods of distance and togetherness equally well. Their relationships have high emotional reserves which help them

adapt to life more easily. This is in keeping with Erickson's (1968) and Maslow's (1968) theory of self-actualization or maximum development which requires that the self be able to mediate between inner needs and a supportive environment. They assert that one who is self-actualized is constantly growing and changing.

What I find most liberating in this theory is the biological and psychological freedom, to be connected or separated. This theory allows one the opportunity to enjoy both communal and individual identity. We are living in a changing milieu, where one's views and opinions are not the same as those of our traditional elders, who have high anxiety levels, and expect everyone to be like them. Because of our differences in opinions and views, it is crucial for opportunities to be created to enable people to adapt to changing environments and to take responsibility for their own integrity and connectedness.

4.2 Conscientisation

There is secondly a principle of conscientisation where one is made aware of the impact of the social order which is being constantly created. This principle is in keeping with Freire's (1993) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, where people can be conscientised about their functioning in life. One would require assistance to neutralise, change or transform existing oppressive structures in the social order. Therapeutic insight and awareness of these structures can help bring about social and political change. This principle looks particularly at structures of domination and subordination, and identifies those oppressors who benefit and the oppressed who suffer within the system. The principle of conscientisation seeks to empower one to take action by uncovering internalised oppression. Matters of racism, heterosexism, homophobia and other social justice issues can be more easily addressed using this principle.

4.3 Adventure

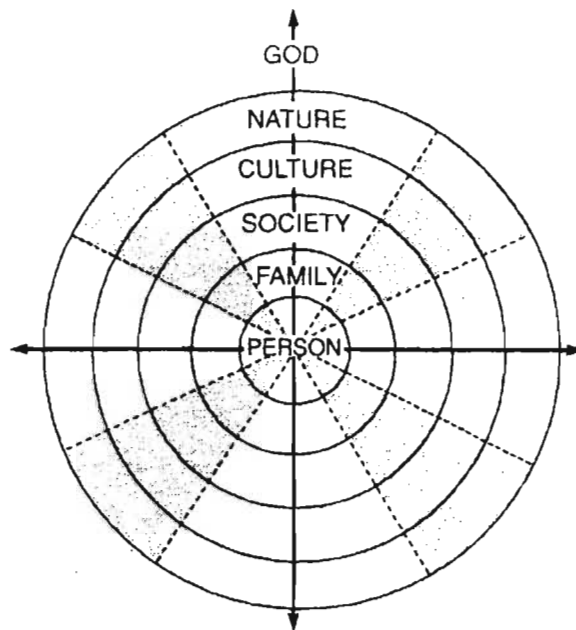
Thirdly, we have the principle of adventure which helps one to realise that there is still hope for change to occur. One may feel a sense of empowerment knowing that others like oneself are on the side of transformation and liberative change. This principle helps create contexts within which victims and perpetrators of injustices can engage oppressive forces in their social structures so that healing and liberation may simultaneously take place between the victim and the perpetrator. This process of healing and liberation may become a new discovery for them,

in ways that they never imagined before (Graham, 1992).

5. The Systems World in Context

Moral goodness is understood as understanding oneself, others, one's environment, and God. It aims at working towards justice and love, as well as promotion of harmony. In contrast, injustice, oppression, and an unwillingness to extend care to other forms of life that we are meant to co-exist with, are expressions of immorality and evil. Unfortunately the entire system, including individuals, groups and the natural order, have to suffer moral and immoral consequences.

Graham's (1992) psychosystems diagram, clearly illustrates the six major components which play a vital role in people's contexts. He begins from the smallest to the largest unit and aims to show us the relationship between the components in terms of concentric circles.



Graham's Psychosystem Map

5.1 Components of psychosystems

- **Personal experience**

Graham refers to the first structure as an actual occasion of one's experience which is seen as the most fundamental building block of reality. Everything that exists is constituted by a combination of actual occasions. These actual occasions come into being through the interplay of one's past experiences, one's environment, one's religious convictions and one's aims and goals in life. The actual occasion gives rise to a level of unconscious intentions which can either be partially or totally fulfilled. If the experiences which come from the actual occasions are positive, then the context will be an enriching one. If the opposite is true, the individual's world will be impoverished.

An actual enriching experience may bring about "beauty [which] consists of the richest possible combination of intensity and harmony of experience" (Graham, 1992: 53). For Graham, intensity is a reference to creativity, whilst harmony refers to a balance among elements. An example that he uses to best describe this beauty is that of the artistic production of Picasso's *Three Musicians* which "harmoniously combines the intense brokenness of line, colour and the human person with the intense commitment to music and human solidarity" (1992: 53).

Evil in contrast is seen as the opposite of beauty, for it consists of "a malevolent combination of triviality and discord" (1992: 53). Triviality may refer to an experience being less than it could have been, while discord may be referred to as intensity without a balance of harmony. Since people become victims of the intense experience of discord, their experiences and values make their world an unjust place to live in.

- **The person**

The person is the second component of this model. Because of the importance of persons within any human context, one needs to have a clear understanding of the individual. It is important therefore, to see an individual as a "synthesising and creating centre of experience, who both reflects and at least partially reshapes the other systems in which he or she is embedded" (Graham, 1992: 55). Thus, the person becomes a creative

synthesis of the elements of his own being.

The person's psyche has the ability to create new forms and experiences from the systems. These influences are not always directly felt by the psyche, but may come across through other substructures of the person. For example, because of a gay person's past, especially his childhood, a set of experiences is set in motion, and these will determine the way in which he will relate to and operate in the natural systems. A creation is taking place and this will either be a good or bad experience, or a combination of both. This will be incorporated into the other systems to which the gay person is either directly or indirectly linked (1992: 55).

- **The family**

The third component in this model is that of the family which:

is the structured ongoing kinship system which consists of two or more persons who by blood, choice, and/or law are bound together in a primary lifelong relationship with one another, and with those to whom each is similarly related (Graham, 1992: 56).

The family can be seen as nuclear, consisting of parents and children, as well as extended, consisting of distant relatives in the kinship system. In this model, Graham defines the family in the broadest of terms and tries to make his definition more inclusive than exclusive. He includes single, dual, and multiple parent families, as well as homosexuals, bisexuals and heterosexuals. At the same time, his definition embraces tribal communal arrangements, as well as isolated contemporary expressions of family.

The family fulfils several systemic functions, including the provision of protection, nourishment and acceptance of family members. The family provides a context of love, where people can develop the capacity for loving and being loved, and for balancing emotional closeness and distance. The family also provides a social context within which people's values and roles are influenced in life. It is here where conflict management, communication skills, religion and morality, language and sexual identities are learned. This context influences one's basic attitude towards work and the natural order. The world from this family context, according to Erickson (1950) may be viewed as either

safe or threatening to one's personality, depending on whether one's basic needs are met or not.

Interestingly enough, the family is also the context which is responsible for the cultural exploitation and the cultural expectations concerning what one's social, spiritual and sexual identity should be like. Paraphrasing what Chodorow (1978) argues, as quoted by Graham, highlights the interplay of family, society and culture in the development of gender dimensions of selfhood. According to her, there are certain processes such as male-hood, which are culturally generated and supported as being "natural". For example, boys gain their identities as males by thinking themselves as not being female. As a result of this, society produces autonomous males, and relational females. This process is not based upon biology, but upon culturally generated processes.

- **The society**

The fourth component is society which Graham argues:

is the structured public organisation of collective human experience. It refers to the institutional, political, racial, ethnic and economic embeddedness of persons and families. It incorporates local, regional, and national laws, mores, and customs (Graham, 1992: 57).

Society may be seen as a complex component which influences the character of individuals and families. People think, feel and act according to the interaction of others within their social contexts. World-views and "dogma bags" which people carry with them, and also a sense of well-being, is shaped by the larger social community that the individual belongs to. Unfortunately, we live in an unjust and oppressive society, where the values one holds and the power and opportunity that one is given are largely determined by one's skin colour, status and sexual orientation.

People today, especially black gays in the context of this study, struggle to understand and locate themselves in this "queer" world and wrestle with past and present issues of sexual harassment, exploitation and violence. Many whom I have interviewed expressed

their fear of rejection, and mentioned how bitter and angry they felt concerning the defeat in their attempts to gain a place of respect for their racial and sexual uniqueness in society. These are the ones who suffer from depression because society marginalises them.

The systems theory affirms a just and humane social order which can address the above situation. It is true that when one's society is affected, one feels the pain, and when it is at peace, one enjoys the peace.

- **Culture**

Graham refers to the fifth component as culture:

a means by which humans collectively receive, synthesise and transform the influences of their world upon them. Culture is to the world as the soul is to the individual...Culture is more than an activity or capacity for action (Graham, 1992: 58).

In most societies, culture is expressed through art, literature, and music as well as through philosophy, science and religion. Graham (1992) explores the following three cultural forces which exist in the natural system, namely, historicism, materialism and privatism.

- (a) **Historicism**

Historicism seeks to understand individual and collective human experiences in terms of their human functioning and development. The positive side of historicism is that it can help liberate humanity from oppressive cultural structures. It also enables society to appreciate the rich diversity of human life, both personally and socially. This cultural force has also helped enhance community awareness and has provided contexts of belonging, healing and meaning to individuals within community contexts (Graham, 1992: 58).

(b) Materialism

Materialism is culturally expressed in modern science, technology and capitalism which have resulted in major social and cultural revolutions contributing to violence, poverty, and racism. Both victims and perpetrators of our violent culture are in need of help (Graham, 1992: 59-60). For this reason, our present government has embarked on a "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" programme which aims at bringing about justice for those who have previously been discriminated against. Unfortunately, the disadvantage of materialism is that in most cases, only the victim seeks help, while the perpetrator continues with his unjust activities.

(c) Privatism

Privatism is the third cultural factor which focuses upon individual interests. It is here where one tends to enter and remain in one's own inner and private world. In a sense, this is good in that one can discover one's inner world of richness. The negative side to this is that more people withdraw into their own private worlds, leaving the public sector with fewer people to exercise greater power in decision making (Graham, 1992: 60).

- **Nature**

The sixth component of the psychosystems' model is nature which Graham refers to as "all entities making up the universe that are capable of endurance, generativity, and change apart from human influence" (Graham, 1992: 61).

Humanity, culture and society will not be able to function without nature because nature provides the context for our greatest human achievements. It also expects us to face death, which is a natural process affected by human social experience. One must see and understand the natural world and humanity in terms of mutual influence. Nature gives rise to humanity and shapes our social and cultural lives and so too do our lives shape nature (Graham, 1992: 61).

6. God and the natural system

The systemic view of God from the systems perspective is that:

God's reality must be reconceived in terms of a systemic and contextual coming - into - being rather than an eternally completed being (Graham, 1992: 67).

This means that God is present in every context which influences what is yet to come. God receives into God's being whatever is being created and comes into existence. God is also the provider of new possibilities at every level of reality. Thus, God's being becomes a contextual one, which promotes harmony and intensity of experience rather than discord.

Since contexts differ, so too may our experiences and views of God. Difference in one's views does not mean that one is superior or inferior to another. The principle of adventure is rooted in the idea that God expects beauty to emerge from present situations, no matter how culturally unacceptable those situations of change may be. An example of this could be that gays may come up with a new theology and spirituality that they find relevant and edifying for them. This new religious experience may help them develop into more holistic and integrated beings, with themselves, possibly with others, with the natural systems, and more importantly, with God. This can be viewed as an experience of beauty for them, but in the eyes of a heterosexist and homophobic society, this very idea of beauty may be viewed as a direct form of evil. God's contextuality means that we can be open to expectations of hope and change. After all, God's intention is to bring about harmony, rather than discord and triviality, between every level of reality (1992: 68).

Summary

One could briefly describe the systems theory as a paradigm seeking to create a state of harmony and integration between individuals and their larger cultural and environmental systems in which they live. This paradigm offers a psychosystemic framework through which social, political and cultural dimensions can be made concrete within community contexts. Our experiences of life largely revolves around issues of injustice, oppression and environmental disorder which makes it almost impossible to achieve the state of harmony and integration that the above paradigm

seeks to promote. For this reason, the following presuppositions can be made:

7. Presuppositions

- If the systems paradigm seeks to understand the natural processes that occur in life, then therapeutic and liberational theatre for oppressed black gay males can address those issues which affect group members within this a psychostemic paradigm.
- Spirituality and sexuality play an important role in the communal lives of black gay males, however, spirituality is unfortunately prioritised and is "shoved into their souls" whilst sexuality is treated as a taboo and is rarely spoken about. This can be a detriment to societal life of gay Black males in the greater Pietermaritzburg area.
- Drama as a means of education, conscientisation and therapy from the systems paradigm can help black gay individuals to move away from disharmony within themselves, one another and nature, towards an open communion and creativity within and among themselves.
- In our present South African society where black gay males are socially and religiously discriminated against, drama methodologies implemented from a systems paradigm can help them develop ways of integrating personal and social healing.

Having introduced this study and its relationship to the systems paradigm, I acknowledge myself at the centre of this work through the consistent use of the first person pronoun "I", except during the actual workshop sessions, where I used the collective pronoun "we", as appropriate for democratic drama facilitation.

Given my particular focus on black gay males, I have attempted as far as possible to use masculine pronouns throughout this study. References to masculine terminologies such as mankind, he and him, however, do not reflect my own approach to the use of gendered language.

Concerning the use of borrowed and contentious terms and phrases, I have chosen to indicate them by placing them within inverted commas throughout the study. Examples of these could be "coming out", "normal" and "aliens in the household of God."

The spirituality that I refer to in this study is specifically a Christian spirituality and the constant use of Church refers to the mainline churches, namely the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, unless otherwise stated. Other churches that I make reference to are the independent Pentecostal churches which I myself, or the participants in the drama group were / are members of, or have a general knowledge of those churches' attitudes towards gays.

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

Spirituality, [homo]sexuality and drama

Drama, sexuality, and spirituality, according to Jung, have great therapeutic potential and can lead to a state of psychological well being and wholeness. He argues that spirituality and sexuality are basic human needs. A lack of either sexuality or spirituality in life may lead one to a state of disharmony, and as Jung observes:

Art is a kind of innate drive that seizes a human being and makes him its instrument [for] as an artist he is a "man" in a higher sense - he is "collective man"; a vehicle and moulder of the unconscious psychic life of mankind (1966: 101).

Thus it can be argued that the expression of the arts, which involves creativity, communality, sexuality, spirituality and identity can be valuable to a group. It is clear from the natural systems paradigm that humanity shares some common roots and that drama can be an ideal medium through which common elements and differences can be explored and shared because it uses the human situation and human behaviour as its medium.

As Peter Brook points out,

we are all only part of a complete man...each culture expresses a different portion of the inner atlas; the complete human truth is global and [drama is the medium through] which the jigsaw puzzle can be pieced together (1989: 129).

Similarly, Wilson (1981) believes that the arts [drama] and spirituality have healing powers because they encourage wholeness and integration. Thus, drama can become an educational, conscientising and therapeutic medium both for the individual and the community. Through the dramatic medium, social norms and values can be highlighted and affirmed or challenged in a way that may bring about positive change for the entire community. It is through this medium that people can be given the freedom to experience a wide range of emotions which are often

stifled by society. The medium of drama can provide people with opportunities to experience moments of catharsis in the midst of togetherness.

One of the major aims of both spirituality and drama according to Martin Esslin is that:

in [spiritual] ritual as in drama, the aim is an enhanced level of consciousness, a memorable insight into the nature of existence, a renewal of strength in the individual to face the world. In dramatic terms: catharsis; in religious terms: communion, enlightenment, illumination (1978: 28).

The educational, conscientisation and therapeutic mediums of drama all seek to stimulate the social conscience of their participants. In dramatic activity, there is a ritualistic element of enjoyment or recreation which enhances the sense of community and togetherness, as Friedrich points out, "In ritual, there are no spectators, only participants" (1983: 186).

Part I is divided into three chapters i.e.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Chapter One: | Male homosexuality and Christian intolerance |
| Chapter Two: | Construction of Gay Men's Masculinity |
| Chapter Three: | Drama as a means of Education, Conscientisation and Therapy. |

CHAPTER ONE

1. MALE HOMOSEXUALITY AND CHRISTIAN INTOLERANCE: IN SEARCH OF A GAY SPIRITUALITY

Many gay black men are committed members of churches and yet these religious institutions continue to inflict more hurt and pain on them. The Church's attitude has been and continues to be one of repression, judgement, and most of all intolerance. In his book *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality*, Boswell (1980) brings to light the Church's understanding and teaching of human sexuality. Before we gain an appreciation of the issues involved, we need to be aware of the historical perspectives.

Thus this chapter begins with a concise review of the social construction and history of gay people in western cultures. I shall provide a definition of the terms "gay" and "homosexual". Thereafter, I shall focus on the Church's attitude towards gay people. I shall conclude this chapter by giving special attention to the general South African history of black gay Christians.

1.1 Construction and history of gays

Social constructionism, according to Denzin (1989) includes three basic assumptions. The first assumption argues that reality is socially constructed, the objects that constitute social life lack intrinsic meaning. Instead, these objects take on meaning through human actions. The cultural definition, symbols and identities attached to these objects are thus carried through a process of social interaction. The second assumption asserts that human interaction entails mental processes in which individuals fashion a point of view that accords with a view of others. These mental processes involve manipulation of symbols, words, meaning and language. Consequently, social interaction is symbolic, emergent, negotiated and frequently unpredictable. Thirdly, it argues that self-reflexive conduct, distinguish human beings from other forms of life. Individuals are capable of shaping and directing both their actions and those of other people (Levine, 1992).

The concept of constructionism is a way of thinking about how knowledge is produced and sustained within specific contexts and communities. The constructionist perspective transformed

social scientists' thinking about human sexuality in that it challenged researchers to interpret sexuality as being socially constructed rather than biologically or psychologically intrinsic (Simon & Gagnon, 1987).

Plumber (1975) believes that culture provides the conceptual meanings through which people distinguish sexual feelings, identities, and practices. Thus, these definitions are culturally relative. Much social research using constructionist theory has been among gay men, especially around issues concerning human sexuality. This approach directs one's attention to the psychic and socio-cultural meaning and motivations attached to sexuality (Levine, 1992).

Culture is a set of symbols, stories (myths) and norms for conduct that orient a society or group, cognitively, affectively, and behaviourally to the world in which it lives, giving coherence, regularity and commonality to a people, group or society (Browning, 1976: 73).

It can also be seen as a medium through which the reality of human existence can be perceived, experienced, lived and expressed (Rackoczy, 1992: 158). Tomaselli (1988) views culture as something concerned with meaning, which each of us views differently, the practises which generate that meaning and the representational forms in which that meaning is encoded. Muller (1985) defines it as a storehouse of the various ways in which people create a meaningful world.

Tomaselli (1988) defines culture as follows:

Culture is an ensemble of meaningful practices and uniformities of behaviour through which self defined groups operate within an identifiable field of signification. It is a process which informs the way meanings, and definitions are socially constructed and historically transformed by the social actors themselves (Tomaselli, 1988: 172).

He maintains that cultures are "distinguished in terms of deferring responses to the same social, material and environmental conditions". He also claims that cultures are not static but subject to change, fragmentation and reformulation. However, he argues that cultures are adaptive, in the sense that they offer ways of coping and making sense (1988: 172).

The importance of culture in addressing the problems of both sexuality and spirituality is evidenced in the way that certain behaviour patterns in culture, are implicitly "hidden" in certain categories, and others not. For example, while the following questions "Are openly gay people welcome in the church? Are practising gays acceptable to God? Is homosexuality a portrayal of western cultural and religious tradition which is a blatant rebellion against God and God's social order?" may seem obvious, they vary across cultures. If a community places value on heterosexuality only, then gay people may be unwilling to discuss their sexuality, especially with people who oppose homosexuality.

More importantly, culture shapes our response to homosexuality. Some issues are interpreted through existing cultural categories. These interpretations may sometimes be referred to as myths, and it can be pointed out that myth making about homosexuality in the Zulu tradition, for example, may differ from myth making about this particular issue elsewhere. Myth, according to Levi-Strauss, is:

a story that is a specific and local transformation of a deep structure of binary opposed concepts that are important to the culture within which the myth circulates. The most powerful and significant myths act as anxiety reducers in that they deal with the contradictions inherent in any structures of binary oppositions, and although they do not resolve them (for such contradictions are often finally irreconcilable), they do provide an imaginary way of living with them, and coping with them, so that they do not become disruptive and do not produce too much cultural anxiety (in Fiske, 1982: 76).

It is therefore important to recognise that beliefs about homosexuality do not arise from ignorance or wilful misinterpretation of contemporary knowledge. They are actively constructed in an effort to make sense of frequently confusing and contradictory experiences which people have.

In a nutshell, the social constructionist perspective argues that any given human phenomenon is culturally and historically learned, and interpreted according to contexts. One could therefore, following the constructionist perspective, say that one is not a sexual being but rather becomes a sexual being. In the same manner, being a woman/man, masculine/feminine are notions that are learned during social interaction with others, and interpreted differently, depending on one's

culture and historical circumstances (Szesnat, 1997).

I shall now examine some of the ways in which gay sexuality has been historically constructed at different times in different cultures. Homosexual behaviour has variously been approved of, tolerated, and banned, while concepts of homosexuality have been in constant flux in modern Western societies. As early as 1883, John Addington Simons compiled material on Ancient Greece in an attempt to show that homosexuality could be noble and dignified when valued by society rather than repressed. Hoffman [in Boswell 1980] argues that homosexuality in a certain form (e.g. a young man and an adult male) was accepted as natural in all segments of the Greek society. Boswell (1980) states that many of the Greek mythological heroes such as Zeus, Hercules, Poseidon and Achilles were linked with homosexual behaviour. Karlen in Boswell (1980) states that, although some Greek literature portrays sexual relationships between women and two adult men, most of the homosexual relations seemed to occur between grown men and young adolescent boys. Indeed most Greek men married, yet homosexual activity was not seen as shameful or sinful.

During the early days of the Roman Empire, homosexual behaviour was common. Relationships between two men or two women were legal and accepted among the upper classes. Several emperors including Nero were married to men (Boswell, 1980). Boswell argues that for many centuries Catholic Europe showed no hostility to homosexuality, even though most historians who have written on the subject suggest that Christianity must have strongly condemned and persecuted homosexuality. In the Middle Ages, homosexuals were regarded as heretics and treasonous (Boswell, 1980).

Negative attitudes towards homosexuality basically stemmed from religious beliefs which were dominated by Western thought until the medical view of homosexuality began to emerge in the 18th and 19th centuries (Bullough, 1976). According to Hopcke (1989: 4), the high moment in the history of American psychological response to homosexuality came in 1973, when the American Psychiatric Association (APA), after a long contested debate, removed homosexuality from the list of mental disorders. The decision came as a result of political action on the part of gay liberation activists. However, the visibility of the gay community has activated political and social opposition from many quarters. Even today, tension exists between homosexuals and

heterosexuals and also within the homosexual community itself.

Like other groups that have suffered discrimination and repression, gays have begun to recover their past and to document their histories of struggle and repression. Hence, my definition of the term "gay".

1.2 Definition of homosexuality / gayness

It is evident that I have used both the terms "homosexual" and "gay" interchangeably to refer generally to people who are sexually attracted to people of the same sex [or gender] rather than those of the opposite sex. It is a term that also applies equally to both men and women. Boswell claims that "gay" refers

to persons who are conscious of erotic inclination toward their own gender [or sex] as a distinguishing characteristic or, loosely, to things associated with such people, as "gay poetry" (1980: 44).

The term gay may also refer to a state of feeling free from guilt about one's sexual preferences, which is caused by gay oppression. Tying in with Boswell, Isaacs et al. (1992: XIII) believes that the word "gay" is used "to describe people who acknowledge an erotic preference for their own gender". What is inferred is that the word "gay" has been appropriated by homosexual people who want to make the public aware of their existence. This term has also been used by the general public not only to mark out homosexual people as belonging to a particular identity type, but also to reject and deny them of their social and legal rights. One could also mention the fact that the recognition of their existence can help reduce discrimination, which is prevalent in many societies.

Homosexuality is not only a sexual attraction between people of the same sex, but it also includes emotional and physical bonds, a fantasy system, and elements of symbolism, eroticism and sexuality (Isaacs, 1992: XIII). For the sake of this thesis, I shall use gay and homosexual interchangeably throughout my investigation.

1.3 The church and gay people

In this section I shall focus on the church in general and its attitude towards gay people. It is my intention to firstly consider my experience as a young, Indian, middle class, gay, Christian male, as a means of exploring a spirituality which currently oppresses, but has, I believe, the potential to liberate gay people. I shall discuss the church's intolerance in general - its traditional response and its response now, whether it be in pastoral care, worship and liturgy or biblical hermeneutics done traditionally from a patriarchal and homophobic perspective. Thereafter, I will examine some of the exceptions from certain Christian communities who view homosexuality as a reality which should be tolerated, accepted and most of all celebrated.

1.3.1 My own experience

It is with a certain kind of fear that I reveal the history of my "other" life. One of my strongest childhood memories is that of rejection, loneliness and pretence. As a child I struggled to fit into groups at school, and desperately yearned to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance. I knew that I was different. I hated the rough sports that the boys played, but found myself drawn to music, flowers, nature - the artistic and creative aspects of life. My father was not much of a role model, we never got on and I believe that I just wasn't the son he wanted. I struggled to defend myself against other boys my own age, and would often run to my mother crying, who encouraged me to fight back like the other boys did, and not to cry, because big boys don't cry. My father's own insecurities had led him to indulge in drugs and alcohol, which had devastating effects on our family. My mother and my other siblings meant the world to me.

I spent my teenage years in a charismatic, Pentecostal church where there was enough attention lavished on me to keep me sane, but there was always this constant battle within myself in trying to understand what it meant to be normal, acceptable, and most of all what it meant to be human. Both my human experience and my Christian faith were equal in importance to me. There was the pressure from family and friends to marry. Everyone my age was either dating or already married. For fear of being found out, I started to date a young girl, but after some time the question of marriage would again arise. My perceptive mother would quickly say "he is doing God's work. Christ did not come to find a wife, but came to do the will of God." If only she knew

how close that was to my reality.

In time I was able to identify my "problem". The church had preached it to me loud and clear. Homosexuality was evil and it came from the pits of hell. I wasn't living a licentious life with drugs, sex and alcohol. I was a human being full of love, wanting to love and be loved in return. How could I ever explain to my church that being gay didn't mean that I had forsaken my Christian faith? Why would I deliberately choose a way of life that exposed me to so much discrimination and suffering? There was no way in which I could divorce my spirituality from my sexuality, and I constantly asked myself why God had given me a heart and never allowed me the opportunity to follow it. Being actively involved in my local church, I cried out wanting my afflictions to be removed from me. How could God withhold an answer that would affect my life in a positive way? Why did God not remove this terrible "sin" from my life, even after fasting and prayer?

I could identify with pain, others' and mine. In time I learnt that pain was part of the process that shaped my life. I had to learn to deal with it in a creative, artistic way. Through creative pain I have learned to share humanity with others. I guess, my own longing and yearning to connect with others, to be accepted and to belong helped me in sharing that basic humanity which is common to us all, no matter the differences. My only consolation during this gay Christian journey was the knowledge that God accepted me, and others like myself, as we are - normal human beings.

In my quest for answers about human sexuality, I started looking at my incarnate role model - Christ. Interestingly enough, I learnt that he taught about love and the grace of God which is free to all. In fact, I still feel strongly that the focus of his ministry was that the kingdom of God was primarily for the poor, marginalised and those who had been excluded (Cf. Luke 4: 18). To be gay today is to be on the outside, on the margins - exactly whom Christ said the kingdom of God is for. Above all, Christ preached a gospel of inclusive love, of justice, mercy and compassion. We are all one in Christ, irrespective of gender, race or status (Cf. Gal. 3: 28).

Not once in the scriptures have I found Christ addressing the issues of homosexuality, or even mentioning it in the long list of other sins that are mentioned, and yet Christ lived during a period

of time when homosexuality was apparently accepted (Boswell, 1980).

1.4 Historical perspectives on the Church's response to homosexuality

In *Aliens in the household of God*, Corbett (1997: 162-171) presents the positive approach to various or diverse forms of sexuality in the mainline Church, in the past. He sees the continued silent persecution of homosexuals as reflecting a total lack of love and tolerance in the church's traditions. He observes that it is only in recent times that one tradition has become dominant, which can be characterised as "no sex outside marriage". This, he says is not what has been taught in all times and all places. Corbett goes on to observe that an understanding of the mainline Church's teaching over the centuries, even in Europe, is essential for the appreciation of the issues involved. He criticises theologians and church leaders who address the issues involved while being utterly ignorant of historical perspectives.

Corbett cites Boswell as an authority in this area, and Boswell's, *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* (1980) and *Same Sex Unions in Pre-modern Europe* (1994) as crucial to our understanding. Corbett admits the observation of some commentators who assert that Boswell has stretched his sources to yield conclusions that they can scarcely bear. Among these he cites an example that Boswell tends to assume the universal existence of "gay people" at all times and all societies, whereas, homosexuality as an orientation or state of being has been conceptualised only within the last hundred years or so. Before this, Corbett notes that writers referred mainly to particular acts or styles of behaviour. "While this must be conceded", says Corbett:

I believe that he demonstrates the significant presence of same-sex desires, friendships and sexual practices throughout Western history and that his thesis stands: that intolerance of homosexuality is not an essential feature of Christianity itself but only became the dominant attitude after twelve hundred years of church history (Corbett, 1997: 163).

Corbett believes that this censorship of certain manifestations of loving is new and that it can be supported by various illustrations from medieval times. One of the illustrations that Boswell (1980) and Corbett cites is a popular song by Burana, "Love is not a crime; if it were a crime to love, God would not have bound even the divine with love" (1997: 163).

Another such illustration, also cited by Corbett is from the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas' *Summa theologiae*, who wrote that:

because of the diverse conditions of humans, it happens that some acts are virtuous to some people, as appropriate and suitable for them, while the same acts are immoral for others, as inappropriate to them (Corbett, 1997: 163).

The church was born into the post-classical Europe of Greece and Rome and accepted the positive values of this culture. Aristophanes considered homosexual desire as a "natural necessity", like heterosexual desire. Xenophon believed that homosexuality was part of "human nature", so that it was clearly both "normal" and "natural". Aristotle, who greatly influenced the theologians of the European Middle Ages also uses the word "natural" in this regard, also considered homosexuality to be unnatural. It was not uncommon for Roman emperors to be gay, most notably Hadrian, and interestingly enough, there was no distinction in Roman law at that time between heterosexual and homosexual matters. This was certainly a period for sexual tolerance. Apart from the instances of prostitution there were no records of the Church at large being discontented with homosexuality (Corbett, 1997: 163).

In the 5th and 6th centuries, feelings against homosexual practices grew as the empire declined. In Visigoth Spain, the Roman Catholic Church refused to co-operate in the state-led suppression of homosexuals until it was forced to. Gays were prominent both among the military and the clergy (Corbett, 1997: 163).

Alcuin is quoted by Corbett as saying to a friend:

I think of your love and friendship with such sweet memories, Reverend Bishop, that I long for that lovely time when I may be able to clutch the neck of your sweetness with the fingers of my desires ... how would I sink into your embraces ... how would I cover with tightly pressed lips, not only your eyes, ears and mouth, but also your every finger and your toes, not once but many a time (1997: 163- 164).

Writings of this kind probably still exist in Christian Europe. The Middle Ages from the 10th to the 14th centuries certainly experienced openness, tolerance and acceptance in a relatively settled political climate. We must take note of a remarkable tradition during this era i.e. the blessing of

gay relationships. The earliest records of same-sex relationships come from the Eastern Church. Nineteenth century historians refused to accept the evident homosexual nature of documents containing same-sex marital contracts. It is evident that during this period, the Church accepted homosexuality as part of the range of human sexuality, and in moral terms, treated it no differently from heterosexuality (1997: 164).

As Europe became more politically volatile, there was tension between Christianity and Islam. This gave rise to various groups of people becoming marginalised namely, Muslims, Jews, lepers, witches, heretics, and gays. The influential Reformation leaders like Luther and Calvin, for instance, tended to accept the more narrow and limited mores of the latter Middle Ages, especially in relation to sexual matters. It is from this time that one can date the popular misconception that the Catholic Church has only two attitudes to sexuality - marriage and celibacy. This stance has become a popular and more *accepted* (emphasis mine) traditional norm in the mainline Churches (Corbett, 1997: 162-166).

Today, the Catholic teaching [The Catholic Catechism, 1994: rule number 2359] continues to state that homosexual people are called to the state of chastity and calls them to approach perfection through self-mastery, by the support of disinterested friendships, prayer and sacraments.

It is clear that the Catholic Church's traditional teaching on homosexuality is largely informed by what the Bible says, regardless of context, culture, scientific and medical findings (Hopcke, 1989: 4). This makes its pastoral concern for gay people sound shallow and uninterested.

As if some were aware of this seeming disinterested concern and even condemnatory stance of the Catholic Church towards the life style of gay people, individual clergy, church leaders and other church denominations have taken it upon themselves to take a stand and speak out in support of gay people and also to accommodate them in the church communities.

Among the mainline churches, the Anglican Church's teaching on homosexuality states that homosexual acts are unnatural. Scriptures used to back up this teaching are Genesis 2: 24; Mark 10: 6-8, and Ephesians 5: 31. These three readings talk about a life-long union between a man

and a woman. In the same way, the Catholic Church's traditional teaching on human sexuality (Genesis 19: 1-29; Romans 1: 24-27; 1 Corinthians 6: 10; 1 Timothy 1: 10) presents homosexual acts as "acts of grave depravity"; that they are "intrinsically disordered"; that they are "contrary to natural law"; that they "close the sexual act to the gift of life" and that they "do not proceed from the genuine affective and sexual complementarity". Thus, such acts cannot be tolerated by the Church (The Catholic Catechism, 1994: rule number 2357).

On the other hand, the mainline Churches acknowledge the fact that homosexual tendencies are deep-seated, and for that reason gay people cannot be neglected. In other words, these Churches accept that homosexual orientation in many men and women is not a matter of choice, and that for most of them it is a trial. For that reason, homosexual people must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. The Catholic Church goes on to state that every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided, as homosexual people are also called by God to play a role in God's salvific act (The Catholic Catechism, 1994: rule number 2358).

1.5 The Church's dissenting pastoral concerns

This pastoral response of the Church towards gay people is again echoed in a new prayer book for lesbians and gays, about which Archbishop D. Tutu (1996) comments that the book turns out to be a poignant testimony - a "cri de coeur" from the hearts of the people whom the Church first accepted as baptized fellow Christians, but then who were later spurned and shunned because of a tacit homophobia and heterosexism. He goes on to write that gay people were pushed outside the confines of the church communities, and thereby the church negated the consequences of their baptism. According to Archbishop Tutu, that is an ultimate blasphemy, for they are made to doubt that they are children of God, and are blamed for something they can do little about.

Michael Worsnip in an article: "A Very Fussy Kind of God" (*The Natal Witness* 20 August, 1998), criticises the Anglican bishops gathered at the Lambeth Conference (the Anglican Church's highest decision-making body on doctrinal matters) on their stance on homosexuality. At the conference, the bishops decided on a motion to retain the old tradition concerning the Church's teaching on homosexuality, which regards homosexuality as a practice that was "incompatible with scripture" and that the Church will not allow the blessing of homosexual

partnerships or the ordination of practising homosexuals. Worsnip argues that the bishops' stance on homosexuality is conservative and uncharitable. He reminds readers that the concept of homosexuality already exists, and that homosexuals have no choice of sexual orientation: "As I understand it, the Church accepts that homosexuals exist and presumably there is not a great deal they can do about that". But above all, he challenges the Church to make up its mind concerning its ambiguous assertion that God loves homosexuals and yet God will not allow them to live as practising homosexuals.

Similarly, de Gruchy (Germond et al. 1997: 17-21) a self-confessed South African lesbian had to leave her home and Church for New York, where she first came out. She writes of her joy when for the first time she could identify with other lesbians and gay men: "I felt that here was a group of people with whom I could identify in some strange new way. There were the strong church connections that were comfortable for me" (1997: 19), and she adds that there was a new sense of difference and excitement. In New York they were incorporated into the church, as she writes:

It was June, at the time of Gay Pride. And as part of a growing awareness within Holden Village, and generally of the Lutheran Church, of the need to incorporate gay men and lesbians into the community of Christ, Gay Pride Week was celebrated for the first time in the village where other churches participated as well (1997: 20).

In the broader church she had experienced people in pain, and hurt by the very church that supposedly preached love to all. She was also struck by the destructive nature of the closeted lives that many were forced to live. This experience of joy and love in the US which she could not connect with her own Church back in South Africa, slowly made her "become distant from the Church", she writes (Germond, 1997: 20-21).

After twenty-one years of celibacy in the priesthood, a senior Catholic priest writes: "I found myself in bed with another man." He recounts this as a miracle that had happened to him, as he had suddenly changed for the better - more compassionate, as the supreme law of love had replaced "the fiddly little church laws" (Germond, 1997: 25).

What is apparently clear from the above experiences is the fact that, while they paid a price for their bravery (such as leaving their families, their homes and facing ridicule), many emerged as stronger and more resilient to challenge the Church further -to make it more aware of its double standards and urge it towards the teaching of love and care that were displayed by Christ Jesus.

Since the 1960s to the present, many books, pamphlets and articles have been written on the church's attitude towards homosexuality, mostly male homosexuality. Most of the contributions have expressed personal rather than "official" views. These contributions are very diverse in the sense that they range from traditional condemnation to expressions of acceptance and tolerance. Most of the authors of these works remain silent about their own sexual orientation when writing from a presumed heterosexual perspective. Christian homosexuals began to write and speak openly about their own experience only after gay liberation movements began to affect the church (Macourt, 1977).

In reading about the teachings on and understanding of human sexuality from the Christian perspective, one realizes that there are inconsistencies in the Church's teaching concerning homosexuality. On the one hand, homosexuality is seen as "unnatural" and "inherently evil", while on the other hand, the same church acknowledges homosexuality to be "deep-seated" in gays, hence the need for pastoral care for homosexual people. Perhaps it is time the church become more Christ-like in its stance towards gay people, and a further challenge to the church should be that they should remain consistent within that stance. This compels me to now examine the situation of black gays in Kwa-Zulu, Natal.

1.6 The South African gay Christian situation

In his inaugural speech, in the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus re-echoed the words of the prophet Isaiah:

He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,
To proclaim liberty [freedom] to captives [oppressed]
And to the blind new sight
to set the downtrodden free
to proclaim the Lord's year of favour (Isaiah 61: 1-2).

The cry "set my [gay] people free" is still being heard in South Africa today. As South African citizens we live in societies where we can identify people falling into two distinct categories: victims and oppressors. In my opinion, heterosexism should be placed high on the list of injustices which deprive many people of enjoying the fullness of life.

Pope John Paul II (1986: XVI) stated that the purpose of the Christian law is, "to facilitate grace, faith, charism and charity in the community and in the individuals who make up that community." In keeping with this purpose, Goba (1984) suggests that for the black community, a black theology may succeed in restoring and healing the brokenness of black people who were held in bondage by a tyrannical system called apartheid. He claims that victims understand their own problems better than anyone else and believes that victims are capable of finding their own solutions. This thinking is in line with Clinebell's (1984) holistic liberation - growth counselling methodology and Graham's (1992) psychosystemic approach towards counselling for empowerment and transformation. Furthermore, Goba (1984) asserts that freedom for those who are oppressed is something to be understood, acted upon and claimed because it is a basic human right which is also rooted in Christian faith. Thus, knowing this truth which triggers off the liberation process must take place from within the person.

Oppressed people like gays, for example, can identify with the Biblical Exodus theme. The Exodus event, where God rescued his people from their cruel taskmasters determined how freedom was to be understood by the oppressed themselves and others. Boesak (1977: 20) at the National Conference of Black Church Men in 1976 wrote, "The Exodus is not a myth but the opening up of a history in which God's liberating act was revealed to his people."

Some gay people have complained about the inappropriate limits that certain churches and societies place upon them. Some of these people have reacted against their exclusion from the church by choosing to remain silent and marginalised parishioners, while others have left their churches in search of religious institutions that are more inclusive and accommodating of gays.

We must ask more concretely what the situation is that the gay black community in Kwa Zulu Natal faces here and now. From my observation, black gays have to suffer a double oppression. The first oppression is that of discrimination caused directly by apartheid, which is still a major

problem which black gay men are still struggling to overcome. And the second oppression is that of their gay sexual orientation. Concerning people's experiences of suffering, Paul Tillich argues that

theology moves back and forth between two poles, the external truth of its foundation and the temporal situation in which the external truth must be received (Tillich, 1968: 3).

Attention to the situational pole is said to make experience relevant, helpful and meaningful. Situational theology starts from the world around us and analyses particular themes and situations with the intention of problem solving. If the Christian faith is not found relevant and creative for individual and personal faith, it is doubtful that it will be able to be relevant to the wider social situation.

We can only understand the Black context from what Blacks have said and written. From the conversations I have had with Black gays, the following questions concerning their spirituality and sexual orientation seemed to be of vital importance to them: what does the Church or the Bible have to say to us in our rejection, restriction and inferiority? Does it only have a spiritual message or one that can give us hope in our gay situation? How can it help us to be more human ... to be ourselves?

Slowly, gay people are beginning to react against the way Christianity is lived out by many people rather than rejecting or denying the reality of their own situation. Black gays are in search of something that would liberate and raise them from inferiority to a new human dignity. They also want to be helped to transcend structures which de-humanize them and make it virtually impossible for them to realize their full human potential as people.

What is interesting to note here is that more black gays are willing to tell others what it means to be Black, Gay and Christian today than they were able to do in the past. Basically, they are more eager to share their experiences with others with the hope of finding some kind of inner satisfaction and possibly some acceptance from those who listen to what they have to say. And I firmly believe that it is something only they can do. It would be presumptuous for us to try and say what they feel. But at the same time if their concerns are not heeded, their Christianity may become empty. Christian love is empty, says Paul Tillich, unless it transforms itself "according

to the concrete demands of every individual and social situation" (Tillich, 1951: 172).

What gay black men [within the area of my study] need is a spirit of tolerance and acceptance in conjunction with Christ's teaching. They want to be affirmed as free, morally responsible and creative human beings. They want to be recognized as people with human status. However, such a process of tolerance and acceptance must be mutual. It is in mutual acceptance that lives and societies are made whole. One can try to be tolerant, for example, gay people should also try to be tolerant of heterosexuals and thus remove barriers that exist between them. It is sad however that many gays have desperately and lovingly reached out to heterosexuals who have continuously rejected, ridiculed and abused the very people who have tried to do the opposite to them.

In search of an acceptance that gays could barely find in the heterosexual community, the Black American writer Alberte Cleage argues:

I tell you you cannot love everybody. You have been trying and you feel guilty because you have failed. Forget the guilt feeling ... You cannot love your enemy ... love is something for inside the [community]. We'll try to love each other as much as we can ... Outside the [community] we are not thinking about love. We are thinking about justice (Cleage, 1995: 96).

Tolerance and acceptance does not try to get rid of the other or pretend that the other is not there, but will see that for all the difference, we all have a right to be treated with respect and we too have positive contributions to make. We cannot wait until there is total equality in every respect. We also need to understand that not all black gay men find this tolerance / acceptance issue an important one. While the above may appear to be a burning issue for some, others seem to have given up fighting for issues such as these and prefer to focus more on what they can do for themselves and others like themselves to improve their quality of life.

South African Christians must make the necessary spiritual and intellectual efforts and be prepared for practical experimentation, not only personally but also in the Church as an institution. A community of faith needs to be established where oneness in practice can be expressed. The Church has a diversity of forms, that is various denominations, and these are here

as a matter of convenience for racially and culturally diverse groups. The challenge of the community of faith should be to find realistic ways of expressing our unity in the midst of our diversities - a community which can continue to have meaningful fellowship with one another even outside the Church without condemnation. It is extremely difficult for gay Black men to see other heterosexual Christians as their brothers and sisters when these are the very people who reject them.

What is needed is not an artificial integration but a true acceptance which is expressed spontaneously in real fellowship. If it is not genuine, then it becomes, as Karl Barth puts it:

A form of love - mere charity - in which we do not love at all; in which we do not see or have in mind the other men to whom it is directed; in which we do not and will not notice his weal or woe; in which we merely imagine him as the object of the love which we have to exercise, and in this way master and use him. Our only desire is ... to find for ourselves self-expression in this sublime form (Barth, 1962: 440).

Concerning this form of love, Barth speaks about it as being

genuinely isolated and frozen and estranged and oppressed and humiliated, so that he feels that he is trampled under the feet of the one who is supposed to love him and cannot react with gratitude (Barth, 1962: 440).

The great tragedy, according to Barth (1962) is that this form of so-called "neighbourly Christian love" is practised within the Christian community itself.

The church in South Africa, modelled after Christ, has the ministry of activating the liberating force that is required to set gay people free from their bondage of fear and rejection. Gay people too have a similar ministry to other gays in the light of heterosexual needs. Orsy (1992: 116) exclaims that a church "which leaves no room for the contributions of the people [gays] ... is theologically unsatisfactory." He asserts that the people who make up the church should be given "real and concrete" possibilities to affect the decision-making processes of the church. Thus, one can conclude from this that there needs to be a ministry directed towards humanizing Christian heterosexuals with their insecurities and fears. It is along this conscientising and reconciling road that we must tread no matter how unpleasant. But as Brown (1978: 82) puts it "what we see

depends on where we are standing", which implies that our experiences affect the way in which we view freedom and reality.

In this chapter, I examined the social and religious patriarchal construction and history of gay men which assumes and dictates the "naturalness" of heterosexual constructions as the only acceptable norm. Although the traditional teaching or stance of the Church remains hostile and condemnatory towards gays, the voices of those concerned with the well-being of gays do not only dissent from the Church's teaching on homosexuality, but they also challenge its un-Christian attitude and its stance on the biological origins of gender roles that are forced upon them. Thus, in Chapter Two, I shall explore the ways in which the heterosexual and homosexual communities construct gay men's masculinity.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONSTRUCTION OF GAY MENS' MASCULINITY: IN SEARCH FOR IDENTITY AND SELF-EXPRESSION

Most discussions of patriarchal and heterosexual masculinity tend to treat masculinity [and femininity] as if it is measurable. It is an assumption that some men have more masculinity than others. This in turn has given rise to a general perception that men who lack masculinity are, by definition, sick and genetically inadequate. For instance, gays are regarded as "not real men" or effeminate, for they lack a proper hormonal balance of masculinity. "This assumption - that we can know and describe men in terms of some discoverable dimension is problematic - because it suggests that masculinity is timeless and universal" (Brittan, 1998: 1).

In this chapter, I shall examine how gay men's masculinity is constructed as studied by Segal (1990); Hopcke (1989) and Coleman (1988). I shall also focus on how a gay person acquires his sexual identity. I will attempt to show the diversity of sexual orientation. From there, I shall investigate the attitude of some gay men once they have acknowledged their sexual orientation, the attitude of parents and how they should interact with and support their gay sons, and how the community as a whole could be challenged to help gays to become part of the larger society.

2.1 Gay men and femininity

Segal's argument, as viewed from a Freudian perspective is that masculinity [and femininity] is "neither biologically determined, nor a simple product of social stereotypes and expectations". She claims that masculinity:

is a complex and difficult process of psychic construction, ineluctably marked by tension, anxiety and contradiction. It has no single and consistent set of attributes and essence (Segal, 1990: 72).

Anthony Easthope in What a Man's gotta do attempts to analyze the representations of the male in popular western culture by trying to show that the "masculine myth" is deliberately preserved in a variety of ways:

Masculinity aims to be one substance all the way through. In order to do this it must control what threatens it both from within and without. Within, femininity and male homosexual desire must be denied; without, women and the feminine must be subordinated and held in place (Easthope, 1986: 166).

There is a constant interplay between masculine (animus) and feminine (anima), between heterosexual desire and homosexual desire, within the unconscious of any individual. The masculine myth denies men the opportunities to explore the options of self available to them. In a sense, the myth entraps them in a struggle to cope with societal expectations of what is required of them. Easthope (1986) believes that the masculine myth has been falling away in recent years, and points out that increasingly men are seeking gender salvation or a fresh approach at gender relationships, where they can come to terms with their innermost feelings and thereby escape from the general patriarchal stereotype that men are not supposed to express themselves emotionally, especially those emotions which society views as effeminate.

In response to the general assumption that men are less emotional than women, Cohen (1990) argues that men do feel emotions which are similar to the ways in which women respond emotionally. He further asserts that the only visible difference between men and women is that men may be less skilled in expressing themselves on an emotional level or perhaps they find some feelings difficult to acknowledge because of the way in which society has defined and ordered their masculine roles and behaviour.

We are taught to feel we ought to succeed and achieve [and] to be in control. Yet often we aren't. We feel powerless. Our response is to deny these feelings. Our expressions of any negative feelings get repressed. It's hard to accept them as part of life. Rather, they show us up as being less in control than society tells us we ought to be. It isn't that our feelings are less intense than those of women, but that certain feelings are shameful (Cohen, 1990: 85).

Frustration, anger, hurt, and a sense of misrepresentation have caused men to question their masculinities. Women and men who are in touch with their femininity can and have been a guide

in the creative task of men's self expression and reconstruction. Women are culturally encouraged to be naturally spontaneous about their emotional expression. They can easily open up without being threatened. Why should men be denied this opportunity? Patriarchal constructions of masculinity have made men feel insecure about their roles in society and have distorted their relationships. The social constructionist approach asserts that both male dominance and masculinity have shifted over time, and that in this recognition lies the possibility that they may yet shift again (Roper & Tosh, 1991: 19).

In Sam Keen's book, Fire in the Belly (1991), he encourages men to set out on a psychological journey of healing and integration. This journey, he believes, is to be both personal and cultural. A change in men's understanding of masculinity can enable them to move from individualism and the avoidance of fears and emotional suppression towards community and the corporate facing of fears.

However, the general public has always seen and associated gay men with femininity. This is how many of them have become victims of heterosexual stereotypes and have been labelled as invertes and even hermaphrodites. Besides, many gay people themselves have expressed feelings of so-called femininity from early childhood which they have expressed in their manner of dress and general behaviour. The focus of the investigation is therefore to look at the reasons why gay men are seen as being feminine, as opposed to being masculine, like their heterosexual counterparts.

According to Hopcke

the sexual orientation of an individual or any group of individuals is determined through a complex integration of the archetypal masculine, the archetypal feminine, and the archetypal androgyne (1989: 132).

The theory posits that all three archetypal dominants work together to produce that particular, archetypally tinged aspect of the personality that determines one's sexual orientation. With regard to heterosexuality, therefore, this contrasexuality (or contradiction) demands that a man's femininity be seen as a vitally important part of his soul. Similarly, the elements of masculinity in a woman's personality, her masculine soul, serve the purpose of integration as well. He asserts

that this emphasis on contrasexuality, in Jungian thought on heterosexuality, should not forget the synthesizing presence of the androgyne, as all sexual orientations contain all three archetypal dominants of masculinity, femininity, and androgyne. He argues that the assumption that all sexual orientations contain all three archetypes pushes further and deeper towards the wholeness that is the teleological (or end purpose) thrust of sexuality on its most basic level of sexual orientation.

Hopcke, points out that taking the theory seriously would mean acknowledging that a crucial element in heterosexuality might also be the urge toward fulfilment of the demands of the androgyne, the wholeness inherent in being both male and female in the act of sexual union. In other words, androgyne could be taken as the goal in an orientation toward heterosexual union. (1989: 133)

Hopcke argues further that the androgyne theory of understanding heterosexuality using Jungian thought, might function well to challenge any theoretical or experiential one-sidedness that has continually favoured heterosexual relationships. He reminds us that men are not just men as defined by western culture, but may at times also be, archetypally and emotionally, women and androgyne (and vice versa), though this aspect of men's beings may often be repressed by cultural values. Hopcke posits that a theory that views sexual orientation as a confluence of masculine, feminine and androgyne both broadens and deepens a mistakenly narrow view of the dynamics of heterosexual relationships (1989: 134).

Focussing on gay men and their culture, Hopcke argues that within the collective gay male culture, the presence of the feminine often comes out in flippant and trivial ways. For example, the camp humour of some gay men, as when they bestow female names on one another, or adopt the more outrageous aspects of the patriarchal stereotypes of the feminine sex-role (such as dressing up as drag queens and displaying exaggerated feminine mannerisms), clearly expresses their closeness to collective femininity. This challenges one to examine the centrality of the feminine in gay men's experiences (1989: 136-7).

According to Hopcke, then, we have no reason to suppose that the feminine as the archetypal dominant in human experience functions any differently in heterosexuals than in homosexuals;

they are as prone to feminine identification as any other group, including straight men. So, if one wants to understand the function of the feminine for contemporary gay men, one must take into account the psychological context of gay men's development, for instance, the sexual mores and attitudes which dominate western culture.

These sexual mores and attitudes, according to Hopcke, have the following two important characteristics:

- patriarchy, whose values identify particular personal characteristics and social roles exclusively with men or women and tends to value those characteristics and roles assigned to men over those assigned to women, and
- heterosexism, which views heterosexuality as the only acceptable, normal pattern for fulfilling human relationships and tends to view all other sexual relationships as either subordinate or perversions of the heterosexual relationships.

Hopcke (1989: 139) believes that the view of the primacy of heterosexuality in human development is supported by nearly every important cultural institution.

The patriarchy and heterosexual bias of modern western culture, in turn seems to create two related tasks for gay men, in so far as they are consciously aware of their exclusive attraction to other men. The first is conditioned by the patriarchal view that sexual attraction toward men is characteristic of women, a gender category defined by anatomy and supported by the value placed on heterosexual relationships. For this reason, for the man who loves men, the only culturally available self-definition given to him, is to see himself as psychologically feminine. But as he points out,

a heterosexual man's femininity is not seen socially as determinative of his identity as a man, while in a patriarchal and heterosexist society a gay man's femininity is seen as his identity, both socially and psychologically, because of his sexual attraction to other men. As compared to other heterosexual men, therefore, a gay man's individuation process begins with a completely different relationship to the psychosocial definition of masculinity and femininity; it unfolds in ways that sometimes differ from the individuation process of men who are not gay (Hopcke, 1989: 140).

The second psychological task for the gay man in a heterosexual society is the process of "coming out". Isaacs defines "coming out" in the following words:

By coming out is meant your recognition that you are homosexual. This may happen via an event or situation, or an accumulation of feeling and or / experience, whereby you admitted to yourself and possibly to others too that you are gay (1992: 180).

"Coming out" is usually related to a set of experiences, and the resulting interpretation of them by the person as "legitimate". It involves recognising that the person is "homosexual", and is associated with the external rituals of the gay sub-culture which impact on the identity of the individual (1992: 181).

Isaacs quotes Berger who suggests three factors that are related to "coming out", namely, the first sexual encounter, openness with others about one's sexuality, and self-recognition and self-acceptance. Berger emphasizes the fact that the essence of "coming out", lies not in these steps but rather in the acknowledgement of the overall process as a "most significant life event in the experience of the person." Roesler and Deisler are also quoted as stressing the fact that "the root of the experience is that coming out implies admitting that one is a homosexual" (1992: 182).

Unlike their heterosexual counter-parts, gay people must go through a psychological crisis concerning their emotional and sexual development, as they lack gay role models in the society at large to support a growing awareness of their homosexuality (Hopcke, 1989).

This psychological journey, according to Hopcke, is not only taken by gay men alone, but also by women, because the patriarchal sex role assignment robs them of the natural ability to see masculine qualities as available to them as women, similarly with gay men, patriarchy and heterosexism robs them of a natural ability to see masculine qualities available to them as gay men (Hopcke, 1989: 143).

According to Hopcke, as gay men, a connection with the positive side of masculinity may be achieved only once some resolutions of the issues of femininity can be found. One of the ways is by casting off society's exaggerations of femininity and locating their own passionate nature, the true feelings - relating to their inner self based femininity. In that way, perhaps, they may not

have to go through all that different a process from heterosexual men in coming to know themselves as men. Through knowing themselves as women as well, they can also bring the feminine and masculine experiences of self together and know the feminine, not in its outward conventional forms, but rather in its inward power and individuality - a part of "me" (Hopcke, 1989: 144)

What one can conclude from the theory is that, although gay men may be seen as feminine or lacking in masculinity, the fact remains that all sexual orientations combine all three archetypal dominants, which we should all be able to display - male and female. The patriarchal and heterosexist biases and denial of femininity in men (and vice versa) has created the stereotype that gay men are (more) effeminate. Thus, the theory challenges both gay men and straight men to incorporate these denied aspects of their sexuality, in order to be integrated and wholesome beings.

The above information is important in this study, in the sense that it provides a clearer context of the theatre group that has chosen itself to work with me. Most of the gay black men who have volunteered to work in my theatre project perform themselves effeminately. An interesting observation that I made during the interviewing process seemed to be that most black gay men in the Pietermaritzburg area who see themselves as being more masculine (butch) feel that drama is not for them but for the more effeminate ones (queens). Fortunately enough, those in the group who are more in touch with their femininity (anima), will express themselves more honestly and realistically. Hopefully, an integration of both their "biological masculinity" (animus) and their "socialised femininity" (anima) will help them in their journey towards wholeness.

Having looked at gay men and the assumptions of femininity that the heterosexual community place on them, we shall now examine how gay men acquire their sexual identity.

2.2 Formation of sexual identity

Erikson (1968) analyses people's search for their true identity. In seeking to find some kind of meaningful identity, a person explores and experiments with various relationships and at the same time, explores his own mental, physical and sexual capacities as well. A gay person, for

example, who fails to find an identity which is approved by his heterosexist society would in most cases suffer from low self-esteem and depression. Like adolescents, Lidz (1968) believes that [homosexuals] go through times of fantasy explorations and also times of disillusionment and disgust with the world they are living in and also with themselves. Psychoanalysts, like Anna Freud (1958), sees the above as a clash between "progressive" and "regressive" forces in a person's growth.

Concerning a person's search for sexual orientation, Coleman (1988) points out that the sexual orientation dichotomy (e.g. homosexual and heterosexual) was dismissed three decades ago by Kinsey and associates. They claimed that "the world is not divided into sheep and goats. Not all are black nor all things white" (1988: 10). Kinsey et al. claim that it is a fundamental principle that nature rarely deals with discrete categories (and tries to force out facts into separate boxes). According to these scholars, "the living world is a continuum in each and everyone of its aspects" (1988: 10).

Out of their findings, therefore, Kinsey and his associates developed a seven point scale in which zero represented exclusive heterosexuality and six represented exclusive homosexuality, while three on the scale represented equal homosexual and heterosexual responsiveness. Individual persons were rated on this continuum which was based upon sexual behaviour and psychic reaction [e.g. physical attraction to desired partners] (1988: 10).

However, scholars found the Kinsey Scale limited, in that, it assumes that sexual behaviour and erotic responsiveness are the same within all individuals. In response to the criticism, Weinberg and Bell utilised two scales on which they rated their subjects: one for sexual behaviour and the other for erotic fantasies. To this two-dimensional and continuous view of sexual orientation which represented an improvement in assessment of sexual orientation, clinicians and researchers recommended additional dimensions.

Scholars like De Cecho and Shiverly suggested the conceptualisation of sexual orientations embracing physical, interpersonal, and intrapsychic factors (erotic fantasy). "Interpersonal affection refers to associations involving love that may or may not include genital contact" (1988: 13).

Other scholars, like Klein, went further in outlining other dimensions of sexual orientations (see diagram). In addition to scales describing sexual behaviour, fantasy, and emotional preference, he also defined other dimensions such as sexual attraction, social preference, self-identification, and heterosexual / homosexual life-styles. Individuals, therefore, rate themselves on a seven point scale for seven different dimensions. Klein also went on to contend that sexual orientation is not fixed or permanent (1988: 13).

Klein’s Sexual Orientation Grid:

	Past	Present	Ideal
Sexual Attraction			
Sexual Attraction			
Sexual Behaviour			
Sexual Fantasies			
Emotional Preference			
Social Preference			
Self Identification			
Hetero/gay Lifestyle			

From the above, therefore, the scholars seem to suggest that sexual orientation is not dichotomous, but rather that it is complex and a continuum in each aspect. For that reason, scholars continue to develop a continuous view of sexual orientation as represented in Klein's grid. With the above in mind, I shall try to show the diversity in sexual orientation.

In the first place, Coleman (1988) wants to warn against the assumption currently made that sexual orientation is determined by one's gender or genitalia and the gender or genitalia of the individual one is attracted to. He challenges one to take cognizance of the fact that "many individuals are attracted to other individuals for reasons other than biological gender" (1988: 13).

He argues that humans and animal species have also shown that attraction can be based upon many dimensions. He quoted De Ceco [et al.] who have suggested a shift from defining orientation based upon one's genitalia to choices that are a reflection of one's personal attitudes

and expectations. He also quotes scholars like Ross who believe that there are a number of social variables, such as class, race, religion, income, and so forth, which may be important in the analysis of sexual relationships. Any of the variables could be of great importance also in partner choice, according to Ross.

According to Coleman, scholars like De Cecho and Shiverly have broadened the notion of sexual identity. They identify two important variables, namely, *gender* identity, and *social role* identity. "Gender identity refers to the individual's basic conviction of being male and female", which De Cecho and Shiverly claim is not necessarily contingent upon the individual's biological gender, as is the case with transsexuals. In this way, Coleman believes that gender can serve as the main criterion variable of sexual orientation (1988: 15).

Coleman goes on to state that a person's social sex-role is an important aspect of his overall identity, as he says: "Is the biological female with a male gender and social-role identity who is attracted to biological males with male gender and social sex-role identity a homosexual or heterosexual individual?" In this way, again, social sex-role could also be used as a criterion variable.

To illustrate his point, Coleman gives an example of a biological female with a predominantly male gender and social sex-role identity, who is attracted to males with male gender and social sex-role identities. The woman considered herself gay. "It is clear" as he says "from this vantage point that the labels homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual can only be meaningful in the context of, or with an understanding of, the other components of sexual identity" (1988: 15).

Coleman also quotes Bell and Weinberg, who reported on their extensive study of homosexuality that assessment of sexual orientation must take into account the fact that ways of being homosexual are diverse, and they include measures of self-concept such as self-identification, self-esteem, and self-acceptance (1988: 17).

Cass is also quoted as having divided identity into two, namely, one's *presented* identity, which is the individual's picture of self presented to others with regard to a specific defined category, and the individual's *perceived* identity, which is the image held by another about self with regard

to a specific identity. Cass also recognised that identity is a socially constructed concept and is therefore time and culture-bound.

And finally, Coleman wants one to be aware that sexual orientation is not static. It changes indefinitely in its complexity. He also points out that some developmental theorists who have defined various stages of identity development for homosexuals admitted that the models have had heuristic value and do not exactly conform to a definable reality. However, he states that, these models give the individual who is searching for identity integration some guidelines or directions towards progress (1988: 18).

Having established how a gay person acquires his sexual identity and diversity in sexual orientation, namely, through gender identity and social role identity, I shall now examine how his sexual identity affects the way in which he interacts with his family and community.

2.3 Gay support systems

2.3.1 Family support system

Isaacs (1992) quotes Erikson who asserts that roles grow out of the third principle of organisation, which is the *social* role. According to him people are organised into groups of geographical and historical coherence, namely, family, clan, community and nation. However, Isaacs argues that within the gay collective, a disparity between self-acceptance and external acceptance is found, and for that many gay people choose to live at some geographical distance from their immediate family in order to avoid conflict over their gay lifestyle. He claims that a lack of support from the family, caused by the reluctance of the gay person to discuss his sexual orientation issue, can preclude a sense of understanding. This separation from the family allows for unqualified support to the gay individual. This "closeted" behaviour may further inhibit him from sharing his joys, discoveries and pains with those who are supposed to be close to him, thereby depriving him of entering into honest, truthful and meaningful relationships in the future.

This lack of involvement with the family of origin, according to Isaacs, can distort the gay person's sense of reality, induce long-standing anger and resentment, and negate a form of free expression - a component necessary for congruent behaviour (1992: 24).

So, according to Woodman [et al.] (1980), as the young person begins to come to terms with his gay sexual-affection, the issue of sharing that awareness can and should be considered. Woodman argues that making a mutual decision will require that the general quality of the relationship between the gay individual and his parents be considered. "Coming out" at home is a crucial decision that risks the loss of support for basic human needs for which the gay person depends on the family, especially if this dependence is also financial.

Woodman outlines four factors (among others) that a gay individual must take into account before divulging his sexual identity to parents:

- (a) How comfortable the gay son is with his sexual identity.
- (b) How flexible and egalitarian the son-parents interaction is.
- (c) The capacity of the parents to deal with their son's sexual identity.
- (d) The parents' ability to respect the son's capacity to know that he is gay (1980: 80).

Fairchild and Hayward are quoted by Woodman (1980) as suggesting that parents of gay individuals can help their children in the following ways: parents should offer love, openness, and trust to their gay son. They should first of all be aware of the attitude they project towards him. For instance, they should avoid using "them" and "those" when referring to homosexuals; they should avoid establishing new restrictive regulations because this may convey distrust and discomfort; they should welcome their son's gay friends into the family's social interaction, especially his closest friend. Hence the next subsection is on the social or community's role in shaping a gay person's identity.

2.3.2 Community-based support system

Authors, according to Woodman, have stressed that gayness is a social identity that requires an appropriate supportive environment for validation. Gay people often complain of being unable to locate needed supports when they are encouraged to move into a broader social arena. The problem of prejudice towards gays in heterosexually oriented societies usually precludes meetings oriented toward gays or the creation of homosexual organisations. For example, the continued absence in many cities of Gay Alcoholics Anonymous groups. Gay men who are willing to acknowledge a problem with alcohol are reluctant to attend meetings in which they

cannot relate to heterosexist presentations (1980: 111).

The homosexual community in general need role models who do not reinforce images of heterosexism and homophobia. Education centres should make ethical commitments to reinforce positive dimensions of gay identity and to identify counselling issues related to this minority group.

Other sources of support could be university faculties which can have a far-reaching impact in eliminating myths and stereotypes if they do not perpetuate the image of fear and repression. The gay professional who has also "come out" can be a very important resource for the immediate gay community. Regardless of sexual-affectual preferences, all helping professionals must strive towards confronting homophobic attitudes and activities within their institutions and societies (1980: 114).

Informational resources such as libraries should be assessed to see if their educational materials are accurate, current and accessible. Woodman claims that, many individuals who are in the process of identifying themselves as gay turn first to these resources, and this investigation is most likely to occur alone. Sex education books should also be reviewed to ascertain whether homosexuality is considered objectively and informatively as a non-deviant sexual-affectual preference.

In summation, therefore, one realises that sexual identity is a very complex area. However, the moment of "coming out", or acknowledging one's sexuality is crucial in helping a gay person to adjust to his sexual identity. So the role of the family and the community at large is important in helping to shape the gay person's sexual identity in society.

I shall now investigate sexuality within the Christian context and how the Church's stance has affected the theatre in general, thereby restricting people within their particular contexts from achieving sexual and social integration.

2.4 Sexuality in the Christian Context

Most of the mainline Churches, which I have encountered are clear on their stance concerning the issue of drama and sexuality, which is that sexual expression in theatre [drama] is used as a commercial bait to attract larger audiences. Traditionally, the Catholic Church has taken harsher measures on the sins pertaining to sexuality rather than issues such as abuse of alcohol and drugs, and also oppression and exploitation. According to Noel, masturbation, premarital sex and homosexuality were viewed as "grave abuses of the sexual function" (Noel, 1980: 144)

Sexual expression in the Church today is still viewed as a taboo and only acceptable within the context of traditional marriage, and better still [the Catholics], for the purposes of procreation instead of enjoyment. Barish (1981) points out that historically, religious people such as Saint John Chrysostom, Tertullian and Saint Augustine felt that any involvement of Christians in theatre [drama] was evil because it brought about pleasure and a new level of frenzy. Crabb states:

In its need to exorcise the pagan past, the Christian church came to develop a fundamentally different approach to sex. The pagans acknowledged their sexuality - particularly its irrational aspects - by giving it a role in their everyday religion and art ... the church fathers sought to supplant paganism ... by castigating its irrational symptoms, such as abandonment, license, and orgy [by stating that] such irrational manifestations were portrayed as animal urges, unbecoming to the higher nature of man (in Day & Bloom, 1988: 50).

Concerning the Catholic Church's attitude towards sexual expression, Esslin points out that:

To deny a powerful erotic component in any dramatic experience would be foolish hypocrisy. Indeed, one of the theatre's - and all other drama's greatest claim is that it operates at the same time at all levels, from the most basic to the most sublime (Esslin, 1978: 34).

According to Noel (1980), the Roman Catholic Church's attitude towards sexual expression is not derived from Christ, but from medieval scholars. Christ was definitely more concerned with the most "basic". This was illustrated in his full human life. The church viewed sexual expression as evil, then Christ who was not evil, could not have indulged in evil activities. With regards to Christ's concern with the "basic", Harris states:

we might better appreciate Christ's ministry of grace if we were to reproduce in graphic detail on the mental stage of our imagination the cripples whom he touched and the underworld of prostitutes and sinners with whom he mixed (1990: 97).

The church has to rid itself of age old prejudices regarding drama and must come to terms with the fact that this medium can be used as a powerful tool for conscientisation, education and therapy to liberate gay people within the Christian context. It is through this medium that people can be taught to take responsibility for their own decisions (Burbridge and Watts, 1979) and those who seek the truth in all respects will find that their attempts to communicate the truth, irrespective of the medium through which it is communicated, will be honoured by God.

2.5 Conclusion

Thus far, Part 1 of this study has focussed primarily on the socio-religious patriarchal construction and history of gay men. The Church's unChristian stance and attitude on the biological origins of gender roles that are forced upon men, are challenged. Whilst the theoretical paradigm used in this research is based on discourses of essentialism, I have also relied heavily on discourses of social constructionism. For example, I shall attempt in the next chapter, to explore and explain Freire's construct of conscientisation and Boal's "theatre for the oppressed" method which seeks to deconstruct forms of socially constructed oppression - personal and relational. Drama is indeed a social construct but I believe that it can be constructed within a psychosystemic paradigm. Some of the ways in which the heterosexual and homosexual communities construct gay men's masculinity as studied by various gender specialists such as Segal(1990), Hopcke(1989) and Coleman(1988) have been explored. Once a gay person receives his sexual identity, within a psychosystemic paradigm, namely, through gender identity and social role identity, he may be able to interact with himself, his family, his community, God and the rest of the natural system in a more integrated and holistic way.

This leads us to the next section which deals with drama – a medium for education, conscientisation and therapy.

CHAPTER THREE

DRAMA AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION, CONSCIENTISATION AND THERAPY: KNOWING THEMSELVES AND MAKING THEIR PRESENCE KNOWN

Introduction

The capacity to express oneself creatively is one of the human characteristics which has been individually and corporately stifled because of the way in which culture constructs human functioning. This construction is brought about by the mediums through which one is educated, conscientised and integrated into society as well as the way in which one is sexualised.

In this chapter, I shall focus on the use of drama as a powerful educational, conscientising, and therapeutic medium. Firstly, I shall explore the use of educational drama and its dramatic strategies such as dramatic play, facilitation, building belief, and reflective evaluation for effective group work as researched and implemented by the following theorists among others: Bolton (1979); Wagner (1979; 1988); Morgan et al. (1987) and O'Toole (1987; 1992). Secondly, I shall explore community theatre as a tool to develop and empower oppressed people. Community theatre for oppressed gays shall be modelled along Freire's (1970) conscientising methodology and Boal's (1979) theatre for the oppressed approach. Special attention will be given to making theatre for the oppressed more Afro-centric and contextual. Finally, I shall investigate the use of drama as a therapeutic tool for gay black men, and in that way, hope to assist them towards achieving personal and social wholeness and integration as practised by Langley et al. (1983); Grainger (1990; 1995) and Jennings (1992; 1993; 1994).

3.1 Drama as a means of education

In educational drama terms, O'Toole and Haseman assert that

drama is a creative, purposeful and disciplined art. If it is worth doing, it is worth more than merely dabbling in. As the water gets deeper, so the person who has learnt to swim

is freer than the dabbler in the shallows (1987: 7).

3.1.1 Definition, aim and philosophy of educational drama

Educational drama which is therapeutic and liberating incorporates an experiential approach to learning. Active learning helps conscientise people, thus empowering both the individual and the group. When experiential learning takes place, the interaction between ourselves and the world results in a change in interpretation and possibly even in behaviour, and in increased autonomy and creativity. Unlike traditional approaches of education, learners are not controlled by a dominating educator but empowered by a democratic facilitator. This democratic, non-traditional method of education helps in the growth process and can lead to a change in understanding and insight in the learners. Besides helping to develop the learner so that he can take responsibility for his own values and emotions (Cranston, 1990), this process involves making discoveries about attitudes and grasping truths about human behaviour and its consequences.

O'Toole (1992: 3-4) describes educational drama "specifically as the form of dramatic activity centred on fictional role-taking and improvisation". He also argues that it is not necessarily "the whole corpus of work" which only takes place in educational institutions. Whether within or out of the school context, educational drama, through the use of various dramatic techniques and the provision of a dramatic context which involves them, will be able to provide participants with moments of intense experience from which they can explore issues, events and relationships which are of concern to them.

Dorothy Heathcote feels that educational drama is able to expand people's awareness by allowing them the opportunity of looking at reality through fantasy, and thus to see below the surface of actions to their meaning. She argues that educational drama is a "conscious employment of the elements of drama to educate, to bring about what [learners] already know but don't yet know they know" (in Wagner, 1979: 13).

Gavin Bolton (1979) suggests that the element of change must occur in appraisal or cognition in order to evoke a change in one's feeling or attitude. By tapping into the learner's knowledge, change can either occur temporarily or it can remain with the learner for a long time. Therefore,

each dramatic activity should aim for moments of real authenticity, choice and concern.

Concerning the value of drama in education, Morgan and Saxton argue that:

it is the most significant kind of learning which is attributable to experience in drama, it is a growth in the [learner's] understanding about human behaviour, themselves and the world they live in. This growth of understanding which involves changes in customary ways of thinking and feeling, is likely to be the primary aim in drama (1987: 38).

Thus, the aim of educational drama involves creating experiences for people to reflect upon critically. It is when one is able to relate the dramatic experience to one's personal understanding of life that real learning takes place. Unless people are given the opportunity to become actively involved in the drama, the experience will remain a mere external performance and not an inner reality. Piaget (1977) maintains that every time something is taught to the learner, his ability to invent things for himself is stifled. What one discovers on his own is bound to remain with him for the rest of his life.

Educational drama can be seen as an important and effective tool because its processes allow people to see the importance of values such as, responsibility, decision making, co-operation and so forth. In dramatic activity people are introduced to a simulated world in which they may gain experience and in which they may find strengths and skills which they possibly would not have known existed within them previously. People have the ability to see and experience a reality different from their own lives, which mirrors society, and in time, what they learn from this may help them cope with real life experiences in the future.

Educational drama makes use of dramatic imagination which is a vital aspect in human development. Courtney argues that dramatic imagination is at the centre of human creativity, therefore drama, if utilised as an educational tool, should aim to holistically develop every aspect of a person. Because educational drama has a social element to it, the group context that is created allows for more effective ways of helping individuals develop through the respecting and empowering of others within the group. In order for educational drama to be effective, it must begin from the individual's level of understanding and attempt to expand his experience and understanding in relation to people, originality and creativity, intuition and inner resourcefulness. Thus, it can be argued that the use of dramatic imagination can assist one towards holistic

development (Heathcote in Wagner, 1988; Bolton, 1979).

3.1.2 Using educational drama methodologies to identify areas of importance for gay people

The principle of outcomes based education is presently being implemented in the South African school systems. The outcomes-based (process) and not the content-centred approach of educating through drama seems to be a more effective means of experiential learning because the focus of this method of educating is not just cognitive but also emotional, drawing on the learner's innermost learning experiences.

Cattanach (1992: 65) draws our attention to the importance of understanding the "ethos" [context] from which the learners come. A basic knowledge and understanding of the learners' context, she believes, can help the educator integrate into the system with more ease and greater acceptance by the group itself. It is my contention that drama as a means of education can be a particularly useful tool for gay people who desperately seek respect and an appreciation from others. This desperation arises mainly from the negative social stigma that the general heterosexual community places upon gays based on religious and cultural myths concerning them. The experiential learning approach can help gay people to deal with their problems within the dramatic context in more practical ways which they can easily identify with. Within the gay context therefore, drama as an educational medium can help gay people to explore and examine a number of important concerns which affect them and others like themselves.

The following are areas of importance which can be examined with a gay theatre group:

- mutually share information concerning existing problems that are related to their sexual orientation;
- explore the groups' attitudes towards those within the group and also towards other gays and heterosexuals outside the group, engendering a better understanding of the myths and stereotypes that exist among them;
- allow participants to explore their identities in a dramatic environment that is both receptive and non-threatening;
- explore their full potential and to encourage belief in themselves and the

activities that they are engaged in;

- help participants with decision-making by developing critical thinking skills and a culture of questioning. By developing a sense of inner resourcefulness (the outcomes based education approach), they may apply learning, as well as critical thought, and a sense of inquiry to their gay experiences.

Addressing various areas of importance which affect gays is a positive step forward, but the following abilities and skills for empowerment which they can acquire and develop through the medium of drama, may be of equal importance to them:

- Creation of trust, honesty, openness and confidentiality within the group;
- Raising self-esteem to live according to one's own beliefs, through understanding and using the drama medium to share, explore and express their gay experiences;
- Communication, listening, questioning and negotiation skills;
- Empowering them with rich opportunities for language development;
- Promotion of assertiveness, to stand up for their rights against social oppression and discrimination;
- Exploration of problem-solving, where the group can work towards achieving their "ideal" situations, especially in the areas of culture, identity, sexuality and spirituality.

Before we look at the methodologies of educational drama within the theatrical context, I wish to focus briefly on Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs. Although the structure that follows may be hierarchical, it does not always have to operate strictly in the order in which it appears. People can be at different stages in the structure without having fulfilled the other steps to their full potential. At any given moment, a person's behaviour is determined by his strongest need. Some needs are more urgent than others, depending on the individual and his priorities. One needs to move from one step on the priority ladder to the next until self-actualization is reached. Self-actualization, according to Lewis and Streitfield is an "ongoing process" (1970: 157).

6. Self Actualization
5. Nature of Giving
4. Nature of loving
3. Status
2. Security
1. Shelter, Food, Clothing

The first priority for any human being is shelter and food. These are the basic necessities for survival. Once one has this, a person will need the security to know that what he has will not be taken away from him. Once these steps are achieved, one begins to develop emotional, psychological and material domains. Self-worth and esteem help one to accept and express love, and once one is loved and cared for, he can give love and care as well. Maslow argues that as soon as one is recognised by society, and can recognise people around one, a person has reached the level of self-actualization. This is the point at which one can make clear active and positive steps to realise one's full potential, in a way that is not harmful to oneself or to others.

Maslow (1970) points out that people who are psychologically mature are those who have reached self-actualization. He also discovered that self-actualised people were more natural, spontaneous, emotionally open, autonomous, appreciative of life, creative, and accepting of others. Self-actualised people, he believed, have deep spiritual and philosophical insights and often delight themselves with artistic enjoyment and inspiration.

Unfortunately, for most gay people, even though they may hope to reach this level of self-actualization, this may not come to pass. The main reason being that because of rejection from society on the grounds of sexual orientation, a gay person can withdraw into his own "world", thereby depriving himself of developing holistically. A lack of self-esteem and confidence in himself may create a barrier for effective relationships to develop, which can leave him in an alienated, lonely and depressed state of mind. In view of the above, I believe that this is where drama can assist gay people towards self-actualization.

3.1.3 Educational drama strategies

The affirming nature of drama is that it can see people as experts on their own lives, starts off from what they already know, and allows them to work at their own pace. It offers one a chance to explore, to gain confidence, and to achieve enjoyment in learning. As a result, one can be less afraid to take risks and can experience achievement and accomplishment. Above all, one is encouraged to solve problems, either individually or co-operatively, and to seek ways in which to find the information, skills and understanding which one does not yet possess.

Drama challenges people to extend their possibilities. Very often a person will perform at a level of what is expected of him, and if the facilitator's expectations of him is low, he will not be encouraged to extend himself beyond those. The drama context provides a safe environment and at the same time encourages one to take responsibility for moving the drama forward, and to take risks. In most cases participants will be able to contribute intelligently to the process of the work in a non-threatening way. Self-actualization is reached faster when people are affirmed, encouraged, supported and extended.

3.1.3.1 Dramatic play

Dramatic activity is firmly rooted in the natural behaviour of play, which is a normal way of exploring and conquering one's world, developing skills and nurturing the growth of one's personality.

Huizinga (1970), the Dutch social historian, argues in his book *Homo Ludens* that adults also need play, not only for recreational purposes, but as an important ingredient of a satisfactory lifestyle. The reason for this is that formal education, the nature of people's work today and the expectations of society suppress one's innate capacity for playfulness, thus stifling one's creativity which could benefit society as a whole. For most gays whom I have interviewed, a loss of their childhood (being different from others), for example gay boys would usually alienate themselves from playing "normal boys'" games and because of embarrassment from others, they made deliberate decisions not to play at all. Creating opportunities through drama can help release true inner emotions in a safe and non-threatening environment.

The sense of pleasure, fun and excitement that comes with new learning is important for a person's capacity to grow. These positive feelings within a person often give rise to new challenges of self-confidence and resourcefulness. People, thus stimulated (Bernstein, 1971) can approach new situations with an exploratory, searching and experimenting attitude. Bernstein argues that a good deal of both learning and enjoyment can emerge from social aspects of play where one can learn to play co-operatively with others according to set rules. In pledging with others, one learns that one is not only an individual but also part of a larger society. A wider culture of expressiveness provides opportunities for fun and a greater chance of broadening one's experiences through play.

It is through play that self-esteem, co-operation, discipline, physical awareness, compassion, and so on, are practised. Play moves one towards exploration, fantasy, experimentation and creativity. In its most extreme, play can become creative work which is a disciplined technique of artistic expression. It also creates a spirit of power and balance in the lives of people.

According to educational drama theorists Heathcote (1980; 1984), Bolton (1979) and Wagner (1988) play can be characterised by the following features: it is voluntary and self-initiated, and helps to free people from threats and needs. Motivation in play is contained within the pleasure or the challenge of the activity. Play is governed by rules, which the group often make and agree to abide by while they move between dramatic fantasy and reality. Play can also act as a temporary reliever of frustration, and as a long term therapeutic process because it focuses more on the process rather than the product of the activity (Valente and Fontana, 1994). Problem solving is usually met in play with calm and pleasure. Play improves people's concentration levels and enhances their creativity and learning because their concern is with engaging in the present activity and not in achieving a particular goal.

Psychologists Erikson (1950, 1968), Johnson (1991), Piaget (1962; 1977), Freud (1908, 1958) and Bruner et al. (1976) add that play allows for experimentation with others and the world they live in, providing one with opportunities to develop strong egos and higher confidence levels. They agree that play provides a safe outlet for intense emotions such as aggression. Play also develops individual and group competency and it has the potential of using up surplus energy.

Yawkey (1980) points out that play helps in the development of one's self concept. One's concept of self determines how one perceives and evaluates experiences (ours and others). All these experiences contribute to one's sense of belonging, worth, competence and achievement. This view of self is in line with Maslow's (1968) theory of self-actualization and Bowen's (1994) natural systems theory because it determines the way in which we relate to ourselves and others.

Dramatic play, as Jennings (1990) points out, is important in that it involves representation and role-play, and provides imaginary situations which are removed from real life consequences. Learning takes place through a process of imitation, identification and exploration in a non-threatening environment. However, she believes that effective engagement in the dramatic activity requires trust, a non-judgmental attitude, the right to withdraw, emotional support and affirmation, and a respect for diverse responses.

Jennings (1990) describes three developmental stages of play which are: embodiment play, projective play and role play. Embodiment and projective play are important for one's holistic development. I will briefly highlight what these types of play entail and will focus more on role-play which I believe provides a starting point for action and a place for spontaneous input (Chesner, 1994) and is essential to consider, as without it drama would not exist (Jennings, 1994).

A. Embodiment Play

This stage of play includes exploration through one's basic senses and other experiences of the immediate sensory world. These experiences become the foundation of one's sense of self and others whom one relates to. It is my intention to allow the members of my drama group the opportunity to regress to their early childhood experiences of play so that they may connect with the child within them. Most of the gays that I have already spoken to have expressed a need to be themselves and to get in touch with their inner beings. Regaining their past through embodiment play can help release them in a safe and liberating environment.

B. Projective Play

Projective play usually develops as one explores the world of objects external to oneself. From this, symbolic play arises. Through the exploration and investigation of objects in play, one learns that objects can replicate real things in the real world. This develops from using simple

play such as using stones, shells and sticks to play a game or to create a story. At a later stage, one will be able to use imaginary objects which are not present to mime an activity. One will also be able to use whatever props are available and transform these to suit one's purpose. For example, a chair can become a queen's throne, a broom stick, her sceptre, and a hat or an ordinary piece of fabric, her crown. Through this process, one learns that objects can have symbolic meaning and this world too can thus have more sense and meaning.

C. Role Play

It is common for children to play pretence games, initially with self-representation and later pretend to be someone else whom they are familiar with. This type of play immediately engages one in role-play. Some people who lack imagination and good verbal skills because of negative childhood experiences hardly get a chance to reach this level of dramatic engagement.

Concerning role-playing, the following theorists view it as follows; Grainger (1990) focuses on the absorbed, ecstatic, ritualistic aspects of role, Johnson (1988) considers the nature of role in terms of therapeutic potentials of transformation, Jennings (1987) stresses the importance of developing the [participant's] range of roles, and Landy (1994) views role as the primary component of healing in the dramatic medium.

Role-play uses play and its principles to inform its action. It can help in the process of coping with daily experiences and also in creating new learning experiences (Jennings, 1994). In our everyday lives we take on roles, be it a worker, partner, brother or friend. According to Pendzik, "entering a role means getting out of myself to meet someone else; exiting a role means returning to myself enriched from the meeting" (Jennings 1997: 228). The different roles we take on are ways of coping within the context in which we find ourselves. Role drama uses a particular imaginary context to provide a structure for individual and group exploration. This allows one the freedom to understand certain social situations, or one can experience what it feels like to be in someone else's shoes.

Role-play also encourages creativity, where one is able to create a persona that is not necessarily present in the real world. These personas are imaged through the use of body, voice language and thoughts. One is able to bring into existence a "character" which does not need to be acted out as in theatre, but rather takes the form of the participant speaking and feeling within a new frame

of reference.

Taking on a role involves identifying with a particular set of values and attitudes, which may not necessarily be one's own, for example, being the all-embracing god who dwells in this unjust world. One of the advantages of using the role-play technique with a group of gay black men is that it can provide a balance between experiencing and reflecting on their experiences. When experiencing different roles as in role-play, participants will be able to distance themselves from self and immerse themselves in the other (O'Neill, 1994). In this way, a participant will be able to see how it would be if he were his mother or father and how they would handle their gay son's "coming out." At the same time he may realise that he is not his mother or father. Upon reflection, it may be possible for him to gain a new awareness of what his parents may be going through, thus, he may empathetically seek to understand them from a more sensitive perspective.

Being in role, however, can never allow the one enroled to function exactly as the person one is enroled as. For example, a participant taking the role of his mother, could never be his mother. He may try to behave like her, but he will never be exactly like her. Thus, no matter how hard he tries to get into his mother's role, it will not be one hundred percent real. However, he can try to see things through his mother's eyes and to be like her. Therefore, as Landy (1994) argues, one can achieve aesthetic distance by maintaining a balance between identifying with and believing the role he is playing.

Role-playing does not demand elaborate costumes or props. It just needs the simple and honest portrayal of creative individuals who will be willing to commit themselves to the dramatic activity. Within this dramatic improvisational context, one must expect the unexpected, the unpredictable, and be prepared for elements of surprise. Role-play increases one's ability to co-operate and interact with others in the group. It also encourages self-exploration, co-operation and effective interaction with others (Bernstein, 1971).

If play is a way of making sense of the world, then why not find ways of making play happen for people who find it difficult to fathom this world they are living in?

3.1.3.2 Facilitation

A. Skills and attitudes of the facilitator

Trauth states that:

Recent empirical research in theatre [suggests that the way in which a facilitator chooses to communicate with his group, influences the nature of his relationship with the participants]. Furthermore the type of relationship established between [facilitator and participant] may affect the socio-emotional atmosphere (in Lundrigan, 1986: 279).

It is therefore important to establish a democratic working environment with the right atmosphere and stimulus for participants to effectively engage themselves in the planned activities and also where everyone in the group will be treated as equals and their aspirations encouraged. This may lead to a trusting and co-operative group process. Proper facilitation aims to help participants move towards greater involvement in the dramatic activities. Hopefully, participants will move out of the workshop context into their communities and apply their new learning to real life experiences.

The facilitator should ideally participate in the planned activities as well and at the same time monitor the group experience either from within or from outside the drama. His democratic involvement in the group must be a form of releasing power to the group. It should also be a form of breaking conventional "group leader" methods which most people are familiar with because of their previous education which restricted their full self-expression. Freire (1970) calls this the "banking system", where the traditional teacher deposits knowledge into the learner.

In the past, people were continuously told what they should do and how they should do it. Society has imposed non-participatory methods of communicating and relating to one another. Power has been in the hands of those at the top for too long. In theatre workshops, especially theatre that is designed for oppressed groups of people, the facilitator must ensure that there is a democratic balance of power. From experience, it has become evident that when one becomes engaged in one's own growth and decision-making processes, one learns to take responsibility for one's own learning and have the courage to be autonomous.

In manner, tone, thought and body language, the facilitator should communicate genuine courage and strength to the group. In order to be able to accept the group of individuals, it is essential that the facilitator should come to grips with prevailing issues or else, more pain and hurt can be caused to already existing "open wounds". The group needs to know that together, they need not be afraid of dealing with issues at hand. The facilitator must desire to help and not manipulate or control the group from an authoritarian perspective. He should also help enable participants to take action in their own lives.

The role of the facilitator is not about telling, lecturing, or teaching his belief systems and attitudes to the participants but of providing resources and structures for participants to explore, learn and develop. He is also there to encourage participants to discover talents and skills which they already possess and to help them to develop these. The facilitator does not require great acting skills but requires the ability to adopt a set of attitudes. This will no doubt have an impact upon developing relationships with the facilitator and the group. These attitudes refer to the beliefs, values, opinions and understanding of the facilitator. The individual's need for autonomy within the group and the facilitator's belief in the value and worth of the group is fundamental for effective healing drama-work. It requires a seriousness and commitment in order that one may be focussed and able to "think on one's feet". The facilitator must be willing to work alongside group members and to engage them in the planned activities.

It is the facilitator's responsibility to demonstrate through example and attitude that all participants have dignity and equal worth. There needs to be a clear sense of mutual vulnerability and humanness on the side of the facilitator and the participants. It is important for the facilitator to act as a catalyst for group development in order to promote holistic growth and integration.

B. The facilitator's responsibilities

If the group perceives the facilitator as someone who knows it all and who is in total control, they may feel that there is no need to bring about change in the group (Winn, 1994: 65). This kind of situation may slow down any progress towards self-actualization. Participants must be made aware that they are responsible for their own actions and behaviour.

Gersie and King (1990) suggest the following responsibilities of a facilitator:

- setting and keeping space and time boundaries;
 - ensuring that the task assigned to the group is completed in accordance with the given structure;
 - introducing and instructing in a way that encourages group responses;
 - creating a "judgement-free" environment;
 - encouraging and supporting each participant's development;
 - helping participants to connect across boundaries of time and experience;
 - structuring a process of reflection where participants can arrive safely at the end;
 - ensuring that everyone's contributions are appropriately acknowledged
- (Gersie et al. 1990: 308-9).

C. Facilitator in role

One of the advantages for the facilitator of working in role is that the facilitator will be able to view experiences and learning occurrences with the group. Working from a middle/lower status is useful if one wants to maintain a democratic group. The facilitator can take on a role where he plays ignorant and pretends that he does not know all the answers thereby getting the group to take on roles of "experts". Thus, the facilitator can challenge and "control" the drama from a democratic perspective which will empower the group and himself to move into new understanding with the group. This technique also helps the group to express its views freely within the safety of their roles because the facilitator is not in an authoritarian role like a traditional high status teacher. In this way, even the group can challenge and question the facilitator in role.

The disadvantage of working in role is that role changes may be a little confusing to the group. Participants may sometimes be reluctant to see the facilitator in another role. Thus, the seriousness of the drama may be lost. The advantage of this method however, is that it frees one from the usual relationship with the group and encourages fresh responses. It allows the facilitator to control the process from within and the group to take on responsibility, and to freely express themselves whilst in role, which is an effective way of reflecting on the drama.

Facilitator in role is a proven way of working with groups in order that they feel more comfortable with the facilitator and the issues that are to be explored.

3.1.3.3 Building belief

It is crucial that the group to be fully engaged in the drama and in order for this to be effective, belief needs to be built. The group through a negotiation process needs to agree upon the place, time and circumstance of the drama that they intend engaging themselves in, and also work together towards the same problem-solving goal. Dramatic tension which simply means "mental excitement", according to the Oxford Dictionary, is an important element in building belief. The main task is to

lead the group to a cliff edge and then leave them there. They must struggle to find their own way back to safety. This is where the excitement in drama lies, where energy is released to power the [group] forward to new discoveries (Wagner, 1979: 148-9).

The use of theatre elements can often help to lead people to the "cliff edge", thereby helping them to build belief in what they are doing. For example, miming actions such as taking on the movements of different people or animated objects, or working in the kitchen using imaginary props, can help build belief. Using props and costumes and concrete objects such as scarves and hats and so on helps to intensify the level of belief that is being built and also helps them to use their imaginations. Enroling is also an effective technique used for building belief because it exposes people to different situations and experiences, especially if their experience of the world is limited. The enroling technique helps build empathy for the roles which people take on, thus helping people to identify more easily with people in other contexts. For instance, a group of gay men who are enrolled as judgmental police officers will understand the police officers' actions in a new light. These are a few basic and successful methods which help to build belief.

3.1.3.4 Reflection and Evaluation

The facilitator needs to constantly determine the quality of the individual's experience, that is, whether any learning is taking place or not. The kind of learning experience that may take place may relate to change in understanding or of learning skills or facts. It is important to remember

that some participants will be more actively involved than others in the group and will reveal the quality of their responses through verbal contributions. Reflection may take place at various stages in the drama and in various forms. Alternative methods of reflection such as reflective drawings, sculptures, keeping journals, small group discussions and so on should be encouraged to gauge what learning has taken place for those who find it difficult to verbalize their thoughts and emotions.

Evaluation is important in that the facilitator can find out what kind of learning has occurred in the group, thus he can therefore make proper judgements about what has been achieved. However, Hornbrook (1989) is one of the few theorists who challenges the methodology of drama as a learning medium. He argues that dramatic methodologies cannot guarantee educational standards. O'Neill and Lambert (1982) also point out that because dramatic learning is often an inner experience for the learner, the educator has to rely on external, visible behaviour in order to evaluate the learning experience.

Constant evaluation of each drama session will help the facilitator to improve his facilitation skills and practices. He can use the evaluations obtained from previous group-work as a basis for preparing future work and should ideally evaluate his own facilitation, the drama activity, and the progress and achievement of the group. By reflecting on previous dramatic activities the facilitator can gain a greater understanding of the experience. Experience is not always in itself productive or unproductive. It is how the experience is reflected on that makes it significant or not.

I believe that the implementation of various drama techniques in educational-therapeutic group-work with gay people can be very useful and successful because participants do things in the "here and now" context, thereby deepening their learning experiences. In our country where intolerance and a lack of understanding concerning gays is still evident, education should be aimed at conscientising and healing gays with the intention of integrating both heterosexuals and homosexuals and at the same time, assisting them in achieving individual and communal wholeness.

This leads us to the following section on community theatre and its methodologies as an ideal medium for conscientisation, which I believe, cannot be divorced from drama that aims to educate.

3.2 Drama as a means of conscientisation

In this section I will explore community theatre as a tool to develop, empower and conscientise, based mainly on the philosophies and methodologies of Freire (1970) and Boal (1985; 1995; 1998). Approaches to the empowerment of gay black men will be identified.

3.2.1 Development and empowerment

Many theorists have used the term "development" in different situations. I would like to think of the term "development" as Kibuka explains it:

Social development makes people the focus of development effort and seeks to develop their potential in a total sense. It embraces programmes and activities that should enhance the capabilities of all members of society to adequately fulfil existing and changing social rules and expectations, and accomplish the various goals they have set for themselves (Kibuka, 1985: 19).

It is my belief that empowerment cannot be separated from development. The Concise Dictionary defines the word empowerment as "to bestow power upon, to authorize, license a person to do something, to gain or assume power" (The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 7th ed. Oxford Press 1982).

Education is a source of empowerment which opens up many opportunities for people to succeed in life. If the marginalised and the oppressed are given the proper resources and support systems, they may have a chance of experiencing an independent and empowered life. Marginalised people are usually placed in a derogatory position which limits normal opportunities.

Community theatre is designed to help empower marginalised and oppressed people. Boal (1985) refers to this kind of theatre (which is a participatory, learning activity) as 'theatre for the oppressed'. Participatory theatrical activity involves people who are engaged in theatre and also those who are not. Like educational drama, various methods and techniques such as role-play, simulation games and improvisation are used to explore real-life experiences which participants select for dramatisation. Community theatre involves participation and engagement of both body and mind, and I prefer to add spirit /soul. It is through active engagement that people begin to

commit themselves to drama which helps them realize the problems they are facing. Through this experiential involvement, one looks for alternative ways of solving one's problems. Byram argues

theatre, of course, is rooted in the oral traditions of the oppressed, and it is this that helps to make it such a powerful medium in terms of their own self- realization and development (Byram, 1985: 1).

Increasingly, more emphasis seems to be placed on theatre that develops and empowers in South Africa. There also seems to be a change in the attitude of people towards using theatre forms such as community theatre and educational drama which is fitting in our new democratic South African context (Mda, 1993; Dalrymple, 1987).

Chapter one, paragraph thirteen of the *Draft White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* deals with the Bill of Rights of the constitution which states that:

Everyone has the right to freedom of expression; which includes freedom of artistic creativity (par. 16) in the language and culture of their choice.

The document raises an important issue of the arts having a vital role to play in nation-building, democratic development and healing through the promotion of reconciliation in South Africa. Indeed, the dramatic arts can play a major role in altering our country's present system by creating opportunities for people, both those with heterosexual and homosexual orientations, to work together in an experiential and participatory way.

3.2.2 Towards a relevant African theatre

The Ghanaian actor and playwright de Graft has defined the function of community in social therapeutic terms as

ritual drama through which participants seek such desired social effects as social solidarity, or through which they attempt to re-affirm, keep alive, or commemorate such facts, beliefs, relationships and attitudes as the community considers vital to its sanity and continued healthy existence (1976: 7).

In a sense, this can be true of many gay people, both those who are 'closeted' and those who are openly gay, who try by all means to hold on to anything that will give them purpose and meaning in life within their context of oppression. It is equally important for them to identify with and to maintain some kind of communal solidarity with other gay people, and this has (according to the respondents whom I interviewed) been in existence for a long time.

African theatre according to Mugo has "a very immediate, spontaneous and participatory style", where "historical and cultural experiences become communal" (1990: 116). Traditional African theatre is a communal theatre which involves (Nkosi, 1993: 120) "as many members of the community as possible in the unfolding of the drama."

Kavanagh suggests that black theatre:

is a theatre with a new mind whose mechanism works at redirecting it to the rich treasury of black civilization wherein lies the truth and wisdom of Africa. It is a theatre of the people who seek to discover and re-establish their civilization (1981: XVIII).

From a more pedagogic perspective, Rugyendo (1973: 17-18) believes that theatre in Africa has been un-African, foreign and almost irrelevant in the past. Thus, he suggests, that more emphasis should be placed on making theatrical art forms more Afro-centric which can be tried out by Africans themselves. Soyinka celebrates the holistic approach of the African theatre which he believes displays a "primal simultaneity of art-forms in a culture of total awareness and phenomenal involvement" (1988: 25) in comparison to the fragmented Western theatre.

Concerning revolutionary theatre which I consider to be an extreme form of theatre for the oppressed, Soyinka asserts that whether it be on a social or spiritual level,

the matrix of creativity ... embraces all times -both in individual and communal effectiveness - the regenerative potential of society. And it is not the immediate definable or tangible but the inherent potential of society - technological, political, artistic, etc. - that constitutes the totality of a people's culture (1988: 60).

Soyinka seems to believe that the regenerating potential of people within the community context can give rise to a progressive transformation of a society.

In trying to create a relevant theatre, Manaka (1980) claims that there is no need for

entertainment [theatre] that would be irrelevant to black man's bone of contention. They need no entertainment [theatre] that shall not respond to the call of freedom's cry (1980: 29).

What he firmly believes is that theatre needs to grow out of the lives of the people concerned by providing them with physical, emotional and spiritual resources.

3.2.3 Freire's Philosophy and methodology

Experimental theatre has become a popular form of theatre in South Africa. These experiments have been influenced mainly by the writings of Latin Americans Paulo Freire (1970) and Augusto Boal (1985). Their approach is popular because of its positive development process of educating and conscientising people. Freire's concept of *conscientisation* helps people to discover ways of looking at their problems in terms of social structures within which they live. I have deliberately chosen to focus on Freire's philosophy and methodology because Boal draws on Freirian methodology and further extends and develops it in the area of theatre. Also, both the works of Freire and Boal seem to incorporate not only the concept of conscientisation but also the concepts of education and therapy to some extent.

(A) Philosophy

Both Bowen (1994) and Freire (1970) argue that even though we have some commonalities with the animal kingdom, we humans, unlike animals which rely on instinct, can reflect, analyze and learn from our experiences. We have the ability to distance ourselves from our actions, critique the picture before us, and then plan for the situation arising from that context and act upon it. Both believe that, in order to act freely, one must be able to look at one's world critically. By this they mean that both critical awareness and critical evaluation are just as important. In the first instance, the individual is able to describe what he sees, while in the second he is able to evaluate its relative importance, to make comparisons with other situations, and to formulate concrete responses. What is important here is the relationship between the participant and his perception of the situation. Hence, oppression for example refers to the situation itself, but also the perception of the situation by the oppressed. This perception like everything else is learned and can consequently be moulded for both humanizing or de-humanizing purposes. The barriers to

freedom, asserts Freire, are a product of both the oppressor and the oppressed alike.

According to Freire, the oppressed "play host to the oppressor". I wish to include gay oppression in this section for the purpose of this research. Many gays "play host to heterosexuals" :

- 1) by accepting their role as the oppressed, rather than rejecting it;
 - 2) by identifying with the aspirations and values of the oppressor;
 - 3) by accepting the opinions which the oppressor holds of the oppressed;
 - 4) by deifying the oppressor and endowing him with magical powers beyond their own reach;
 - 5) by seeing themselves as a "thing" or an "object" owned by the oppressor;
 - 6) by expressing aggression against their own kind and by denying their ability to strike out against the oppressor;
 - 7) by opposing any changes which may threaten the ability of the oppressor to protect them because of their established dependency upon the oppressor;
 - 8) by sanctifying the entire relationship and by making God responsible for the world, and human beings mere instruments of God's will
- (Freire, 1970: 49-51).

The aim of Freire's conscientisation methodology is to alter the above relationship by trying to get the oppressed to change his behaviour. Freire points out that a deep conscientisation of one's situation will lead one to understand one's situation as a historical reality susceptible to change or transformation.

Freire makes a dichotomy between the oppressor and the oppressed to explain how he feels. According to him, the oppressor [like the heterosexual] is active, initiator, authoritative and dominant, while the oppressed [homosexual] is passive, follower, meek and fully the "object" of the learning process (Freire, 1970: 59). Freire opposes the "banking model of education", and offers the problem-posing model instead, as one option open to individuals interested in a liberating education.

The first task of this model is to dispose of the dichotomy between dominant and passive; both becoming actors in a process of mutual communication. Freire sees no distinction between those who know and those who do not. All participants come to practice freedom, and consequently

come to learn from what he calls the *praxis*. According to him, therefore, the methodology of problem-posing education is questions and not answers. His methodology offers open-ended questions with answers resulting from a free individual's critical exploring of the situation (Freire, 1970: 67-68). Freire argues that it is impossible to liberate the uneducated by prescribing education because liberating education is the practice of freedom.

(B) Methodology

According to Freire (1970), the first element of dialogue is the functional application of the problem-posing model of education to a group, for it presupposes the existence of certain basic attitudes and qualities of the educator. For instance, love, faith, mutual trust, hope and critical thinking are Freire's pre-requisites for the establishment of a liberating relationship between the educator and the oppressed learner. Education becomes the *praxis* (practice) of freedom. Both the oppressed and the educator come together democratically in a common search for liberation through mutual action. Freire believes that authentic education is carried on by the educator and the oppressed ("A" with "B") and not "A" for "B" or "A" about "B" (Freire, 1970: 82).

The second essential element of dialogue is education that originates from the people's context. It requires that the researcher [educator/facilitator] spend time locally, interviewing the target group during various phases of their activity. He should constantly evaluate the progress that people make and see if their contributions and findings are consistent or not. Gaining a general knowledge of the community's level of awareness is also crucial for the understanding and evaluation process. For example, the researcher can try and find out why heterosexual people have more privileges than gay people. This would require him to get as much background information as possible from the "oppressed" group and also from the "oppressive" group if possible.

Any injustices or oppression picked up by the researcher can be transformed into codes. These codes are supposed to be visual (e.g. a picture of hands behind prison bars, a group of people raising their fists up in the air together or a person hiding behind a veil or a mask). Codes must be appropriate for the group and sufficiently ambiguous so as not to propagandise the participants.

The next step, is a small group process where participants are shown the picture codes and asked

a sequence of increasingly critical questions concerning them. If the participants are able to discern the intended contradictions, and generate the new ones through the decoding process, then the codes are considered functional. These initial sessions begin the process of *conscientização* by confronting the participants with a reality they may not have seen previously.

A number of such decodification sessions will produce common themes, for example, gay oppression and discrimination on the basis of one's sexual orientation. Participants will explore these themes together and will try to generate meaning for them. These codification groups are the fundamental organisational unit in Freire's method, and they exemplify the essential tenets of his approach, summarised as follows:

- (A) The relationship between the learner and the educator must be based on mutual respect and openness.
- (B) The content of education must come from the learner's experience and grow outward, rather than being imposed from the outside and later internalised.
- (C) The methods of education must pose open-ended problems related to the basic contradictions of life rather than providing standard answers to universally abstract problems (Freire, 1970: 101-8).

(C) Relevance of simulation games

On the basis of these above three tenets, the relevance of simulation / games as a possible instrument of *conscientização* is being formed. A simulation in Freire's conscientisation context is a game which attempts to replicate some real-life, abstract or hypothetic experience for the purpose of research, amusement, [or, I would suggest, healing]. For example, trust or ensemble building games employed by black gay men can help them to connect with other gays on a level of social acceptance. This would mean that there would still be hope for them to overcome feelings of loneliness and rejection. Thus, it can be said that a simulation game is a special kind of learning experience for those engaged in it.

Freire's prerequisite for problem-posing models of education imposes impossible limitations on most traditional forms of educational methodologies. The task of engaging people, especially those who have had no previous drama experience can be quite a challenge. Therefore, Freire's liberating educational methodology can be implemented with success, provided this

methodology is adapted for use in different contexts.

3.2.4 Theatre of the oppressed

3.2.4.1 From Freire to Boal: Boal's extension and development of Freire's ideas into community theatre.

Boal (1998) extends and develops the Freirian transitivity of true teaching and argues that learning should be a two way process. He believes that both the teacher and the pupil, even though they differ from one another can learn from one another through democratic dialogue. When the process of dialogue ceases and is replaced by monologue, whereby one, instead of two people are given the right to speak, "other parties are reduced to silence, to obedience; they are the oppressed (1998: 129).

Boal draws on Freire's belief that the illiterate are

perfectly literate in the languages of life, of work, of suffering, of struggle, and all that they need to learn is how to translate into marks on paper that which they already know, from their daily lives (1998: 128).

Concerning the illiterate, Boal asserts that they are not necessarily those who cannot express themselves, but rather, people who are "unable to express themselves in a particular language". With this in mind, Boal based his theatre work on two principal aims, namely:

1. to teach literacy in both the first language and second language without discrediting or abandoning either one;
2. to teach literacy in all possible languages, especially theatre as a language, using puppetry, film and drama (Boal, 1985: 121).

According to Boal, Freire's method of conscientisation teaches one to know and to respect various diversities in others, for by merely engaging in dialogue, "the two of us gain, teacher and pupil, since we are all pupils, and all teachers. I exist because they exist" (1998: 129). Once again, one can see the parallel between the African concept of ubuntu and Freire's argument that people are interdependent on each other.

Using Freire's pedagogy, Boal proposes dialogue, interaction and change in his book Theatre of the oppressed, claiming that everyone, be it pupils or teachers, citizens or spectators, should be viewed as subjects as opposed to objects in an undemocratic and hierarchical society where the ruling class made distinct separations between themselves and the working class.

Boal's focus on using theatre as a language was founded on his belief that any and every person is capable of using theatre as a language of self-expression, whether or not they possessed any artistic talent. By using this "theatre as language" approach, Boal argues that it "can be placed at the service of the oppressed", and in so doing, the subject can also discover new concepts.

Boal draws on Brecht's proposition, where the spectator delegates power to the character, who acts out what the spectator dictates, but the spectator has the right to think and to make sense of the actions for himself. In this way, "an awakening of critical consciousness" occurs.

Adding a new dimension to Brecht's proposition, Boal proposes that the spectator himself takes on the protagonic role, "changes the dramatic action, tries out solution, discusses plans for change - in short, trains himself for real action" (1985: 122). Thus, this type of theatre is known as a rehearsal for future action, even to the point of a revolution. In revolutionary terms, Boal refers to the theatre as a weapon which should be utilized by the people themselves.

3.2.4.2 Boal's methodology in Community Theatre

Boal outlines the following four stages for transforming the spectator into an actor:

Stage one: Knowing the body

In this stage, people are sensitively encouraged to use that which they are most familiar with - their bodies. Through a series of relevant and appropriate exercises, they are able to discover their bodies and their limitations and possibilities. And because theatre may appear foreign to some people, Boal suggests that the initial "knowing the body" stage should deliberately avoid the imposition of theatrical techniques and theatre language that most people are unfamiliar with. This stage should aim at raising people's levels of consciousness with regards to their bodies and their capabilities.

From Boal's examples of disjunctive exercises, the following two stand out as unconventional but effective exercises:

- slow motion race, aimed at getting participants to run as slowly as they can, and at the same time try to maintain their balance at various levels of movement, without standing still at any point in the race. The last participant who reaches the finishing line is the winner.
- hypnosis, aimed at getting participants to assume different bodily positions from those they are familiar with in their daily lives.

The maintenance of a creative and democratic atmosphere is important at every stage. One way of getting participants to further commit themselves to the planned activities is by asking them to describe their experience of the activity they were involved in or to contribute any exercises which they knew of and which they felt were relevant to the present activity. An acknowledgement and interest in participants' contributions will further encourage them to engage themselves more fully in future activities (1985: 126-130).

Stage two: Making the body expressive

This stage focuses on developing the body to be more expressive. In most cases, people are used to verbal expression only, which leaves the body's ability to express itself in an undeveloped state. Like stage one, a series of exercises can help participants to use their bodies for self-expression. Participants are encouraged to focus on play instead of interpreting the characters whom they play. Here too, participants should be encouraged to create other exercises / games of similar appropriateness. These exercises should not be aimed at competitively reaching correct answers or solutions, but should focus on participants trying to use their bodies to express their characters. An example of this could be, trying to get participants to show that they are different animals in search of their mates, without making any animal sounds or verbal communication. Without realizing it, participants will be engaged in what is known to us as "dramatic performance" (1985: 130-1).

Stage three: The theatre as language

Unlike stages one and two, which focuses on the knowledge and use of participants' bodies, this stage is the actual practice of theatre as a language for the oppressed. Boal uses three forms of theatre, namely:

* **Simultaneous Dramaturgy**

In this type of dramaturgy, a short rehearsed scene which deals with a theme / issue that affects the spectators present is presented. The scene is developed to the point where the protagonist has to make a decision. When this crisis point is reached, the audience are asked to provide possible solutions. On stage, the performers would improvise each of the suggestions provided by the audience. Thus, the discussion itself is not made in verbal form, but in theatrical form, and this process happens simultaneously. This form of theatre usually breaks down the barrier that exists between the conventional actor and spectator. The actor must be willing to change his actions almost simultaneously without protesting, while the spectator has the right and the freedom to give his version of a solution in its "bare-truth" form (1985: 132-4).

* **Image Theatre**

This form of theatre requires more direct participation from the spectator. The spectator expresses his views on a common theme or issue. The participant is asked to express his opinions in a non-verbal form, that is, in theatrical form, whereby he sculpts the bodies of other participants in the group. The group sculpture should reveal his opinions on the issue at hand. Only after the sculpture is made, can he (the spectator-sculptor) verbally question the others concerning his opinion. The sculpture can be modified in part or as a whole. When the group reaches an agreement on their sculptured image as being a good enough portrayal of their problem, the spectator-sculptor is asked to construct the following three images:

- a) the actual image
- b) the ideal image
- c) the transitional image

Each person has a chance of proposing ways to change the actual situation of oppression to ideal images of their choice. Special attention is given to the transitional image as this image may be one of the most difficult to come up with in comparison to the previous two images. This form of theatre can be stimulating because it is easy to practice and through it, thought is made more visible and concrete (1985: 135-9).

* **Forum Theatre**

Boal (1995) maintains that forum theatre is not didactic, but pedagogic because of the element of collective learning present in it. In this form of theatre, the spectator intervenes directly into the dramatic action and acts, thereby changing the actions. Participants are required to firstly tell a story containing a common problem. A short skit is improvised around that problem and a possible solution is presented. After the skit is performed, participants are asked if they agree with the solution that was presented. Those who disagree are asked to replace any actor on stage and to continue the actions as appropriate to them. Participants are not allowed to dictate to others what should be done but must engage themselves in the dramatic activity. Anyone may suggest solutions but only in action on the stage.

In forum theatre, the spectators should be given an opportunity to try all their ideas in practice. While engaging oneself in dramatic, fictional activity, the spectator-actor is practising a real act. This practice of theatrical form can create in the spectator a need to take real action so that he may fulfil a sense of incompleteness within himself (1985: 139-142).

Stage four: The theatre as discourse

This stage focuses on the use of simple forms in which the spectator-actor creates "spectacles" according to his specific need. Some of these are:

- * the newspaper theatre which consists of several simple techniques whereby daily news items are transformed into theatrical performances;
- * the invisible theatre which consists of a scene presented in a place other than the theatre, such as the market-place or a taxi rank. The people who witness these performed scenes are taken by surprise as they were there by chance. People automatically congregate around these performances and unconsciously involve themselves in the presentation. The impact created by this form of theatre is far more powerful because the environment and the atmosphere within which it is performed helps liberate the theatrical energy;
- * breaking the repression, a technique which requires participants to remember moments when they felt repressed and acted against their own free-will. This story is dramatised by other participants chosen by the story-teller. The spectator-participants come out of their experience feeling enriched by this rehearsal to resist oppression (1985: 142-150).

In all of the above forms of theatre, one knows before hand how the experiments will begin but the final scene is never known until that moment when it is presented in a form that people can easily identify with - in popular form.

3.2.5 Popular theatre for social change

Whilst Boal prefers the forum theatre technique, Mda (1993) believes that this type of theatre can sometimes be anarchic and therefore prefers a more community generated approach to theatre such as simultaneous dramaturgy. It is interesting to note that the above approach seems to challenge the western approaches of theatre such as working with a written script, having individual authorship and creating a division between the audience and the performers [participants].

Tying in with Boal's type of theatre, Mlama explains that popular theatre:

is used not only to develop theatre as a form of cultural expression but also and more significantly, as a tool for improving life in its totality (1991: 66).

He continues to state that,

it becomes a process through which man studies and forms an opinion about his environment, analyses it, expresses his viewpoint about it, and acquires the frame of mind necessary for him to take action to improve upon it. As such theatre is economic, social, political - it indeed becomes life itself (Mlama, 1991: 5).

The main concern of this approach is the process that takes place during problem-solving rather than the product. This approach also assumes the need for change and empowerment of the participants, which in Boal's terms is referred to as a "rehearsal for revolution" (1985: 141), whereby participants practise a real act even though they do it in a role-play. Boal maintains that

while he [the participant] rehearses throwing the bomb on stage, he is concretely rehearsing the way a bomb is thrown, acting out his attempts to organise a strike he is concretely organising a strike within this fictitious limit, the experience is a concrete one (1985: 142).

He argues that even though participants rehearse fictional solutions, the experience can later become a concrete one where a real situation can be approached in a constructive way. Popular participatory theatre, places more emphasis on participation by all the participants involved. Byram asserts that "it drew on people's natural ability for acting and improvisation" (1985: 4). Thus, everyone's acting skills should be affirmed and encouraged. In recent years there has been a "move towards more participatory theatre - for - development" (Byram, 1985: 6).

This experimental theatre extends conscientisation, for example, black gay men with no previous acting experience should be encouraged to express themselves and analyze their present situation through the dramatic medium. The most appropriate and successful technique in this type of theatre as implemented by Boal and others is improvisation. Ross Kidd argues that:

as a result in this process of creating, analysing and re-creating socio-drama deepens on participants socio-political understanding, overcomes some of the fears, myths and rationalisations which reinforce positivity, and opens up some of the possibilities for organising and struggling against oppression (1984: 79).

It is evident and clear from the above sections that drama can be used both as an educational tool and as a means of conscientising people within their particular contexts. This leads us to the next section which focuses on drama as a therapeutic medium.

3.3 Drama as a means of therapy

3.3.1 Definition

Therapy is defined by Langley and Langley as creating an environment in which healing can take place, where

anything that facilitates a move from the maladaptive behaviour to the adaptive and personal equilibrium can be described as therapeutic (Langley et al. 1983:12).

Drama therapy refers to drama as a form of therapy, originating from the beliefs that theatre and drama are necessary to healthy individuals and societies (Jones, 1996). The concept is connected with the verb "to heal" which has an etymological origin of "hale", meaning "whole". Drama therapy, unlike other "talking" therapies focuses on the creative and expressive sides of people, which allows them the opportunity to become more whole (Oatley, 1984). Jennings defines drama therapy as "the specific applications of theatre structures and drama processes with a declared intention that is therapy" (Jennings 1992: 229). She views drama therapy as an art form which continuously renews people's creativity and through this engages self-healing. The therapeutic change towards healing should then allow the self and relationships with others to become more whole.

3.3.2 The Value of Drama Therapy

Jennings (1993) views drama therapy as one of the newly emergent creative arts therapies that include music, art, dance and movement with the aim of bringing about therapeutic change and healing. Drama therapy evolved in Britain in the 60s from drama in education: theatre in education and remedial drama. It took its form from theatre and art and made the various elements of this form available to the client or patient, either to maintain social health or to work with disorder problems. Drama therapy also incorporated the aims of developmental psychologists and sociologists (Landy, 1994). Although therapeutic in nature, the goals in drama therapy "often bear resemblance to educational and recreational drama goals" (Landy, 1994: 62). The development of drama in the latter half of the 20th Century has included an exploration of various dramatic techniques. In education, Slade (1954) encouraged children to express themselves through drama. He argued that because of the general tendency that adults have of

controlling their children's actions, thereby denying them the opportunity to be spontaneous and creative, that parents should listen to their children.

Leading on from Slade, Dorothy Heathcote (1981) focussed on the importance of educational drama, a child-centred approach. She believed that teaching was an act of interfering in the lives of children. She herself entered the drama by taking on a role, thus she worked from within the group. An example of this was in her video, "The Industrial Revolution - a South African perspective" (1981), where she took on the role of a school inspector and demanded that the learners explain what Ms Heathcote had been doing with them. Whilst in role, she was also able to deduce what kind of learning took place for them. Valente and Fonta (1994) argue that it is not beneficial for the therapist [educator / facilitator] to be in role because he will not be able to fully observe and monitor what is happening. Heathcote's intention however, for getting into role with the learners was that the entire experience should be both objective and reflective, since experiential learning allows learners to reflect on the learning process which leads to better learning.

In theatre, Grotowski (1978) began experimenting with laboratory theatre where the actors thought of themselves and their work as "a paradigm of humankind". This process of theatre became a form of analysis and therapy for both the actor and the spectator.

Drama therapy focuses mainly on the use of games and improvisations. Like educational drama, it works according to each individual's pace, and aims to provide positive personal and corporate growth.

Concerning the educational element of drama, O'Neill and Lambert point out that:

the most significant kind of learning which is attributable to experience in drama, is the growth in people's understanding about human behaviour, themselves, and the world they live in.

This growth of understanding which will involve change in customary ways of thinking and feeling, is likely to be the primary aim of drama teaching (O'Neill et al. 1982: 12).

Because of the old education system (see Freire's "banking system"), which did not allow learners the opportunity of thinking and experiencing in new ways, people like Sue Jennings began to explore alternative methods of educating learners from a more liberating perspective.

In the early 60s, Jennings was influenced by the approaches of drama and education. She began to implement drama techniques in the clinical field and later opened the first Remedial Drama Centre in London, specialising in training and the practice of creative and expressive drama with adults and children. By 1977, drama therapy became better known as an alternative to Moreno's psychodrama.

Drama therapy can be seen in ancient forms, such as healing rituals and theatre performances in many civilizations. During the past three decades drama therapy has re-emerged as a contemporary therapeutic practice with formal training and accreditation. To facilitate drama activities that are aimed towards therapy, one needs to have knowledge of the theatre as a therapeutic art, knowledge of the elements of voice, movement, and how to construct a performance. Like a theatre director who spends a great deal of time and energy preparing a group of actors before developing a performance, the drama therapist works in the early stages with body and voice before attempting more developed theatre. This is in keeping with Boal's (1985) initial approach of getting people to get to know their bodies before they can embark on anything else.

Jennings strongly believes that theatre is important in the context of drama therapy and asserts that:

all art expresses the things we are unable to express and experience. Through theatre we are able to express and experience what are often termed "the mysteries of life" (1993: 18).

For instance, one can experience feelings, emotions, and actions that are not part of one's everyday experience. This can happen through group interaction where myths, legends, and common concerns and themes are dramatised by the participants themselves. The medium of drama in this context can also act as a vehicle for exploring participant's individual lives and interrelationships.

Langley et al.(1983) highlights the following specific ways of making drama therapeutic:

3.3.2.1 Enrichment in drama therapy

The element of enrichment focuses on dramatic play. Through the use of games and play people are given the opportunity to explore and experience that which they may not have previously

experienced. The games and exercises used for this purpose are non competitive [unless deliberately chosen by the facilitator to be a competitive activity in a particular session] learning games which allow for everyone to enjoy mutual fun and learning from these activities without there being any losers.

The above dramatic activities usually build group cohesion, trust, and help participants to focus and relax (Barnes, 1999). Ideally, a facilitator should always have a variety of appropriate games available for each session. It may be possible that participants may dislike certain games, depending on their particular context, thus, an alternative game may save the situation. Each of the chosen games have various strategies, some of which are structured to stimulate thinking, imagination, physical awareness, concentration and so forth.

3.3.2.2 Goal-orientated drama therapy

When using drama therapy, the facilitator must have a specific goal in mind, for example, working towards an acceptance of one's sexual orientation. He may use drama as a means of looking at participants' pasts, examining those past experiences and trying to help them find possible solutions to their present situation. When people are involved in some kind of dramatic activity they often gain helpful insight and understanding into their own behaviour and that of others, which helps them to cope with life in a more mature manner.

Individual and group goals should be appropriately selected according to the needs and abilities of the group. This means that the facilitator must gain a good understanding of the group prior to planning and implementing the planned activities with his drama group.

3.3.3 Psychodrama and its link to Drama Therapy

Psychodrama is a type of psychotherapy that is generally accepted as the foundation stones for some of the drama therapy theories and practices used today. It has given rise to techniques such as socio-drama and role-play. Moreno, the founder of psychodrama describes it as follows: psychodrama is the "science which explores the 'truth' by dramatic methods" (1972: 9).

The following is Kellerman's proposed, comprehensive definition of psychodrama:

psychodrama is a method of psychotherapy in which clients are encouraged to continue and

complete their actions through dramatisation, role playing, and dramatic self-presentation.

Both verbal and nonverbal communications are utilised (Kellerman, 1992: 20).

Psychodrama aims to view the image of a person holistically, attempting to give a complete picture of humanity rather than partial ones. Like the natural systems, psychodrama views the person as a complex dynamic system who is constantly interacting with himself and others in various contexts.

3.3.3.1 Differences between psychodrama and drama therapy

Snow (1996) points out that psychodrama and drama therapy have more common elements than they have differences such as role-playing, spontaneity, fantasy and representational experience. Snow also mentions that because drama therapy has no single originator, this has given rise to several theories that are widely used in the drama therapeutic context. Some of the commonly known theories and practices of drama therapy are: Landy's Role Theory, Gersie's Narrative Theory and Johnson's Developmental Theory.

Although similarities between drama therapy and psychodrama stem from a common dramatic tradition, Chesner (in Jennings) explored the following differences, the main one being that psychotherapy aimed at healing individual minds as opposed to drama therapy which aimed to heal the complete person within a group context:

1. Drama therapy often focuses on the whole group, unlike psychodrama which works through one protagonist as the holder of the group concerns.
2. Psychodrama focuses on and uses only those techniques developed by Moreno to direct a specific therapeutic journey, whilst drama therapy draws on relevant and appropriate aspects of the dramatic activity as a therapeutic source, depending on the needs of the group.
3. Drama therapy gradually addresses issues which the group identifies with from time to time, while psychodrama confronts issues more directly.
4. The group matrix in psychodrama is identified within the group, unlike drama therapy where the group freely explores issues which they choose to dramatise using the improvisation technique at their own pace.
5. The drama therapist acts more as a facilitator rather than a mere directive psychotherapist

who believes that he has the answers to his client's needs. (Chesner in Jennings, 1994: 131)

While psychodrama may provide both a theoretical source for drama therapy and a series of techniques that are widely used by dramatherapists, drama therapy for me is a more viable approach when working with improvisational drama. After all, the creative experience which drama therapy provides is exactly what is required within a democratic drama context.

3.3.3.2 Differences between facilitator of drama as therapy and drama therapist who uses drama therapy as a form of psychotherapy.

There is a difference between drama used as therapy, and the value of drama and some of its aspects used for therapeutic purposes within a dramatic art or educational drama framework. Drama therapy embraces a wide range of theories and psychological paradigms, and when used as a form of psychotherapy, is a clinical modality with its own assessment, treatment and intervention procedures. Over the last ten years, there has been a radical shift away from the creative and educational drama fields of study and practise toward the clinical domain. Drama therapy's inclusion under the auspices of the Health Professions Council of South Africa is proof of this.

Chesner in Jennings (1994), like myself, has a limited view of clinical practice and therefore interprets drama therapy as a process more like facilitation. I prefer to use facilitator and therapist, as well as the terms therapy and healing interchangeably, after all, therapists are called to be responsible facilitators. All the therapist does is set the therapeutic process in motion and take responsibility for this process. His concern should be for the client's journey and not his own. The only major difference between the therapist and the facilitator, as is the case in this study, is that the therapist makes therapeutic interventions around projections and identifications within the group in order to bring to their consciousness the roots of their underlying pain and anguish. Thus, one will notice that this study lacks the psychosystemic therapeutic evaluation but focusses more on the process of the drama therapy work. For instance, great emphasis is placed on what drama techniques and exercises worked and what did not for the group. This is a democratic style of getting the "disempowered" group to start owning and making decisions about what they enjoyed most and what they least enjoyed.

3.3.4 Roots of drama therapy

Grainger (1990) asserts that drama therapy is rooted in the following:

3.3.4.1 Drama as involvement and distance

According to Grainger, as long as our everyday and ordinary efforts are focussed towards making sense between us and the world around us, that is creativity; it is a passion for clarity or what Rollo May (1969) calls, "the struggle against disintegration, the struggle to bring into existence new kinds of being that give harmony and integration". This struggle draws our attention to what is around us, so that we see everything more clearly and without any confusion. In this way, dramatic art creates the space for recognition that leads to a deeper understanding and meaning of life. In order to perceive everything that is there before us, we must always stand back and look, seeing whatever it is that we look upon as a source of meaning in itself rather than simply part of a well-known argument; what Winnicott refers to as "creative apperception" - or something "more than anything else, that makes the individual feel that life is worth living". In this way, far from being an escape from reality, dramatic art demands greater engagement with others around us and the world we live in (Grainger, 1990: 17).

With regards to the togetherness and individuality forces, Grainger argues that [dramatic] art:

is produced by men and women as the inevitable expression of their humanity, corresponding to that fundamentally important part of life that sets itself apart to comment on itself (1990: 17).

The self about which it wishes to draw conclusions is changed in the process, giving it a new identity which distinguishes this new self from the old one that constructed it. The new identity becomes distinct from the old, and although the two exist together, they comment upon each other and draw attention to the differences and similarities between them. Both realities remain, together with our experience of life, and the task of restructuring their relationship brings an appreciation of new dimensions. So the task of dramatic art, therefore, according to Grainger, challenges existing structures by engaging human reality at a deeper level of purpose and meaning (Grainger, 1990).

3.3.4.2 Drama as a symbol of healing

Human beings employ symbols to express things outside their immediate realm of reality. Whether verbally or non verbally, symbols are a means of reaching out from an association or inclusion, in thought and imagination. Grainger quotes Langer as stating that symbolism arises "as a consequence of distancing or detaching the self from the object" (1990: 30). In a way, therefore, it can be said that symbols creatively construct and order the ways in which one views life from an individual point of view and draws one's own conclusions from it. In this way, a symbol becomes a mental presence which draws attention to something that is physically not there and serves in part to make up for it. In many ways, symbols play a role in that which they signify. They are the link one has with what is not oneself and can never be involved "within" one. Grainger states that failure to be able to symbolize has been associated with schizophrenia, a condition in which "the inability to make any link between inner and outer worlds is seen in its full malignancy". In an attempt to explain the above condition, Grainger quotes Winnicott who claims that:

people in such a position [schizophrenia] have nothing authentically "apart" from themselves to compare and to contrast things with; they retain an undifferentiated awareness (1990: 30).

So as one can see, the therapeutic use of drama provides one with the experience of "coming out of oneself" as its main aim. And then, when one's imagination has been aroused, it does not only show one the different worlds that exist but encourages one to explore them. As one's mind has a contagious quality, one does not have to explore alone, but in the presence of other people. This may effectively happen in a group through the medium of drama and can also become a positive therapeutic experience for those engaged in the dramatic activity.

3.3.4.3 Drama and connection

Grainger (1990) points out that, "over-tight construing" or the ability to construct an inflexible mental picture of the world and the self is characteristic of depressed people. This is done as a defensive ploy by which a person tries to keep a very tight hold of what he believes is going on without having to face the possibility of changing his view of the world. The person sees the world changing, not himself. Bannister (1997) shows that in depression a swing can occur within a previously stable system. A sudden invalidation of some major beliefs held by the depressives may create a weakness within one's construct system. A depressed person, therefore, may be prone to having the integrity of his construct system suddenly destroyed, making the whole of

his world fall away at his feet (1990: 40).

A loosely construing individual might not find the experience so painful, but the depressive who only embraces one way of dealing with life problems will not be able to accommodate the effects of real trauma. This may cause him to become angry with others. Grainger points out that it is within this particular area, "that our relationship with others, ... the integrity, or lack of it, or our construct system is most important" (1990: 40). While this is a personal construct system, its subject matter is concerned with what occurs among others in the group. In the case of depression, therefore, someone who was sure about his relationship with other people will no longer be certain; he will be in a state of despair, trying to get back the lost image before it was shattered. So in situations where other people are purposefully and creatively trying to change the environment, depressives torture themselves and create negative pictures of themselves.

Beck identifies the following three distinguishing characteristics of depression: firstly, a negative view of the self; secondly, a negative expectation of the future, and finally a tendency to screen out positive factors in one's awareness, so that only negative elements in a situation are construed as having any significance (in Grainger, 1990: 42).

What then has drama therapy to do with depressives? Grainger's impression within the dramatic context is that, those who are inclined towards depression find that theatre [drama] may have an invigorating effect on them. He thinks that this is the reason why some depressives choose to go into the dramatic arts. Grainger points out that this makes sense because "the experience of theatre [drama] hovers between involvement with and separation from others" (1990: 47).

Dramatic activities are especially designed to make the adventure of spontaneous and creative involvement as safe as possible without lessening its force. For that reason, all those who lack self-confidence and self-esteem, but can make the first move to engage themselves in a group for the purposes of using drama as a therapeutic medium, are welcomed. For the depressed, dramatic involvement can provide them with an experience of acceptance and courage which they need for both play itself and life. Grainger calls this a "mediated role", for the participant is "in role", and therefore, he is distanced from the source of emotion that inspires him. Grainger puts it that the depressed, "protected by the contrived nature of the play [is able to stand back as himself] while remaining in relationship with other people involved (1990: 49)."

This benefits a depressed person because he tends to immerse himself in the experience of others, without feeling free and confident enough to respond reciprocally and mutually. But in order to respond to others, one requires distance from self and to have an identifiable position from which to respond. So drama can provide a safe place within which these identifiable positions of well-defined scenarios of human interaction can occur. Grainger argues that "drama and therapy is largely based on the purposeful manipulation of aesthetic distance" (1990: 49), which is carried out to allow those involved in the dramatic activity to be free to experiment with their own image, especially with the crucial boundary between self and others. For this reason, Grainger asserts that depressed people are to take advantage of the opportunity to "fit in", for the ability to give and receive is what they crave, and above all, the need for an opportunity to share. The medium of drama, therefore, provides safe, adventurous ways and a conducive environment which opens up the world of imaginative possibility in which genuine and focussed involvement can occur (1990: 49).

3.3.5 Approaches to drama

Self-Awareness and Imagination

Looking into oneself is an important factor which can produce cure. Most psychotherapies have used self awareness as an important part of the healing process. This process of gaining such understanding may be far more important than any other factor. Self-actualization can provide people with an understanding of themselves, their differences, how those differences arose and how they can be changed.

Self understanding does not automatically produce therapeutic effects. Intellectual insight alone cannot change emotional and behavioral patterns. People may, for example, gain an understanding of their problems and explore their childhood, but this doesn't guarantee healing. Appelbaum states:

If information alone could bring about therapeutic change, patients could get well by reading their psychiatric case summaries and psychological test reports (Appelbaum, 1988: 205).

The healing process can only be successful if the person discovers self on an emotional level as well. This must definitely be accompanied by a meaningful learning experience, which

incorporates an integration of emotional, imaginative and behavioural experiences. People need to become more aware of themselves, their feelings, their conflicts and motivations. They need also to recognise what they are doing to themselves and to others and also to evaluate their behaviour patterns. This process will definitely help people to cope with present and future behaviour.

Like educational drama, psychodrama allows people the opportunity to imagine, to hope and to dream, even for a short period of time. Freud believed in analysing people's dreams, whereas Moreno believed in trying to give people the courage to dream again (Moreno, 1972: 5-6). In drama, the use of role-play, warm-up exercises, props and so on aids in the journey towards self-actualization. In this way, people learn to adapt as individuals and groups in their society.

People have no difficulty using their imagination. They have the ability of making inanimate objects come to life, and to relate to them as if they were real. For example, during the Walk and Squawk improvisations, many imaginary inanimate objects came to life and group members became aware of the presence of these objects and related to them in ways that they found appropriate. In one of the improvisations centred around cultural taboos: the role of women in our culture, I felt a strong urge to become the baby which the doctors were helping deliver. According to Bartlett (1932), people often recall certain experiences according to their moods. In this instance, I was obviously looking for some attention and affection. Unfortunately, the direction of the improvisation changed to a scenario where I was being beaten up because I threw a tantrum for not being able to play with my sister's doll. This brought back childhood memories of rejection and loneliness, so I quietly walked away, head-bent from the acting space. Had the drama not changed direction, I probably would have enjoyed a moment of love and affection, even if it was for a short period of time. But the twist in the improvisation allowed me a new opportunity to look within myself and to reflect on what I was feeling at that particular moment, and also to focus on why I was feeling that way.

The point that I am trying to make here is that drama can create therapeutic opportunities for one by getting people to remember personal painful experiences, and to reinterpret and examine them afresh. Recalling our pasts can help us to creatively reconstruct that past in a way that helps us adapt to our present way of living. Conway (1990) asserts that the act of remembering and becoming aware of what has happened to us, in the past or present, makes us what we are.

Self-awareness is necessary in drama therapeutic work in the sense that it places one in touch with his true internalised and externalised self. Being aware of one's emotions and feelings is something that can be learned over a period of time.

Self-awareness involves the following elements of learning:

3.3.5.1 Experiential learning

This type of learning is based on an actual personal learning experience, and not merely on verbal information. For example, it would be meaningless to tell an extra sensitive lover to be less sensitive. However, in role reversal he or she can take on the opposite role even for a short period of time, to experience what it feels like being in that particular role. This is a first-hand awareness which will have a long lasting meaningful impact on the person.

In his book, *Freedom to Learn*, Rodgers (1969) mentions that in order for learning to be meaningful, it must involve the whole person in a significant experience. Intellectual learning alone has no relevance for most people. He also points out that when a toddler touches fire, he or she learns the meaning of the word hot. This learning will not be easily forgotten.

Stone (1981) claims that adults cannot regain what they have lost in their childhood years, but whilst it is impossible to correct past mistakes, it is possible to supersede some of the negative learning from that time. People can re-experience the past in a new manner and also unlearn some patterns and attitudes from the past. This means that there is hope for personal growth from the point at which development was arrested.

A personal example of this would be, as a child, I grew up with abusive relatives and had no parental affection from the age of about four and a half up to the time when I was about fourteen years old. In time, I developed a low self-esteem and suffered from periods of anxiety and depression. By gaining exposure to love from a caring figure within the dramatic context [the need to be a baby in the improvisation], I may have gained a sense of hope and confidence.

Another example of this would be that of the traumatic Khayaletu shelter street children whom I had the privilege of working with in 1997. Each of them were uniquely different. After some time of working with them through the medium of drama, their public performance proved that

they had achieved something valuable. From rebelliousness to cooperation, from shyness to boldness, from fear and withdrawal to less fearful and extroverted children. They managed to find safety and a creative release within the dramatic context. I have no doubt that this was experiential learning for them and from their responses after the dramatic performance, it was clear that they wanted to continue learning through the medium of drama.

3.3.5.2 Learning through doing

This type of learning is based on practice more than on theory. Here people are encouraged to do more than just talk. Telling people about their self-destructive behaviour may prove to be ineffective. Fox believes that

we do not talk a paranoic out of his delusions; we do not persuade victims of phobias...stop being afraid; we do not convince the addict he can do without his drugs; and we seldom are able to give a depressed suicidal patient a reason for living (Fox, 1972: 191).

In most cases, talking about something will not always teach one how to do things. In order to learn how to do something, one must practise doing it. Similarly, behavioral skills cannot be learnt through mere talking about them but through action as well.

The following is a another personal illustration: As a teenager, I grew up with an alcoholic and abusive father. For years, I clung onto many traumatic childhood experiences which depressed and frustrated me and made me direct my energies towards self-pity. It was not long before I developed a negative generalised concept of men because I did not have any positive male role-models. I strongly disliked men and believed that all men, my "father" being the first, were beasts.

Within a theatre group, I could be encouraged to work through some of these unresolved conflicts with men, and at the same time unlearn some of these previous behavioral patterns through dramatic engagement.

3.3.5.3 Non-cognitive learning

This third level of learning moves away from mere head knowledge. It is when things are

emotionally and intuitively learned, a kind of "gut feeling" experience, where real meaningful therapeutic change can take place. Non-cognitive learning often cannot be translated into words. An example here could be the lack of forgiveness between the young man and his abusive alcoholic father. Perhaps he feels guilty because of his unforgiving nature and realises that he cannot continue living with a spirit of unforgiveness. In role drama, he can play himself, and in role reversal, his father. This experience will definitely be a liberating one for him, as he "concretely" faces an issue of concern for him.

Another personal example was the scenario in which I played the role of an abused child in a community theatre planning workshop on child abuse in 1996. This wasn't just another performance role but a deep emotional experience for me. The tears shed during this scenario were most therapeutic. I had the opportunity to cry within my role and this was quite acceptable by others in the group. Months and years later, I still remember that liberating experience which taught me to understand my feelings and also to feel what I understand. It is important for there to be an integration of the emotional and the cognitive (Kellermann, 1992: 90-5) because the very act of thinking about oneself, as well as feeling, is an important basic human process. Whilst we experience something emotionally, we also need to reason and reflect upon our emotional experiences.

3.3.5.4 Acting Out

People are not only encouraged to talk about their conflicts but also to act them out within a particular context. In this way, inner tensions and repressed behaviour can be given vent to by acting out their internalised oppression. Acting out their true inner feelings can produce a certain kind of inner healing. In this case, acting out refers to acting from within, where people can reflect the inner self.

Unless people take up the challenge of acting out, there will be many uncovered mysteries hovering in their lives. Acting out within the healing context will help one to release those mysterious areas and to bring to light hidden resources of healing.

Because of its combination of structure (e.g. character, plot, presentation) and freedom (from the demands of extra dramatic reality), drama can be a liberating experience to those who find themselves oppressed by their narrow and restrictive world view and lack of a stable and

recognisable image of themselves. So therapeutic approaches based on drama are able to provide identifiable models of personal interaction, that are safe and challenging at the same time:

Dramatic structures have been shown to provide people suffering from disordered thinking with the kind of experience of human interaction which they can use to give shape to their own lives. Drama therapy has the potential of speaking the language of human intentions and emotions instead of merely using language to speak about them. The kind of drama which provides the medium for drama therapy is the basic material of every experience (Grainger, 1990: 71).

The therapist's central task, will be the setting of the scene which provides a milieu to explore ideas and experience, to move the group away from the familiar and established world into the world of imaginative possibility. The therapist will accomplish this by making use of art forms like focus, tension, symbolism and so on to intensify the experience and thus allow catharsis and healing to take place. In order for this to be done, certain rules need to be established, such as the creation of an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and regard, which is necessary

for the unique combination of safety and danger which makes drama therapy such an effective way of treating people who are ontologically vulnerable (Grainger, 1990: 72).

3.3.6 Structural elements underlying drama therapy

The structural elements that underlie the drama therapeutic process according to Grainger (1990) are as follows : Roles, Games, Sculpts and Metaphor.

*** Roles**

Pitzel, P (in *Psychodrama, Inspiration and Technique*, 1991) quotes Moreno who uses the word "role" to describe the definable units of possible action that compose us, while he, Pitzel, uses "role" and "part" synonymously. According to Pitzel, Moreno seems to suggest that, the self is just a part of many individual selves [playing a role] in the theatre.

Roles, according to Moreno (1972) are expressions of identity which are inseparable from contexts and interpersonal matrices. In this way, while role-playing in theatre,

people become collective, and talk of themselves as "we". Emphasizing the same point, Grainger (1995: 56) states that simulation and role-playing are widely used "theatrical approaches ... on agreement between client and therapist to explore an alternative reality".

* **Games**

The second rule calls for the acceptance of the therapeutic value of games, intended to help participants relax, physically and psychologically. In this way, participants are permitted to enjoy themselves and unknowingly lose their self-consciousness. A process of group adjustment takes place within the special protected world of games in which individual participants find a balance by inviting others into their own universe. In this place and time, one receives the permission to be oneself, and encouragement to explore the possibilities of new kinds of selfhood that are revealed to them. It is therefore important to encourage participants to "trust their non-reflective unselfish conscious activity", since the ultimate aim of drama therapy is to enable a person to "set off down paths he does not know" (Grainger, 1990: 74).

* **Sculpts**

In order for communication to be as clear as possible, gestures and bodily positions are used to express various states of mind. The physical disposition of bodies and the degree of closeness and the distance from others present the reality of personal and social relationship in ways that cannot be fully verbalised. While words may be used, the primary mode of self-expression remains physical, as "sculpts", where a created statue symbolizes a particular idea or experience. In educational drama terms, sculpts can be used as an effective way of reflecting on one's learning experiences. The symbolic power of movement and posture in the drama therapeutic context can provide the facilitator with useful insight for summarizing complex relationships.

* **Metaphor and symbols**

Drama cannot exist without symbolism and metaphor, for drama itself is a metaphorical activity. In drama therapy, much of the subject matter and its artistic form are metaphorical. Through the creation of symbols and metaphor, one can interpret or reinforce experiences and at the same time through reflection see the parallels that exist between oneself and the wider, "universal" context. Metaphor and symbolism are

therefore, crucial as a means of self-expression and self-discovery.

SUMMARY

From the above, one can conclude that drama can be used as a means of education, conscientisation and therapy. All that drama basically needs is an individual or a group of people to use themselves, their bodies and their minds to dramatise issues of concern to them. O'Neill et al. (1982) assert that drama in this context [educational, conscientisation and therapeutic] also involves social contact, communication and the negotiation of meaning. As a result of being involved in the dramatic activity, participants may feel better either temporarily or permanently. Although the facilitator may need to motivate the participants into desiring a need for change in the dramatic context, he is not responsible for bringing about change. It remains the participant's responsibility to take advantage of the situation that will bring about the desired change, or to reject the dramatic experience which may bring about change altogether.

PART II

THE BLACK GAY DRAMA FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

Don't be fooled by me,
Don't be fooled by the face I wear,
For I wear a thousand masks,
that I'm afraid to take off
and none of them is me.
Pretending is an art
that is second nature with me.

Masks by Peter Lehman

Part II is structured into four chapters i.e.

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| Chapter Four | : | A summary of thirty black gay male's profiles |
| Chapter Five | : | An outline and evaluation of the "freeing the body, freeing the soul" workshops |
| Chapter Six | : | An evaluative summary of the workshops by the participants |
| Chapter Seven | : | An evaluation of the dramatic techniques employed in the workshops |

Introduction

Chapter Four sets the scene for the subsequent chapters which describe the practical details of the process that took place when I conducted the "freeing the body, freeing the soul" workshops with a group of black gay males. I will provide a brief portrait of the black gay men in the Pietermaritzburg area which I obtained from them through the use of a questionnaire / interview technique. The broad areas covered in this section are: spirituality, culture, identity and sexuality. This leads us to Chapter Five which provides an outline and evaluation of the nine sessions held at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. Chapter Six provides a detailed summary of participants' responses to the workshops, followed by Chapter Seven which evaluates the dramatic techniques that were employed by the participants in the workshops.

CHAPTER FOUR

A SUMMARY OF THIRTY BLACK GAY MENS' PROFILES IN THE PIETERMARITZBURG AREA

4.1 Introduction

The main aim of this particular research was to gain a general impression of black gay males in the Pietermaritzburg community. Questionnaire One (see Appendix A: 207) served to elicit the necessary background information required to plan the drama intervention. Moore states that questionnaires, "are most effective when used to survey a relatively small group of people ... who are likely to have reasonably similar opinions on the matter" (1987: 19).

I initially decided to hand out the questionnaires to black gays with whom I had established contacts a few months before the series of "freeing the body, freeing the soul" workshops which were held at the university. I later realised that it was necessary to gain first-hand perceptions and experiences from the actual people involved instead of hearing about gay people from other sources. Thus, this chapter briefly summarises the data collected from the respondents, which enables one to establish whether or not respondents were able to integrate their spirituality and their sexuality within their cultural context. It also helps one to get a clearer understanding of the black gay context and their attitudes. The information derived from the questionnaires / interviews, provided me with further guidance and direction while planning the above workshops. I would like to suggest that this information should be viewed against the general background of South African black gay men which is included in (pp. 35-40) of this dissertation.

The research process

Thirty black gay males completed the "culture, spirituality, identity and sexuality" questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised of four sections, totalling thirty-seven open-ended and closed-ended questions. The closed-ended questions allowed respondents to make quick choices from the alternatives that were provided, while the open-ended questions created opportunities for the respondents to express their views in their own words. The main concern here, according to Cass (1984: 112), was that respondents should give their own perceptions of the contexts within which they function. These questions were preceded by a brief section of data identification such as name (anonymous), age, area of residence and so on.

Respondents were not allowed to take the questionnaire home, firstly, because of the general reluctance on their parts to promptly complete and return the questionnaire. And secondly, because some of the questions needed some probing and cross-questioning. I felt that it was necessary for me to overcome the language difficulties which may have caused a breakdown in communication between myself and the respondents [since I am Indian], in order to draw from them the data appropriate for this study. Also, most of the respondents were not familiar with some of the terminologies and words used in the questionnaire. Examples of these were "coming out", "in or out of the closet", "active / passive roles", "masculine / feminine", and "straight marriage".

Most of these interviews were conducted at the usual gay meeting places such as bars (Cats - a gay bar, Marabi - a predominantly heterosexual bar), cruising spots (Alexandra Park), respondents' homes or their friends' homes, work and the local campus of the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg). The questionnaire / interview field survey technique was used whereby I conducted individual informal interviews using questionnaire one (see Appendix A: 207), and immediately wrote the responses given.

The interview / questionnaire technique

Researchers like Isaacs (1992) argue that face-to-face interviews may be a more threatening approach as opposed to distributing questionnaires and waiting for them to be returned to the researcher. Another disadvantage that Isaacs points out is the element of interview bias, which he believes, affects the findings of the research. Unlike Isaacs, Moore (1987) argues that the questionnaire allows for flexibility and a certain degree of anonymity. My personal experience is that an interview such as this has allowed me to make more personal connections with each respondent. This process allows the researcher to enter the lives of the respondents (even though it may be for a short period of time) and to empathetically draw on their unique gay experiences. This direct connection made between the researcher and the respondent allows the researcher to "yield rich material" and "to put flesh on the bones of the questionnaire responses" (Bell, 1993: 71)

This technique also helps one to probe deeper into issues of interest that were once superficial, so that the researcher's understanding of respondents' experience may become more concrete. It has its advantages and I single out one respondent who verbalised the following, "this is the first time that I have spoken about my life to someone else without feeling intimidated". I responded

by saying that I hoped this was not his last time. I would like to think that this research survey may have enabled those who responded to it, to move one step further towards "coming out", not necessarily to others but more importantly, to themselves.

Below is an analysis of the responses obtained from the questionnaire / interview which provides a clearer background of black gay mens' experiences and perceptions in the Pietermaritzburg area, which may be similar to other black / gay / male experiences in other areas.

4.2 Respondents' Profiles

1. Name:

Respondents who were still in the closet gave pseudonyms, while those who had "come out" preferred their real names or "feminine-gay" (e.g. "Sandy", for Sandile, "Samantha" for Sam) names, which were either given to them by themselves or by their friends.

2. Age of respondents:

Their ages ranged from eighteen years of age to thirty-five. It was my conscious decision to interview people within the above age range, so that I did not have to deal with more complicated issues of varying developmental stages and levels of maturity. I am also well aware that older people (even among gay groups) are often discriminated against on the basis of their age. It was my intention to reach a particular target group and to collect data from this particular age range so that it would make it easier for me to structure the forthcoming workshops in a way that was relevant and appropriate for the group.

3. Areas of residence:

The respondents came from places in and around the Pietermaritzburg (Msundusi) area and are shown in Table One.

Table 1: Respondents' residential areas

Areas of residence	Number of respondents
Pietermaritzburg Central	10
Edendale	4
Sobantu	3
Imbali	3
Dambuza	2
Caluza	2
Northdale	2
Glennwood	1
Pelham	1
Prestbury	1
Eastwood	1

The above statistics reveal that the majority of the respondents come from the central or outlying urban areas. Isaacs (1992), points out that these areas, unlike the townships provide more socio-sexual outlets such as bars and clubs. While those in the township areas consider the city centre to be the place where all the activities happen, many respondents claim that others have left the "sleepy hollow" in search of a better life.

4. Type of residence:

- Respondents living with families (67%)
- Respondents living on their own (26%)
- Respondents living with friends (7%)

Most respondents (since they were still in school) resided with their families because they were either financially dependent on their families or they succumbed to traditional cultural obligations of living together as a family unit. Those who were living with friends or on their own mentioned that they had no option but to leave home because of family pressure to fulfil cultural expectations such as marrying and raising a family of their own. Some of them were

even banished from their homes because of their families' hatred for gay people.

5. Highest standard of education passed:

- Tertiary education (37%)
- Passed Matric (53%)
- Currently in Matric (10%)

Despite the fact that most of the respondents came from a middle to low class income group, they all saw a need to be educated. One of the many reasons why they deliberately chose to pursue higher education is their need for independence. Respondents made mention that they wanted to make something of their lives and prove to their families and their communities that they are just as capable as anyone else (or even better) of doing anything that they put their minds to.

6. Are you presently in a relationship?

- Respondents in relationships (47%)
- Respondents not in relationships (53%)

Respondents who were in relationships revealed that gay relationships did not last, so the high percentage (47%) is not really a true reflection of their relationship status. When asked about the length of their relationships, most of these lasted between six months to a year. One must also consider the fact that most gay people who are in steady long-term relationships prefer to be at home or go to other places of interest instead of frequenting "common pick-up" places.

7. What are your hobbies?

According to the respondents, their hobbies included reading, writing, listening to music, eating out, clubbing, caring for others, interior decorating, hiking, travelling, flower arranging, fashion designing, modelling, hair-dressing, gardening, "dragging", cruising, theatre, movies, creative arts, fishing, cooking, and baking.

While most of these hobbies could be classified as "feminine", when viewed from a Zulu cultural perspective, respondents assertively claimed that they are living in changing times and that people need to look at them and their actions within the present context and not in that of their grandparents. In response to this, one respondent defended himself by asking the following

question, "are not we men one of the best cooks, nurses, school teachers, counsellors, hairdressers, and dress-makers?" In the Pietermaritzburg area alone, respondents were able to easily name some of those gay people who have made a mark in society. While most of them perform these tasks with such dedication and commitment, it is unfortunate that they do so under a heterosexual guise, for fear of being found out and discriminated against by their colleagues.

A. SPIRITUALITY

God and his / her love towards gay men

- Respondents who felt that God was a merciful parent and loved them as they were (90%)
- Respondents who felt that being gay was sinful (10%)

Life after death - heaven or hell

- Respondents who believed that they were going to heaven (60%)
- Respondents who felt that they were going to hell (3%)
- Respondents who were unsure (37%)

Church attendance

- Respondents who attended Church (84%)
- Respondents who did not attend Church (13%)
- Respondents who did not answer (3%)

Those respondents who attended church did so for the following purposes: either out of duty or they were forced to because of family tradition, to worship God and to learn more about him, to feel secure and closer to God, to gain inner strength and spiritual upliftment and also to be in fellowship with other believers.

Those who did not attend Church did so because they felt that God saw them as sinners and did not fully accept them as gays, the church and its members made them feel out of place, and they also saw their churches as corrupt institutions which were irrelevant to their lives.

Respondents' perceptions of the way God views black gays

- Respondents who believed that God loved them as they were (90%)
- Respondents who believed that God saw them as sinners (7%)
- Respondents who were unsure (3%)

Coping with your Church's teaching and attitudes towards gay sexuality

- Respondents who felt that the Church was anti-gay (67%)
- Respondents who felt that the Church was supportive and accepting of gays (17%)
- Respondents who had mixed feelings about the Church's attitude towards gays (13%)
- Respondents who made no comments (3%)

Those who felt that the Church was anti-gay said so because of their experiences in churches that were judgmental and homophobic. These churches taught that being gay was unnatural, sinful and against scripture. Because of these reasons, gays felt rejected by and alienated within a place where they expected to be embraced and welcomed.

B. SEXUALITY

Are you "out of the closet" (openly gay) ?

- Respondents who were out of the closet (57%)
- Respondents who were in the closet (43%)

It must be noted that most respondents seemed a little confused with the term "coming out". After briefly explaining what this meant, there was also further confusion as to whether "coming out" to their heterosexual counter-parts or to the gay community was expected from them. Most gays mentioned that they had "come out" to their gay friends and not to their families or to the public. They also pointed out that the process of "coming out" was ongoing, simply because of the fact that they have to always be on their guard concerning their sexual orientation, for fear of being gay-bashed or alienated from people that they always coming into contact with. Those who were still in the closet were afraid of rejection by their families and society.

· Lover preference: Masculine / feminine / both?

- Respondents who preferred masculine, straight-acting men (84%)
- Respondents who preferred men with both masculine and feminine qualities (13%)
- Respondents who preferred effeminate looking men (3%)

While most respondents preferred masculine, straight-looking and straight-acting men, they also preferred the following qualities in their men: education, physical attractiveness, independence, wealth, maturity, romance, reliability, flexibility, and non-racism. Some respondents were quite flamboyant and put on an extravagant performance while they spoke about their "dream-man". It is interesting to note that the old-fashioned "dream-man" (with thick lips and big bums) was replaced by the more African- American type of man.

C. CULTURE

Community's changing attitude towards gays

- Respondents who agreed that change was possible (69%)
- Respondents who did not agree that change was possible (10%)
- Respondents who were unsure (21%)

Those who agreed that change was possible said so on the basis that the new constitution allows gays their right to sexual expression. They also mentioned that with more gays "coming out" of the closet and with gayness being more acceptable, it would make it easier for people's attitudes towards gays to change.

D. IDENTITY (sexual and social)

Masculinity / feminine

- Respondents who felt more masculine (53%)
- Respondents who felt more feminine (40%)
- Respondents who felt both masculine and feminine (7%)

Men's / women's clothing

- Respondents who preferred men's clothing (46%)
- Respondents who preferred women's clothes (34%)

- Respondents who preferred both men's and women's clothing (20%)

Sex change

- Respondents who preferred a sex change (7%)

Born gay / socialised into being gay

- Respondents who felt that they were born gay (93%)
- Respondents who felt they were socialised into being gay (7%)

Contributions towards the development of the gay community:

- conscientising and educating gay people on issues such as supporting one another morally and socially;
- creating more social opportunities for gays (e.g. providing more safe "cruising" and entertainment places);
- recognizing and legalising gay unions (marriages);
- providing counselling services and support groups for gays;
- creating new religious experiences for them (e.g. gay / friendly churches);
- arming gays with life-skills which will empower them;
- teaching gays acceptance of each other and standing up for gay rights;
- learning to fight against labels and stereotypes that are discriminatory of gays;
- conscientising them about safe sex and the effects of HIV / AIDS; and
- encouraging faithfulness and monogamy in relationships.

Contribution towards educating and conscientising the heterosexual community:

- work towards a better heterosexual understanding of gay people;
- teach them acceptance and tolerance of gays;
- create more learning opportunities for greater understanding and openness, teaching them that gayness is not something dirty, sinful and unnatural as they have been made to believe;
- to promote peaceful relations so that gay bashing would be a thing of the past.

4.3 Conclusion

From the above findings (respondents who were interviewed), it would appear that most black gay males in the Pietermaritzburg area have struggled to integrate their lifestyles within their hetero-patriarchal society. Whilst these gays come across as well-adjusted beings, one must bear in mind that there are underlying issues which affect them personally and corporately. These issues are not always made known to the public. For instance, at the heart of any gay man's identity, is his sexuality and its expression. However, in his society, where heterosexuality is the norm, he is forced to abide by the rule. In his struggle to survive, he can choose either to suppress his sexual identity and expression, thereby forcing him to succumb to the heterosexual norm, or to flee his home-town for the larger cities where he can live out his lifestyle without any family or socio-religious pressure. In this regard, respondents mentioned that they knew of many gays who had left their townships and homes for far-away cities such as Durban and Johannesburg. Many gays today, who do not have proper resources (including gay support systems) available to them, contemplate similar moves.

In terms of black gay males' responses to spirituality, the findings of this study revealed that a large percentage (nearly 78%) of them, despite discrimination from the church in general, still believed in God and in God's love for them. This was demonstrated by them attending church regularly. Conversely, only a small percentage (under 10%) believed that being gay was a sin and that they were going to hell. For this reason, they chose not to go to church, for they felt that they were already condemned. It must be noted that the high percentage of church attendance does not necessarily reflect a serious Christian conviction on the part of the respondent. It is a well-known fact that traditional practices, such as attending church, can be done out of cultural duty without one having to question the motives behind these duties or having to internalise them.

Concerning sexuality, the findings reveal that more than half of the respondents were out of the closet (57%). While this may seem to be a positive sign in terms of statistics, most respondents claimed to have come out to their gay friends and not necessarily to their families or the public in general.

In view of the above findings, one can conclude that respondents in the Pietermaritzburg area feel a need for change, both in their private and public lives. This is evidenced by the high percentage

(69%) of those who believe that change in the community's attitude towards gays is possible. They pointed out that the New South African Constitution is the basis upon which that change will occur.

It is upon respondents' conviction and hope that change is possible, that the workshops which follow this chapter were structured. Having gained a clearer understanding of their context and their attitude towards themselves and others, I felt a need to equip a group of black gay males who volunteered to work with me, using drama as a medium of development and empowerment. It is hoped that drama would firstly, help to educate them with life-skills; secondly, conscientise them on some of the issues (and possibly similar ones that arise in the drama group, since the contents of a Community Theatre workshop should not come from an outside source but from within the group itself) that arose from the above findings; and thirdly, create opportunities for them to explore personal and social areas of integration and wholeness that will eventually lead to healing.

CHAPTER FIVE

AN EVALUATION OF THE "FREEING THE BODY, FREEING THE SOUL" WORKSHOPS

5.1 Introduction

This group of black gay men in the greater Pietermaritzburg area, showed a keen interest in using drama as a medium to bring about some kind of healing to the dis-ease reported by most of them. It became evident when interviewing participants that they were pre-occupied with themes related to oppression and discrimination which was partly a result of the apartheid system. There is a growing concern, however, in our new government and society about the effects of societal and religious intolerance towards gay people [as the constitution shows]. While the constitution acknowledges gay people, gay people are still concerned with how they are affected emotionally because of their sexual orientation and also with how their socio-religious communities respond towards the issue of homosexuality. Increasingly, I have become more aware of how gay people are treated both physically and psychologically, both inside and outside their homes and religious institutions. There seems to be very little opportunity in which societal and religious intolerance towards gays could be addressed. This situation further persuaded me to undertake this research, in search of contextual, dramatic methodologies that aim to educate, conscientise and heal black gay men.

Workshop sessions and the participants

The drama workshops held consisted of nine two and a half hour sessions designed for a group of about fifteen black gay men. Two and a half hour sessions (6 - 8:30pm), seemed reasonable enough to achieve experiential learning within the session. Some of the participants worked full-time. An hour after that gave them enough time to go to their respective meeting places where they were picked up and brought to the University. These sessions were held at least once or twice a week. Winn (1994) recommends eight sessions which gives one enough time to get to know each other and to work through issues at hand. There is a definite advantage to running a series of workshops of this nature for a block of time because it allows for continuity and also the building of group cohesion, and unlike an intensive weekend workshop, it is not as exhausting.

Language of expression

The intention of these workshops was to use drama as an alternative language which allowed for communication beyond the participants' verbal Zulu (mother-tongue) or English (second-language). Drama, it was hoped would help them find alternative ways of expressing themselves (body, mind and soul) - ways that transcended the usual verbal means of communication.

Drama techniques employed

In the course of the sessions participants were introduced to various drama techniques such as role-play, story-telling, improvisation and forum theatre. These techniques were used to work through areas of concern, i.e. homosexuality and social and religious intolerance. After active involvement using the various dramatic techniques, participants reflected on what had happened. This new awareness was thereafter linked to their own experiences which brought to light a new sense of meaning for them.

Planning

All the sessions were thoroughly planned in advance. Some of these sessions were closely adhered to while others took a slight deviation as appropriate. Most sessions began with warm-ups and exercises which helped participants to get to know their bodies and to release them for dramatic expression (Boal, 1985), after which we moved into the main activity and thereafter reflected on the session.

Basic structure of the workshop

I found it necessary to pay attention to the warm-up phase, more especially when working with a group that had no previous drama experience. The warm-up phase effectively allowed participants to enter the drama space in a physical and energetic way and also to identify themselves and others within that space. Here, participants were able to get to know each other in a light-hearted way while being prepared for the task ahead of them (Boal, 1985: 126-131). I initially chose to spend at least a third of the time doing warm-ups with them and in later sessions focussed more on the main activity and reflection. The warm-up phase proved to be very successful, relieving many from negative feelings of stress. A great deal of play (Piaget, 1962; Winnicott, 1971) helped to release participants from highly charged emotions which they had brought with them to the workshops.

Reflection and evaluation

Most sessions were video-recorded, mainly for me to go back and reflect on the sessions, to gauge what inner learning had taken place for the participants (O'Niell et al, 1982), how the participants reacted and their participation in the sessions. At least a third of the time was spent in reflection where participants shared their experiences and tried to understand and make sense of them. Day (1975: 137) suggests that since drama is also concerned with personal development, this phase should ideally focus on participants' capabilities and potential, as well as their limitations without comparing one participant to another. He argues that the element of competition, if encouraged during reflection will go against the social aims of drama which promotes co-operation. It was here that their learning should become more personalised, therefore opportunities should be created for them to consolidate whatever had taken place. Reflection was also a good way of reinforcing their learning and also ensured that we concluded the session in a manner which built trust and mutual support. Group sharing and support was necessary because participants needed to be assured that they could leave the place feeling safe and confident about what they had just experienced.

The nine sessions that were implemented with the drama group were aimed at trying to establish a group of black gay males who felt oppressed by their religious and social communities on the grounds of their sexual orientation, in order to come together as a collective group and to identify and explore areas of concern to them, using drama as their language of expression. Most of these participants had no previous drama experience. Because of the nature of this group, the workshops dealt with different aspects of ensemble building, which started with simple exercises where participants got to know others in the group, became aware of the space they were working in, and the attitudes they came with to the workshops.

The various exercises that were implemented in these workshops came mainly from the Walk and Squawk Performance Project, who spent a three month residency at the University of Natal (PMB) in 1997, and from Boal's *Games for actors and non-actors* (1992) and *People playing people* (a manual that was used at one of Boal's workshops in Cape Town in 1997). The sessions were also structured in such a way that opportunities were created for participants to be given a chance to release their creativity and to use various dramatic techniques to explore gay oppression.

The areas covered in each session were:

- Session 1:** Creating a sense of ubuntu: getting to know and trust one another.
- Session 2:** Releasing one's creativity and spontaneity through free-writing of personal experiences and paired story sharing.
- Session 3:** Developing the courage to start the healing process: sharing stories from the heart through the enrolling process.
- Session 4:** Exploring alternative ways of expressing oneself through dramatic movement: seeking a new language of expression.
- Session 5:** Developing empathy for others through the use of role-play and improvisation techniques.
- Session 6:** Exploring gay oppression through the use of pictorial stimuli and Image Theatre (sculptures).
- Session 7:** Challenging discrimination: taking action in the form of verbal debates and non-verbal images.
- Session 8:** Creating oppression stories using objects and imagination and sharing / miming it with the group.
- Session 9:** Building democracy: regaining our humanity and "*toyi-toying*" (standing up) for one's rights, using posters, and group song and dance.

These sessions were more or less divided into the following sections:

- Aim - the articulation (for myself) of the main aim of the workshop. This was useful for the processes of reflection and evaluation to establish the degree of success of each workshop.
- Warm-ups / ice-breakers
- Voice and breathing exercises
- Focus and concentration exercises
- Main activity (reflected session themes)
- Reflection (during / at the end of the actual session)
- Evaluation of session (after each session)

5.2 Evaluations of each workshop:

Session 1

Aim: To create a sense of ubuntu (getting to know each other) among the participants and the facilitator through dramatic play.

Knowing the body, knowing the group:

This introductory session was planned in such a way that participants would become familiar with others in the group, including the facilitator, with the space they were working in and also with themselves. Using Boal's (1985) idea of "knowing the body", I found it imperative that participants should have as much fun, pleasure and excitement as possible through dramatic play which certainly provides them with an exploratory and experimental experience. The element of fun and pleasure enables people to approach new situations with a new sense of adventure (Berstein, 1971). A combination of learning and enjoyment in this session created greater opportunities that enabled the group to deepen their learning experiences. Unlike the other sessions, this session had no main activity, and was aimed primarily at allowing participants to get a feel of what they were going to experience in future sessions.

The importance of exercises that release energy, imagination and relaxation for effective drama group-work:

With the first two warm-ups, "it" and "tag" (App.C, Figure 3: 232), participants' energy levels were raised as they ran around the room, releasing their bodies and their voices with great bursts of energy. An inclusion of both energising and relaxing exercises are equally important in any dramatic activity, as King (1972) argues that most participants experience certain degrees of tension, whether it be mental, emotional or physical. He asserts that in order for participants to express themselves freely in the dramatic activity, their bodies need to be in tune with their minds. Hence, a combination of the body and the imagination enhances one's creative expression (1972: 25).

One of the group's favourite exercises was "be a queen" (a phrase commonly used to refer to an effeminate gay person). Participants easily picked up on the suggestions for activities that were assigned to them. Some of these activities were quite humorous in the sense that they required participants to do some "laughable" gestures, such as "put on some make-up", "shave your arm-

pits", "propose to your boy-friend". A few participants turned out to be real comedians and always acted outrageously, which sometimes caused fits of laughter during the activity. Participants afterwards resumed their activity with a new sense of inspiration and enthusiasm. This exercise was the most effective in revealing individual personalities. It also helped develop individual and group imagination. It has become clear to me that the group process positively enabled individuals to physically express themselves in a comfortable manner. Without any doubt, it became clear to me that individual participants did draw from the high-spirited energy and enthusiasm of the group.

Another exercise that helped release individual and group imagination was the "transformation of gesture" exercise (App.C, Figure 5: 233). Dance, movement and song came to them naturally and this came to me as no surprise, considering the previous experience I have had with the black Christian community in Stanger. Participants managed to flow easily into the rhythmic tune and movement of the group. Once they were engaged in this activity, it became almost impossible to stop them from their vibrant, charismatic ritual. Participants worked well together as a team, and displayed high energy levels.

Energizing exercises allowed participants to express themselves in a physicalised manner, whilst relaxation exercises prepare them mentally, for further effective engagement in the dramatic activity. For relaxation exercises to be effective, it is vital that participants' imaginations are tapped into, and images and sensations which create an atmosphere of comfort and ease need to be suggested. The importance of having energising exercises before the relaxation exercises is that participants can stretch and loosen their bodies, sometimes releasing themselves to the point of weariness and tension. It is only after this "tense" warm-up phase that the relaxation exercise can be most effective and appreciated. The following relaxation exercise, "bird in the nest" confirms the above assertion.

After the participants had completed the energising exercises, they lay on their backs on the floor, a position which King (1972) argues is excellent for correct posture, breathing and relaxation. The "bird in the nest" image (see App B: 214-231) cooled the participants down a little as they felt the cool, gentle breeze blowing against their hot, sweaty faces. More belief was built through the use of a lufah, creating an unpleasant and irritating sound, which was later followed by the soothing sounds of a wind chime. This imaginary journey was also aimed at extending their listening, concentration and imaginary skills. This exercise allowed the participants to relax

and focus in a safe and peaceful environment. Participants thoroughly enjoyed this exercise, saying, "This seemed so real", "I wish it didn't have to end" and "It made me feel so good, this must have been heaven".

Language and communication difficulties:

The rules of the above exercises had to be given slowly and sensitively since some of these participants did not have a good grasp of English, let alone some drama terminologies that I used from time to time. I had to be constantly aware of my vocabulary so that everyone in the group understood what had to be done. This, I later discovered, had to be done with utmost sensitivity, since some of the participants could easily assume that my repetition of certain instructions happened because I under-estimated their level of intelligence. Fortunately, the use of interpreters in the group eased this problem.

The process:

The process that took place during this research was determined by the following aims and objectives which were discussed and approved by the group itself:

- to create an atmosphere of acceptance, openness and experimentation where participants could explore their feelings and attitudes in a non-threatening environment;
- to create opportunities for participants to empathetically share and dramatize their concerns with one another and to receive support from one another;
- to examine the feasibility of using drama to educate, conscientize and to bring about healing for the participants involved in an experiential way;
- to raise the participants' awareness of the importance of working together as a team;
- to enable participants to develop assertiveness, empowerment, communication and analytical skills;
- to encourage confidence, hope and self-esteem;
- to help participants develop imagination, creativity and spontaneity, which in turn will enable them to value and affirm themselves and others.

Participants shared a common interest in the following:

- being more comfortable with and accepting their same sex feelings;
- examining gay oppression and stereotypes;

- creating better knowledge and understanding of their sexual orientation and their purpose in life;
- dealing with issues of societal and religious intolerance.

Participants were somewhat reserved as they waited for me to control the discussions. This was exactly what I was trying to work against. My intention was for the group and myself to work together democratically and for this reason alone, I included many team-building activities so that the group could work co-operatively. Day (1975) warns that there is a danger of giving too much or too little power to the group. Too much control and instructions from the facilitator may inhibit creative development, while too much freedom in a loosely structured drama may lead to chaos.

Group dynamics, expectations and rules:

Concerning the writing down of their expectations of the workshops, some participants were initially hesitant. However, having two small groups was an advantage and worked well in this context because it was less threatening for those participants who did not enjoy working alone or in a large group. Due to drama's dependence on individual and group co-operation, the facilitator needs to be sensitive to individuals within the group context. Interestingly enough, there were no disagreements, perhaps stemming from an initial fear due to this being the first session. Included below are some of the expectations which participants shared in the group:

- to make friends (or even lovers);
- to work together closely as a group, working towards a common purpose;
- to share one another's burdens and concerns as gay people;
- to improve their life-skills (e.g. communicating, listening);
- to perform in a stage play (e.g. to dance, sing and act);
- to educate themselves on gay-related issues.

Most participants expected to be involved in the traditional forms of drama, ie. to perform in a play from a written script, seeing that these were drama workshops. The idea of using drama as a means of educating, conscientising and healing was a fairly new phenomenon for them. It was hoped that in time that they would understand that this new approach to drama will develop and empower them. Participants will soon discover that the kind of drama they are going to be engaged in would be "of them and from them" (Way, 1967: 27).

Negotiating the drama contract: setting ground rules:

Negotiating a contract of rules was essential for order and control in the group. This was the only time where I exerted authority from above. The contract included:

- respect for everyone's ideas and opinions;
- listening to one another;
- avoiding being judgmental;
- focussing on material at hand;
- being yourself;
- confidentiality of personal and group sharing;
- respecting each person's personal environment;
- attending and participating fully in the workshops;
- no "star" parts and payments;
- clapping and various objects such as a lufah and wind chime as control mechanisms.

Participants were in full agreement with the group rules and even suggested a few themselves. For example, participants asked questions such as, "Are we allowed to smoke in here?" "Where are the toilets?" "What time will we finish?". These are important questions which had to be answered and made me realise that one may sometimes tend to leave out important details.

Maintaining a democratic drama ethos:

It was made clear that it was fine for participants to speak out and to ask for clarification on anything that did not make sense to them. They were constantly reassured that they were not forced to do something that they did not feel comfortable with. For example, in the "name and action" game, which was aimed at learning each others' names in an active and enjoyable way, some participants were reluctant to do an action after they mentioned their names. However, some humour was thrown into the situation as the rest of the group mimed the facial and body expressions of the participant who refused to do an action. For example, Chris shyly said his name and indicated by raising his shoulders and facial expressions that he did not know what action to do. The rest of the group hilariously mimed his actions. During reflection, this point was raised and Chris was assured that the laughter that arose during his turn was not based on his inability to spontaneously do an action after he mentioned his name, but rather, it stemmed from the fact that everyone simultaneously mimed his actions together as if it was a planned

effort. It became evident that participants slowly began to feel a sense of belonging to the group.

Breathing and posture difficulties:

Whilst most participants thoroughly enjoyed the voice and breathing exercises, some of them had a problem, especially with the "big lungs, small lungs" exercise. They confused themselves with breathing in and out. Instead of taking air into their stomachs when breathing in, participants took air into their chest cavities, thereby enlarging their chest cavities instead of their stomachs. To a certain extent, participants were familiar with positioning themselves in a fashionable "model" posture, (i.e. pulling the stomach in and pushing the chest out). "A proper queen", the more effeminate-behaving ones said, "must not let everybody else see how much she has eaten for supper. She must pull her stomach in, push her "boobs" out and keep her shoulders up. Our gogos relaxed their stomachs and look at them now with their big stomachs and big bums". In later sessions, it was observed that participants' breathing improved considerably.

The circle of reflection:

During reflection, participants sat in a circle on the floor, which created an enclosed space, suggesting safety, a sense of containment and group equality. It is a natural shape formed by groups of people at any spontaneous public gathering. For instance, it is natural for people to immediately crowd around a scene of an accident, a street preacher, or some local game or performance. The circle also enabled the group (including myself) to communicate freely and easily with everyone in the group, thereby establishing a good rapport with one other. The most important of all the advantages of the circle is that it enables the facilitator to maintain order and control over the learners without stifling their freedom or self-expression (King, 1972: 18). During reflection, participants initially found it difficult to say what they did not like about the workshop. Almost everyone unanimously answered, "We liked everything". This was not good enough for me, so I gently and encouragingly directed open-ended questions to individuals who later responded in the following ways: "This workshop was nice and full of fun", "It was refreshing", "I feel motivated now", "Some of the games were tricky but I enjoyed them". It was during my active involvement and observation of the participants in their activities and during this reflection phase that I felt a great sense of accomplishment.

Final impressions:

I felt that in terms of involvement, concentration and group building, this session had managed to achieve its aim in an exciting way. Participants were able to familiarize themselves with others

in the drama group, their facilitator, their working space, and more importantly, themselves, through dramatic play. By the end of this session, it became evident that participants enjoyed the activities so much so that they continued to talk about them during the refreshment time and while I gave them a lift home.

Session 2

Aim: To encourage spontaneity and creativity through free-writing personal experiences and paired story sharing.

This being the second session, participants showed a deeper level of engagement and enjoyment. I have no doubt that this may have resulted directly from the ensemble building exercises that were done in session one. Participants seemed to be more relaxed and free. The excitement of the first session led to them inviting some of their friends to the second workshop. The newcomers to the group fitted in quite easily.

Language and communication difficulties and its potential to stifle one's growth in confidence and self-esteem:

Once again, some of the words used in the "freeze-in-guise" exercise were a little problematic. For example, one brave participant, in the middle of the activity stopped and asked, "What is mud, thin rope and coals?" These seemed easy for me and for some participants in the group, but not for others. This "ignorance" has taught me to make whatever I am going to say to them in the future as simple and clear as possible. I realised that once words that some of them were not familiar with were explained to them, either by myself or through interpreters in the group, participants were able to work independently and with the greater sense of confidence. I affirmed the participant who mentioned that he did not understand what some words meant and encouraged others to speak out as well.

Overcoming language and communication difficulties:

The tongue twister exercise, "Playing with sentences" brought a new dimension as participants contributed Zulu tongue twisters which made this exercise language appropriate. Their inability to say the English tongue twisters may have placed a damper on their learning experience, thus asking them to come up with their own tongue twisters made this experience more personal and appropriate. One that most of them enjoyed was, *Amalanda alandelanelani na?* (Why do egrets follow one another?). Participants were under the impression that I (their educator), knew it all.

This assumption stems from their previous education system which has taught them that the teacher should know it all. My inability to say the above Zulu tongue twister was proof for them that I was just as much a learner as they were. However, my interest and enthusiasm in trying to say their tongue twister made them feel better about what they would have considered a "failure".

Leadership opportunities for empowerment:

Allowing participants to lead certain exercises gave them a sense of leadership empowerment and at the same time, relieved me of some of my responsibilities. Using different participants also allows for a variety of rich, meaningful expressions as compared to one individual's restricted expressions. Participants felt more confident doing some exercises the second time around.

Main activity:

Free writing exercise - Write about a time when you felt different, embarrassed or ashamed as a gay person, using either English or Zulu.

This activity was deliberately chosen for this session as a way of getting participants to use their imaginations in a creative and spontaneous way, based on Gersie et al's (1990) assertion that when we are able to share our stories, "we allow another human being access to our experience of life, our inner world, the journey on which we've been".

Way (1967: 42) argues that "it is vital that each human being is helped both to develop his or her own imagination and to feel confidence in it". He adds to this imagination that builds to self-confidence by stating that,

it is necessary for the practice in using imaginative faculties to take place in a constructive atmosphere, free from fear of failure, from competition and comparison, free from sarcastic or caustic comment, free from criticism (1967: 43).

During this activity, participants hesitantly took their writing material and sat in various parts of the room. Some of them were not quite sure what was expected from them. After further explanation there was silence, as participants went into deep thought about experiences that they should write about. Each of them had powerful stories to share. This recalling and writing up process would help them achieve a sense of personal and group empowerment.

After some time, participants were paired off, where they shared their stories with their partners. This sharing can be cathartic and sometimes even frightening (Winn, 1994). It was here that participants discovered new dimensions of this experience at their own level. It is possible that this discovery has the potential of bringing about change and ultimately, healing. It became clear that certain levels of trust were developed during one-to-one sharing. This, in a sense, was for some the beginning of the "coming out" process.

Reflection:

Participants were initially sceptical about writing their personal stories. Firstly, because these stories were too close to their hearts and difficult to express in English. And, secondly, because some of them had found it difficult to verbalise their stories of humiliation, previously. Most participants felt more at ease, writing in Zulu, while some of them wrote in English. It was also clear that some participants were afraid of writing down their innermost secrets, for fear of others finding out and mocking them. However, during the sharing process, participants gained strength from the rest of the group and started sharing their stories "straight from their hearts". There was evidence of a sudden flow of spontaneity which resulted in a participant remarking, "It was difficult at first. I am not good with English. But later, it felt good. I felt free to share my story". Participants had obviously found support and inspiration from one another. They were definitely able to find a place for both thought and feeling, and most of all, acknowledgement and integration. This was a holistic process for them.

Final impressions:

This session was a success in terms of encouraging participants to write down their experiences. Most of the participants found this session helpful, because they could give written and verbal expression of their own personal experiences. Another point that is worth noting, is that participants felt a sense of collective identity as they identified with one another's personal experiences. One participant felt that the free-writing exercise was a bit too demanding and stressful for him. He preferred to be doing something more active than merely sitting, thinking and writing. Participants were reassured that their stories were important, and these were treated with due respect during the sharing process. Some participants shared their concerns, hoping that members of the group would not share these stories outside the group. At this point, it seemed appropriate to remind the group about the confidentiality rule, which they agreed they would abide by. Even though this was a little encouraging to the participants, the intense level of indepth sharing and emotional engagement of the group during the listening to the stories caused

some of them to feel a little tense and uneasy. Being sensitive to their fears, I reminded them that no one was forced to share his story if he did not feel comfortable doing so, but at the same time affirmed those who bravely and courageously shared their experiences. The refreshment time broke that level of emotional sensitivity, as participants spoke to one another, thereby causing them to feel more relaxed. This session provided participants with an opportunity of gaining first hand experience of empathy for one another.

Session 3

Aim: To help participants develop the courage to start the healing process by sharing individual stories of oppression in a group setting using the enrolling technique.

Competitive exercises: their potential to inject tension:

Unlike the previous sessions, the warm-ups and exercises used in this session had a competitive element to it. This competitive element helped inject tension into the exercise as participants worked hard together as a group to win. Through exercises such as the "spider web" and "grab the scarf competition", participants were able to learn about the importance of team-work, group participation and gain skills for problem-solving. Although the element of competition may hinder true democracy that is required for effective drama group work, it is important that the "losing" team be affirmed for their efforts. For example, team A in the "scarf competition" felt a little disappointed at losing, but they were also given points for overall good behaviour and commitment to the game. The reflection phase revealed that a few leaders had emerged from the group. The passive participants in the group were grateful to those who took the initiative of "making things happen" for their group.

Group Sensitivity: developing empathy for one another:

Sharing one's feelings in the group was very effective as it allowed participants to relate sensitively to one another in the group. For instance, Andrew said that he was feeling ill, and stressed out from a heavy work-load. He was allowed to sit and watch the others in the group, and voluntarily joined in activities that were less energetic. During reflection, participants remarked that it was good that their feelings were listened to and respected, or else others in the group would think it strange when some of their fellow group mates did not fully co-operate with the rest of the group.

Developing assertiveness and empowerment:

In the "we're gay, we're proud of it" exercise, participants confidently shouted out phrases of assertiveness. The team-spirit evident in this activity was unbelievable, and their expressions and tone of voice made what they were saying to each other very convincing. During reflection, Christopher mentioned, "This exercise was so empowering. I now feel that I am in a position to speak out to other people who try to dominate me". Some of the phrases that the participants later called out were:

"You spread AIDS!" ----- "No, we don't!"

"Gays abuse children!" ----- "Where's the proof!"

"We're special!" ----- "Nonsense!"

A new sense of awareness made me realise that the group had started to become more assertive and empowered. This was a positive sign, where participants chose to behave in ways that did not disempower them. Another example of this was when Sylvester (as the fairy-god mother) turned the group into swine. Firstly, the choice of words used by Sylvester (a post-graduate student) were inappropriate for this group, as the participants stopped and looked dumb-founded, not knowing what the word swine meant. Secondly, when they did find out what it meant, most of them angrily refused to do the action. A small discussion immediately brought to light the negative connotation that "pig" had for gay people. Participants assertively remarked, "People say that we are dirty because we sleep around. They call us pigs, and we hate that". Hopefully, this assertiveness was only a rehearsal (Boal, 1985) which participants may use to express themselves in other similar situations, outside the drama context.

Language and communication difficulties:

It was observed that participants were more interested in talking rather than listening. The "broken telephone" exercise was proof of this as participants failed to communicate a message to others in the group. Two barriers that caused a breakdown in communication were identified; firstly the language and the choice of words that were used and, secondly, the lengthiness of the sentence which added to the communication problem. In a group such as this, participants should initially be given short and simple sentences. Ideally, it would have worked better if I asked a participant from the group to translate the sentence from English to Zulu. However, the object of the session was not to train participants in a second language but to prepare them for the activity ahead.

Main activity:

Enroling: Story sharing at annual conference - Participants are taken out of the room. A box of hats is placed in front of them and each chooses their hat. The facilitator asks participants to close their eyes and to imagine themselves at the Annual PAGA (People Against Gay Abuse) Conference. Participants are to think about who they are, how old they are, where they come from, why they are attending the conference, who else will be at the conference, how they should walk, speak, and relate to others at the conference. They are asked to open their eyes and the facilitator briefs them on the conference which they are about to attend in five minutes time. The facilitator enters the room and as the chair person (person-in-role) and welcomes each participant to the tenth Annual Conference and shows them to their seats. After an introduction of themselves, which countries they came from and their concerns, participants began to share their experiences.

Wethered (1973) maintains that drama may provide a person with a subjective, creative experience, but an objective look at what he does may help him find a new attitude. Since most of these participants had never had the opportunity of sharing their stories of oppression with others, this enrolling technique was intended to enable them to emerge from their previous silences, thus empowering them with voice and form through imaginary roles. It was hoped that this subjective experience may enable participants to enjoy a new breakthrough in their lives, as the act of remembering our past experiences makes us what we are (Conway, 1990). (See App. D: 235 - 236) for some personal stories that were shared by the participants.

The exercises prior to the enrolling activity provided participants with a good foundation upon which the story-sharing experience took place. It became obvious that most of the participants were able to openly share their experiences with others in the group with ease. This exercise was also aimed at helping participants develop better language and communication skills. It was interesting to note how the group had developed and progressed during this activity. The reasons for the success of this activity was that:

- participants were effectively warmed up;
- costuming (hats) and characterisation techniques were used to enhance the belief in that situation;
- participants were taken through an imaginary journey which paved a way ahead

for them;

- the facilitator became person-in-role which increased the level of believability. Facilitators have a variety of roles to choose from, depending on its appropriateness for different groups. Morgan and Saxton (1987: 42) offer nine types of status roles.

The enrolling technique used in this session was aimed at engaging participants and the facilitator to represent someone else, in this case, different delegates from various countries, but with their own personal experiences. The function of that character in that particular enrolled context was vital for proper engagement and belief to be maintained in the group. It was hoped that the enrolling technique may allow the group to move beyond their limited experience of the world to something bigger and better. The use of concrete objects helped to release their imagination and to invest belief and interest in the dramatic activity in a more creative way. The use of labels also served as a focussing device and as a control mechanism because it made it possible for each participant to be addressed in role by name.

Costumes and props: an effective means for building belief:

Whilst the use of costumes and props help to build more belief in the drama, educational drama theorists such as Wagner (1976), Bolton (1979) and Morgan and Saxton (1987) suggest that these should not be relied on extensively, as developing the imagination is important in the learning process. Participants really enjoyed wearing their hats as it gave them a different persona from their usual selves (App.C, Figure 7: 234). Also, they could choose their own hats, which was an interesting observation to make. Most of the participants chose women's hats (at least 11 out of 14), which ties in with the earlier statement I made of the general black gay community believing that drama is for the more effeminate gays.

Reflection:

Looking at their responses regarding their involvement in this session, it was evident that creative learning had taken place for them. Participants discussed how worthwhile these sessions were to them. Some of their responses to the enrolling activity were, "We felt different from ourselves" and "I felt like I was really Miss India". A few said that they felt disorientated and knew that it was just an imaginary world that they were entering. Fortunately enough, the belief that was suspended by the others overwhelmed those who were not fully engaged in the activity. Other interesting responses from the participants were as follows: "My heart felt so moved when

Eric shared his rape story that I wanted to cry", "This experience created a good emotional release for us. It is so good to listen to others share their experiences and also for us to share ours", "I gained confidence through sharing my story and actually feel like I can trust this group", and " Sharing our hurt, pain, frustrations and grief is like healing to the spirit".

Final impression:

This session was very productive in the sense that participants responded well to the exercises planned and were fully engaged in the enrolling activity. I was especially impressed with the way in which participants were enroled, believed in their characters and were able to meaningfully share their personal experiences through those characters. Because role is seen as an activity in which participants represent someone else, this is a technique which protects them from becoming too "transparent" and vulnerable. Thus, in this context, role was useful in safeguarding participants from direct exposure to others in the group, especially when sharing their experiences. Role provided them with an opportunity to see the world through someone else's eyes and to express themselves in that person's context (Wagner, 1988). Participants were involved in a learning process that allowed them to look at their situation and others' from different viewpoints, which ultimately enabled them to deepen their own knowledge and understanding of themselves and others. In a sense, participants took on roles, played them and at the same time gained "training" to perform better in future situations of a similar nature.

Session 4

Aim: To explore alternative ways of expressing oneself through dramatic movement.

Dramatic Creativity: its potential for healing and wholeness:

Personal and group creativity, according to Gersie et al. (1990) is important in the healing process and can be encountered as a stimulating experience. When participants were asked to imagine something, for example, going on a journey to a place of flowers and sunshine, this became a unique individual expression of their inner being. Participants were initially introduced to a simple exercise which developed and extended their creativity. In later sessions, they were introduced to more demanding techniques which required them to give voice and feeling to the inner world. Grainger asserts that

Creativity proves to be as contagious as any other state of mind; more contagious in fact, because of its essential openness, its identity as that which reaches out with from itself

to set another person's imagination aflame ... To create something is, after all, the oldest activity of all as well as being the source of all newness (1995: 91).

Participants admitted that the relaxation exercise stimulated their imaginative creativity. They mentioned that this experience made them feel so good that they wanted to stay in the "open meadows of flowers and sunshine". When asked why this exercise appealed to them so much, they responded:

- "I love flowers, they always brighten up my life".
- "All our lives we lived in the shadows, hiding our true selves from the public. It's not good to remain in the dark gloomy forest. Coming out into the sunshine shows us that we too can enjoy life."
- "It's just like our government accepting us. We're moving forward into the light."
- "I hope that the Church will allow us to enjoy the 'Son' of God with them as well."

These responses were powerful and spoke volumes concerning participants' feelings towards the community, the government and the Church.

Movement exercises: their potential for developing body-co-ordination:

Participants displayed a keen sense of concentration and focus, and developed good body co-ordination skills, using doyle sticks (App.C, Figure 4: 233). Those participants who were more confident about themselves and the use of their bodies took full advantage of this movement exercise. Their enthusiasm and boldness in the activity encouraged others to use their bodies to the fullest as well. An example of this "performance-like showmanship" was Walter's use of Indian classical dance movements. Being a student of this particular dance type, Walter left the group stunned at how he could gracefully extend his body movements. His movements were an inspiration to others who imitated him and tried to take their movements to the top as well. Swapping partners gave the less inspired participants a chance to do their movements with people like Walter.

Main activity:

Exploring movements with individual stories - Using their personal stories, participants choose three movements which they like or dislike. For example, Thami could use the

following three movements:

- (1) walking in town with his mother
- (2) admiring a doll he saw in a shop
- (3) crying for the doll which his mother refused to buy him (because dolls in the Zulu culture are meant to be girls' toys)

Participants work on their movements individually, using normal human size movements. Next, they do their movements as small as possible, with the minutest of details and precision. Later they enact their movements in an exaggerated, larger-than-life style. Each of the above phases are viewed by the rest of the group.

The above exercise was intended to engage participants in an activity other than the verbal form which would develop their non-verbal communication skills. It was hoped that expressive movement would affect participants, either on a conscious or unconscious level. In most cases, our bodies express our inner selves and we are able to interpret people and their moods according to the ways in which they move (Wethered, 1973). Even Boal (1985) believes in the power of the body and its ability to naturally express itself. It was therefore my intention that participants be given the opportunity to express themselves through an instrument that was most natural to them, thereby moving themselves away from the traditional verbal means of expression towards a new language of movement.

Concerning the movement activity, participants were able to easily choose the movements that they wanted to dramatize. I walked around, helping those who seemed a little unsure of what was expected from them. After using Thami's story and movements as an example, participants began to explore their own movement possibilities. A few of them chose to dramatise movements that they liked, while the rest focussed on parts of the experiences which they disliked. Andrew, for example, briefly shared the following experience:

I was walking down the street one day, looking very smart and feeling very good about myself. I suddenly bumped into an aunt of mine who greeted me. Her five year old son was with her. I greeted him in a child-like manner. He just looked at me. My respectable aunt asked him to do the rightful thing; greet ubhuti Andrew, and he said, 'Where is ubhuti Andrew? This is a girl.'

Andrew spoke about his embarrassment to the group, saying that it was not his fault that he was born effeminate-looking. He surprisingly remarked, "I can't believe that even a five year old knows how to discriminate." Andrew dramatised the following three movements:

- 1) modelling down the street.
- 2) saying hello to his aunt and her son.
- 3) turning away in embarrassment and screaming for help.

Participants were eager to enact their movements for the rest of the group. Adding on variations to their enactments enhanced their concentration and reflex skills and clearly revealed the personal challenges that were placed upon each of them. Participants became less self-conscious as they took their time doing their movements as small and as large as possible. These variations had the potential of throwing humour into their scenes. Participants remarked that they felt good "putting on a performance and entertaining" others in the group. Their own personal experiences were being dramatised in a way that did not cause them hurt or pain. Participants were also aware that the kind of laughter that arose from the group was not one of mockery but of humour because of the way in which the participants presented their experiences.

Participants were thrilled to watch other participants:

- getting a beating in a tiny way with a tiny stick;
- being kissed by a giant with huge lips;
- stirring a huge cup of tea with a huge spoon;
- putting on a tiny pair of trousers.

This "humorous" approach is what Grainger (1990) refers to as drama as involvement and distance. It is here where participants are engaged in creative activities that are aimed at bringing about harmony and integration of self and others. They are actively caught up in a process that distances them from "real life" movements, but upon reflection, view their actions from a new and meaningful perspective.

Reflection:

In reflection, participants spoke about how working through their issues which were once bottled up within them, and now finally finding a release, was such a relief. They also made mention of the fact that they felt much more confident about the use of their bodies to communicate more

effectively. They expressed their gratitude for the opportunity they had to practice the use of their bodies in a non-competitive and comfortable way.

During the group discussion that was held, participants spoke about labels that the heterosexual community attached to them. Some of these were:

- *Isitabani*
- *Ungqingile*
- *Inkonkoni*
- *Ucukumbili*
- *Usis'bhuti*
- *Usweetie*

They also spoke about how heterosexuals hated them because they were educated, organised, and friendly, even to strangers. They made mention of heterosexual guys thinking that gays have a lot of money because they buy drinks for others at clubs. One participant remarked, "The only reason why some gay people are friendly to strangers and why they buy them drinks is because they are making a move on them." The overall sentiment expressed by the group was that they had had so much fun and at the same time managed to learn about their bodies and their capabilities and restrictions, which ultimately made them feel better about themselves.

Final impressions:

This session worked well, as participants were able to express their inner experiences through movements based on their past personal experiences. In accordance with Grainger's (1990: 120) belief that "events speak louder than words", participants were able to recall those events and to use their bodies in an expressive way (Boal, 1985), allowing their recollections to become a learning content both for themselves and others in the group. It was my intention that this exercise would gradually lead participants to reach a certain level of self-consciousness, not just on an intellectual, perceptive level, but as Way (1967) puts it, on an emotional and spiritual level as well. He continues to maintain that this consciousness of self,

is wholly positive, and springs from the intuitive awareness of the uniqueness of individual personality [which brings about] a capacity to use all one's own resources (1967: 158).

I have no doubt that participants had gone through an exciting learning experience, even though the dramatic experience seemed to be somewhat distanced from them. However, the important thing to remember here is that this experience led them to a deeper level of purpose and meaning (Grainger, 1990).

Session 5

Aim: To develop empathy for others through the use of role-play and improvisation techniques.

"Pass the object" got the group to work together as a team. This exercise was aimed at developing body co-ordination, concentration and focus on the group. Participants were highly energised and creatively passed on various imaginary objects of their choice to each other.

Group dynamics: how cliques and the element of competitiveness can alter it:

The "fishing ritual" worked well for one group only, while the other group unenthusiastically watched. The reason for this kind of behaviour was that I allowed the participants to form two groups. Most of the "go-getters" huddled together, leaving the quieter and less enthusiastic participants on their own. The element of competitiveness displayed by one group "depressed" the creative spirit of enthusiasm in the other group. It was obvious that the one group competed with the other. Also, Nhlanhla, being an influential person in the group always manipulated them according to his mood, and because he did not feel like taking the lead, no one else did. When asked to do one big group ritual, all the participants were keen and managed to easily fit themselves into the group and its movements.

Main activity:

- a) Role-play - In twos, participants are given roles which they play out. Each participant has a turn to take on both roles. For example, Role One is that of the respectable, Christian uncle who is furious after finding out that his favourite nephew is gay. Role Two is that of the much loved nephew who lives a secretly gay life and who is petrified of being confronted by his uncle. After participants enact their roles, the roles are reversed. Afterwards, participants de-role and share their experiences with one another and talk about what it feels like being in different roles.

- b) Improvisation ("coming out") - In groups of three, participants prepare little scenarios concerning their "coming-out." Each group has a turn to perform their scenes for the rest of the group. Some scenes are selected by the group, and re-enacted with minor changes made by the group itself. These changes were later discussed.
- c) Free style improvisation - Not more than five participants are allowed to be in the acting space at the same time. Participants improvise anything that comes to mind at that point in time. They enter the stage area, make their contributions and exit.

a) Role-play

Moreno (1972), the founder of psychodrama, maintains that the exchanging of identities with others can be an invigorating act that most humans are capable of. He argues that entering into another role can increase one's strength and identity with oneself. By playing another role, participants can become more sure of themselves. Because of the potential that role-play has for enabling people to understand and cope with certain social situations in their daily experiences by exploring new attitudes and behaviours (Jennings, 1994), I decided to introduce this important development technique to the group. In role-play, Grainger (1990), O'Neill (1994) and Landy (1994) agree on the aesthetic distancing of self when one enters into a role. Hopefully, this experience may help participants to explore ideas and experiences that they were familiar with, helping them to move into a world of imaginative possibility. Participants have two ways of dealing with social issues which directly involve people; they can "be themselves" or they can "play a role" (Grainger, 1990: 74) in experiential and participatory ways, thereby encouraging personal exploration. It was a concern to me that participants had developed feelings of anger, frustration and even resentment towards the heterosexual community, including their immediate families who opposed their homosexuality. I was quite certain that the role-play activity would increase their knowledge and understanding of those people and the situations that frustrated them. By creating a situation of human conflict, participants would critically find a channel through which their feelings may be constructively dealt with. This technique can be stimulating and can also encourage participants to develop further interest in drama as a medium of development and empowerment.

Role-play evaluation:

The role-play activity was very useful in the sense that participants were able to see the world through someone else's eyes. Not only did participants act out the outer aspects of another person, but they also tried to understand how that person feels and thinks. It is important to note here that participants were only playing out roles and not a character, because characterisation would require the participant to rely on personal traits of the character that he was portraying.

The group tended to be slow at developing their belief in their assigned roles and would easily disengage themselves if it was not reinforced. While in role, the nephews were questioned on their feelings and these were some of their responses:

- I am angry and scared of him;
- I feel shocked. I just want to run away and hide myself;
- I feel so embarrassed being shouted by him like that;
- I know that I hurt him, but he does not have to treat me like that;
- I am happy. At least he finally found the truth out.

Only two of the seven nephews felt happy that their uncles had found out the truth about them, while the rest expressed emotions of shock, fear, embarrassment and even anger.

The uncles in role felt emotions of surprise, anger, disappointment and shame. Only one uncle behaved calmly and treated the matter with some dignity. Participants were amazed that they had not given much thought to the reasons why people behaved in the way they did. It was through this activity that they learned to develop empathy for their uncles and for others and for others in the same category as their uncles. They agreed that they had found a place to give vent to their own feelings and an opportunity to express themselves to others in the group who were willing to listen to them. Besides having the advantage of either being "themselves" or "playing a role", they also had the opportunity of exploring coming into contact with and safe-guarding themselves from others. In this way, reality became less threatening to them because a new level of understanding was reached. This became more understandable because the dramatic structure and flexibility of the role-play technique had provided them with an opportunity to live through their experience and not just to think or speak about it.

Johnson (1981: 53), argues that role reversal requires one to consider several kinds of relationships, of which many occur simultaneously. He analyses these as follows:

- A) Impersonal: the relationship between two enacted roles.
(e.g. Vusi - as - Christian uncle and Bheki - as - gay nephew).
- B) Intrapersonal: the relationship between each participant and his own role.
(e.g. Vusi as the "Christian uncle" and Bheki as the "gay nephew").
- C) Extrapersonal: the relationship between each participant and the other participant's role.
(e.g. Vusi and the "gay nephew" and Bheki and the "Christian uncle").
- D) Interpersonal: the relationship between the two individuals.
(e.g. Vusi and Bheki)

Whilst Johnson maintains that the above levels are closely connected, Grainger (1990) believes that the last of these, the interpersonal, is emotionally the most highly charged. The object of this technique was to achieve a high level of spontaneity and engagement. Negative energy and bad relationships between participants can alter the dynamics of the role-play.

b) Small Group Improvisation ("Coming Out")

The purpose of this activity was to provide participants with an opportunity for personal and group expression. Improvisation allows participants a chance to explore particular situations of interest to them more fully. While this situation can be verbally explored, drama can further engage participants in more imaginative, exploratory and physical ways, which can open up more channels of learning. The value of this technique is that participants do not have a prepared plan of action, thus the response to their situations become more immediate (App.C, Figure 7: 234). Wethered (1973) believes that through this activity, those participants who feel inhibited take advantage of the freedom provided and unconsciously come forward and act. It is hoped that through this experience (during or after), participants may gain a deeper understanding of issues improvised, which in turn may stimulate them to further action and commitment.

Small Group Improvisation Evaluation:

In the improvisation activity, participants enacted stories and actions, drawing on their imagination and their bodies as resources to work from. The awareness of these resources were developed in earlier sessions. The improvisations which the groups presented revealed what individuals in the group already knew and were feeling. This technique helped the group to

realise their issues and the problems which needed to be addressed. They revealed this by creating short scenarios which reflected their experiences. The following is an outline of these scenarios:

- 1) *Andrew (mother), Sylvester (father) and Thami (gay son).*

The father showed his disappointment towards his only gay son for not being "man" enough to marry, have children and to carry on the family name. The mother was very sympathetic towards her son and was "torn" between her husband and her son.

- 2) *Mfana (sangoma) Nhlanhla (mother) and Nkanyezi (gay son).*

The mother takes the son to the sangoma because he does not have a girl-friend, only to discover that her precious son is gay. She is totally devastated and desperately seeks a cure for him, namely, sacrificing a white chicken.

- 3) *Thami (gay son), S'bu (Thami's lover) and Vusi (mother).*

The mother discovers that S'bu, who is supposed to be Thami's friend is actually his lover, and throws a temper tantrum. Thami becomes upset and leaves home.

- 4) *Chris (the "man"), Eric (the gay-lover) and Walter (Chris' wife).*

Chris' wife finds him in bed with his male-lover and is devastated to the point of tears. Eric tries to explain the situation, but she cries all the more saying that Chris betrayed her. Chris apologises and tells her that it's over between them.

- 5) *Thembinkosi (mother), Sam (gay son) and Bheki (father).*

The father confront his son after seeing his picture "Miss Gay Kwazulu-Natal" in the local newspaper. The son tries to explain his story to his parents, but mostly directs what he says to his stubborn father. The father accuses his wife of knowing about this all along and chases them both out of the house in his drunken stupor.

From the above, scenarios 2 and 5 were selected by the group for re-enactment. The forum theatre technique was applied to these scenarios, where participants had to intervene decisively in the dramatic action and change it, so that a possible solution was reached (Boal, 1985). As a result of this, participants became aware of the situations they were faced with. During this process, participants came up with the following constructive ideas as possible solutions to their

problems:

Scene 2:

- Church and spiritual healers need to be conscientise that gayness is not unnatural or a "sickness" but a way of life;
- If you are old enough (at the proper consenting age), speak up for your rights;
- If you are financially independent, move out of the home or stay with friends;
- "Coming out" is an important developmental phase in one's life, which allows one the opportunity to reach self-actualization. Therefore, find someone you can trust and disclose your secret to them;
- Look out for relevant resources (books and tapes). These will benefit both you and those people whom you think need to be conscientise.

Scene 5

- Find someone whom you're comfortable with and share your experiences with them;
- If you think that you're at risk of being found out, try to break the news gently to the persons concerned. It can be more frustrating for the persons concerned (especially family members and those who are close to you) to hear about your sexual orientation from other sources;
- Be prepared for their initial reaction of "wrath" towards you, be sensitive and try to empathise with them because it only takes a matter of time before these emotions will change;
- If the persons concerned become violent or abusive, seek refuge with relatives or friends or seek legal advice.

Generally, all these new suggestions and ideas were tried out by the group. Participants were made aware that there was no one solution to the problems that they were faced with, but they had a few alternatives to choose from. Participants in this activity developed both physical movement skills and assertive, communication skills. They appreciated the fact that they were provided with an opportunity to express their problems, to criticise one another and to sometimes give conflicting ideas with the aim of changing their situations. Once again, this activity became a rehearsal for change for them (Boal, 1985). During reflection, they mentioned how empowered they felt because the decisions came from them as a collective group and not from me or any one particular person from the group.

c) Whole group free-style Improvisation ("From struggle to Joy")

The same approach which is used in the small group improvisation can be used in the free-style whole group improvisation, with the exception that participants extended their previous individual / small group improvisation experiences into a large group improvisation. This immediately makes this experience a corporate one. Through this type of improvisation, it was hoped that participants would develop their concentration and fluency skills and increase their confidence levels. During the early stages of improvisation, Way (1967) suggests that participants should be given the freedom to express themselves without any disturbances and negative criticisms from the facilitator or anyone else in the group.

In this activity, there was no subject matter given to the participants, based on Way's (1967) belief that people generally draw on their own experiences, either consciously or unconsciously. In most cases, he argues that particular areas of interest for the participants will become the subject matter.

Free-style Improvisation Evaluation:

Participants enjoyed the free style improvisation which extended their imaginations. The scene initially started off with a couple quarrelling because one of the partners was promiscuous and moved to a sangoma scene, and thereafter a scene in the club, which concluded with a gay marriage celebration. Later, participants repeated some of their improvised scenes, using hats and other costumes that were available (App.C:234, Figure 7). This activity had to stop because of time constraints. An interesting observation that was made during the actual improvisation activity was that some participants, because of their anger towards people who are judgmental towards them, manifested violent and aggressive behaviour. Way (1967) argues that fighting can give rise to new discoveries and experiences, just as long as participants are physically protected. An example of ways in which one can be protected is that participants could be encouraged to use imaginary weapons, such as an axe or a whip, instead of using their bare hands, feet or any other props that may be within their reach during that violent breakthrough. During reflection, participants mentioned that it was easy to be caught up in aggressive activities because of their need to give vent to their feelings of anger that were previously suppressed. Even though one can pick up undertones of aggressive and violent behaviour, it is important to show the group that their enactments are significant.

Final impressions:

I felt that various aspects of dramatic presentations were adequately explored for the participants to gain an understanding of the connection between the process and content of this session. In terms of involvement, the participants enjoyed the role-playing and improvisation techniques that they were engaged in during this session. One downfall, however, was that the main activity was a bit too long and could have been spread out over two sessions, thereby allowing participants to gain a better understanding of the techniques used in this session. Also, in terms of the output, the group could have worked through each activity and come up with more constructive solutions to their problems. Despite the lengthiness of the activities, I still feel that the aim of the session was achieved. Participants were able to see themselves through others' eyes and vice versa. The reflection phase proved that they were fully engaged in a productive learning situation which took them one step ahead towards a deeper and clearer understanding of their experiences.

Session 6

Aim: To develop sharing, communication and interpretative skills using pictorial stimulus and image theatre.

Trust exercises: a need for sensitivity and awareness:

Despite previous sessions of trust building exercises, the "Trust game" was not well received by most of the participants, probably because of their past history of alienation from their community and not having anyone to lean on for help. Their refusal to close their eyes indicated a certain level of fear on their side, which they admitted stemmed from previously unresolved issues. In cases of this nature, it is important to teach people to be sensitive to one another, to be aware of others' needs and to be responsible for their own and others' actions. Mutual trust can be communicated through physical touch exercises. The group during reflection argued that physical touch exercises differ from one culture to the next, but they did agree that if done in a sensitive way, the group dynamics can be altered considerably without there being any spoken instructions to do so.

Main Activity:

- a) Pictorial stimulus - Five different pictures are displayed at various places in the room. Participants walk around the room and view the pictures in silence. Each participant stands next to the picture he identifies with most. Individual participants around the individual pictures, form a small group who share their

impressions of the pictures with others in their group. Each group has to find a suitable caption for their picture. Volunteers share their impressions with the large group.

- b) Image theatre (small group sculptures) - after sharing their impressions, participants create small group sculptures, portraying a common theme which arises from their impression. Other groups view these sculptures and share their impressions of these tableaux.
- c) Paired sculptures - Participant A is the clay and B is a sculptor. A must be sculptured by B to show gay oppression. Participants must use their whole bodies and facial expressions. The facilitator taps the sculptures on their shoulders who then express their feelings, using a word, phrase or sound. A now becomes B and B becomes A.
- d) Whole group sculpture - One participant is a sculptor and the whole group becomes the clay. There is no sharing of ideas involved here. The sculptor shapes the group into how he perceives gay people to be treated by the Christian community. The sculptor explains his image. A frozen participant de-roles and re-shapes the existing images as he pleases. This process continues until a few participants have their turns to be sculptors.

The use of pictures in this session offered a visual way of getting participants to make careful choices and to express these in verbal and non-verbal ways. These pictures were in some ways linked to gay oppression and discrimination. The discussion that arose from this activity revealed that participants could identify with their own suffering and also project themselves into others' suffering as well.

The following pictures (see Appendix E: 246) were briefly analysed and shared by participants in their small groups:

Picture 1

Caption: Cry freedom

Participants: Eric and Christopher.

This group's impression of their picture was one of repression, fear, imprisonment, darkness, loneliness, hate, closetedness and oppression. They felt that gays were caged up and could not openly show their affection to others like themselves. The fingers reaching through in the picture, are a sign of gay people wanting to break free. These fingers resemble animal claws which can be quite dangerous, even violent when the "animal" is released.

Picture 2

Caption: Masks of pretence

Participants: Sylvester, Walter and Thami.

This group's impression of their picture was that gay people have had a history of pretending and of putting on masks so that people would not discover who they really are. Gays are afraid of being found out because of the negative stigmas that society places upon them, family pressure and religious intolerance.

Picture 3

Caption: Unity is strength.

Participants: Sandile, Bheki, and Vusi.

This group saw gay people as those who needed to stand together in unity. With their fists in the air, they are democratically claiming their human rights together. All that gay people want is liberation and this can only be made possible when they work and stand together in unity.

Picture 4

Caption: Hope for tomorrow.

Participants: Nhlanhla and Siphiwe.

This group's impression of their picture was that gays have had a bad past, living secret lives. There are three phases evident in the picture. That is the past, present and future. Ultimate freedom is on its way and gays won't remain oppressed forever. Today, they are still afraid, but tomorrow, they will be proud of who they are.

Picture 5

Caption: Reaching out to heal a broken world.

Participants: Sam and S'bu.

This group's impression was that gays live in a world that is broken and torn apart. The hands in the picture are needy hands, desperately seeking help. It could also be of a person dying of AIDS, who wants to be touched, or maybe even one of us reaching out and not being able to receive help. There is a feeling of despair and despondency but there can also be some hope because both the hands are coming from dark worlds and are almost touching in the light.

Pictorial stimuli impressions:

The above impressions were briefly shared in the large group, which gave rise to a stimulating discussion relating to gay oppression (App.C, Figure 9: 234). The most commonly used words in their impressions of the pictures and the discussion were discrimination, oppression, prejudice, repression, fear, despair, pretence, democracy and freedom. An example of the kind of discussion that took place during this session was the group members' feelings towards local clubbing places. Participants spoke of how even the local gay clubs, which they expected to be more accommodating of them, were racist. They also mentioned their discomfort in places such as these which are owned and predominantly frequented by whites. They strongly felt that these places should be more sensitive towards black gays.

Image Theatre

The Image Theatre approach was aimed at getting participants to express their ideas and opinions in a non-verbal form, which Boal (1985) refers to as sculptures. This technique was used to develop participants' skills in reading and analysing body language. With regards to body language analysis, Wethered (1973: 33) argues that "the body is the instrument we use in the give and take of life; through it, we communicate in speech and action, and receive impressions and reactions". In this session, it was also my intention for participants to use group interaction as a means of educating themselves and others in the group about issues which affected them. This activity helped participants to work from action to reflection in a visible and concrete way.

Small Group Sculptures

Group A presented a sculpture depicting picture 5 ("Reaching out to heal a broken world"), with some participants (gay) reaching out to others (heterosexuals), who angrily shunned them. Group

B depicted picture 4 ("Hope for tomorrow"), with different participants taking on various positions of gays in the past, present and future. The sculpture presentations managed to grip the participants attention as the other group gave their impressions of the sculptures. The observing group was able to easily analyse the presenting groups' image.

Paired Sculptures

This type of sculpturing gives every participant an opportunity to sculpture someone else and to be sculptured by their partner. Being a one-to-one exercise, it provides both the shy and the bold participants with the same opportunities in a less-threatening way. The paired sculptures made participants aware of the amount of control they had over their own lives. Those who were in a position of power and control mentioned how good it was to have been in that role. After having experienced both the roles of the oppressor and the oppressed, almost all the participants, except one, preferred the dominating role instead of the weak, despondent and helpless role. Those who were in the disempowered position expressed how angry they were at those who oppressed them.

Whole Group Sculptures

For those who displayed leadership qualities, this was their chance to sculpture the whole group. Thami, for instance created a good story line, starting off with a friend writing a letter to someone close to him, and concluded with a depressed person, sitting curled up on the floor. After Thami had explained his sculpture, Nhlanhla de-roled himself from the sculpture and became the new sculptor. He sculptured a family scene, where the parents were worried about their son who was not home as yet. To their dismay they were later informed by a neighbour that Thami waited for dusk before he secretly met his gay lover at a nearby forest. When asked about whom they preferred as their sculptor, participants unanimously preferred Nhlanhla and agreed that he was sensitive to their needs and less authoritative compared to Thami who bullied them around.

Final impressions:

This session was very intensive and mentally exhausting for the participants. Most of them displayed a low level of enthusiasm and energy, possibly caused by work stress and also the fact that the more influential people in the group were not as engaged in the dramatic activity as they usually were. It is interesting to note that the mood of certain participants in the group can drastically alter the mood and performance of the entire group. Perhaps one of the above activities should have been carried forward to another session. Participants however agreed that

this session was very educative compared to previous sessions. In the "image" activities they mentioned that they had never thought that there were so many different ways in which people were oppressed. The reason for this new understanding, was that they did not just hear about it or see it, but they did it and discovered a new dimension to what was already there. I felt that participants managed to develop skills of interpretation and expression through the pictures and sculptures. This session could have been more effective and have had more impact if there had been a deeper level of focus and concentration.

Session 7

Aim: To develop assertiveness by challenging gay discrimination through debates and sculpturing and by working from action to reflection.

The "transformation of gestures" exercise worked well and managed to get the group in a better mood. Participants seemed to be more vibrant and refreshed and were willing to contribute creative movements and sound to the group. The group's energy was raised and their levels of focus increased. The focus and concentration exercises, "stealing space" and "fishing ritual" were done with a real sense of excitement.

Main Activity:

- a) Pictorial stimulus review and debate - Various small groups share their impressions of their pictures. The existing small groups join together to form a large group that is anti-gay, and protests against the small group's presentation, their impressions and views.
- b) Sculpture feelings arising from debate - In pairs, participants decide to be either A or B. A becomes the oppressor who is more powerful than B. A freezes in his position. B who is in an oppressed position takes on a more assertive, dominating and more empowered role. B tries to make himself more powerful than A and freezes in that position. Participants are questioned in role.

Based on the discussions that arose from the previous session concerning participants' impressions of various pictures that were handed to them, I decided that they should use those impressions to stimulate further debate concerning areas of interest and concern to them. In the pictorial stimuli activity, participants got into their groups and reviewed their impressions of the

pictures used in the previous session (App.E: 237). Each group (gays) had an opportunity of presenting and defending their impressions to the other groups (anti-gay). Factors of communication were not important here, as the group was more focussed on sharing the impressions that came to them from the pictures that they had collectively chosen. All their contributions were accepted as being of equal value. The interest that was shown in their contributions and the fact that we as a group did not single out impressions that we felt were better, made it possible for participants to grow in confidence and interest. Another factor owing to this growth in confidence was the informal atmosphere that was created for effective sharing to take place. Their impressions were followed by short discussions / debates which gave rise to some interesting questions which appear below:

Picture 1: Caged

Group's Impressions: Our world denies us our true feelings and creates barriers which imprison us. We have to remain restricted behind these barriers (prison bars) because of the general community's belief that being gay is wrong.

Questions arising from the debate

- Why do gays feel trapped or imprisoned by society?
- Don't you think that they may be trapped within themselves or they may be prisoners of their own conscience? Why?
- Why do gays sleep around so much?
- Are gays responsible for spreading AIDS? Why?
- Did it occur to you that gays in that picture may be locked up for public indecency or abusing children?

Picture 2: In the closet

Group's Impressions: We become prisoners of our own thoughts and actions because we learn to suppress and deny our true identities, yet we have the power to regain our own self-acceptance.

Questions

- Why do gays have to conceal their identities?
- Are they hiding because of fear or guilt? Why?

- Are there laws to protect them? What are they?

Picture 3:

Toy-toy

Group's Impressions:

Our repressed feelings re-surface with a vengeance, which causes us to react in angry outbursts. Our pain and suffering allows us to get up and to take action against those situations which aim to "domesticate" us.

Questions

- Why do gays protest?
- Why should gays be given equal rights when their religious and societal institutions regard what they do as taboo?
- Do you think that gays are genuinely preserving their family and cultural values?
- What about children? How can one talk about preserving one's values without producing generations to carry them on for you?

Picture 4:

Coming out

Group's Impressions:

The liberation and the healing process begins. It's time for a renaissance of the true human spirit. The internal externalises itself into a new sense of life and self-actualization. A naked newborn without any culturally restricting garments is born.

Questions

- Is it necessary for all gays to flaunt their gayness? Why?
- Why do you think people get upset when they see effeminate- looking men?
- Why is "coming out" regarded as such an important issue when it can be so risky?
- If you were heterosexual, what kind of child would you wish for - gay or heterosexual?
- As a gay parent, would you prefer your child to be heterosexual / homosexual / bisexual? Why?

Picture 5:

Helping hands

Group Impressions:

Healing becomes a mutual process. After the re-birth from pain,

and a child is only born through pain, our duty is to reach out to others in oppression. The strong hand must reach out to the weak - this is the purpose of our re-birth.

Questions

- How does the community's intolerance affect you?
- Do you think that there is any hope for gays today? Why?
- If you have the choice to be born again, would you choose to be heterosexual / gay?

The debate grew with intensity as Sylvester brought up the following statement, "Being gay is a choice." This statement opened up a "new can of worms" for the group. Participants were furious and expressed themselves in a very angry, yet assertive manner, using their bodies and facial expressions as well. In their anger, they started directing the following statements to Sylvester:

- "You cannot change your feelings if you're born with them."
- "It's not a matter of choice but of finding your real identity."
- "You cannot suddenly change your sexual feelings and start sleeping with a woman."
- "Choice for me is choosing a lover. No one can force me to sleep with a woman."
- "I am twenty-seven years old, and I have never slept with a woman. You can take me to the Church to be prayed for or to the witch-doctors. Try to get them to cast the demons out of me, but nothing will work. I am gay through and through."

The kind of tension which arose in this activity was not planned for, but it made me realize that participants were able to engage themselves more effectively in situations of tension and discomfort. A conflicting idea always helps to inject tension in the group. The assertiveness that emerged from the group because of the amount of tension that was present in the dramatic activity was overwhelming. Participants knew their stance on the above issue and they clearly made that stance audible and visible, with a genuine passion and conviction.

Now that the participants were energised by the discussion, the sculpturing activity worked well in getting them to be verbally quiet, but at the same time physically active. Once again, their

assertiveness skills came into operation as each participant attempted to be more powerful than the other. In his anger, one participant even tried using force to push his partner down and to hold him there. Once again, one must be prepared for undertones of violence and fighting. This was getting out of hand, so I stopped the action and asked them to scream as loudly as possible at the count of three and thereafter de-rolled them. The process of de-rolling helped participants to return to their normal selves, thus leaving behind emotions which emerged in their roles.

Final impressions:

Overall, this session provided participants with opportunities to physically and verbally assert themselves. In reflection, participants were pleased with the content of the workshop and the direction that the debate had taken. It was here where they realised that their problem does not only exist out there in the heterosexual community, but within the gay community as well. They could not understand how another gay person, i.e. Sylvester, could make such a betraying statement. Participants left the session feeling proud of themselves for the stand that they had all taken together.

Session 8

Aim: To develop our ideas and imagination to create memorable stories using objects and mime.

Participants were energised in an exciting way during warm-ups. The "group-huddle" was well enjoyed as they worked together as a team. The focus and concentration and voice exercises were done with a new zeal and enthusiasm.

Main Activity:

- a) Object story telling - Participants are paired off into two groups. Each group is given different objects. Participants have to choose an object and make-up gay related stories, using these objects. They are to imagine that these objects were lost when they were six years old and now finally recovered. This discovery could bring good or bad memories.

Participants sit facing each other. Each participant tells the other his object story in the mother tongue, Zulu.

- b) Mime - After each participant shares his story, he mimes the story with facial and body expressions and movements to his partner. After some time, participants voluntarily mime their stories with the large group which tries to guess what the story is.

From the personal experience that I have had of writing and telling my experiences in story form, which I learnt from the Walk and Squawk Performance Project, I decided that this group should be given a similar opportunity to create their own stories using various objects. Participants were given a variety of objects which were appropriately selected for this activity to choose from. Some of these objects were; crowns, loofahs, pine cones, shells, knitting needles and so on. Another reason for me using this technique is the belief that de Graft (1976) has of story-telling which he claims has played an important role in the social and psychological well-being of African society. It was hoped that this process would not only create a deeper level of sharing and openness between the participants but it would also provide them with a powerful medium of self-expression.

The objects for this session were randomly selected and equally divided between two small groups. In their small groups, participants shared the following stories using objects of their choice:

Object: Crown
Sandile: As a young boy, I remember my sister winning a beauty pageant. I always hoped that I would win a crown like hers one day.
Bheki: My grand-father fought for the civil rights movement, and won this crown. I will fight for the gay liberation movement.

Object: Loofah
Nhlanhla: My mother sang to me while she played this instrument for me when I was a baby.
Vusi: My best friend and I used to play dolly house when we were young. He gave this to me as a lucky charm.

Object: Pine cone
Eric: My father died when I was young. I found this near his grave-yard.

S'bu: We used to live on the farm. As boys, we walked a long way to fetch these to make a fire.

Object: Marble stone

Walter: I found this when I was small and used to stick it on a ring, and placed it on my finger. It looked beautiful.

Chris: My father's grave, in Cape Town has lots of these stones. I look at them and think about my father.

Object: Shell

Nkanyezi: I keep in touch with my ancestors with this shell. When I place it on my ear, I can hear them listening to me and I feel connected to me.

Sylvester: My father brought this from the sea. I did not know what the sea was until I went to see it for myself.

Object: Knitting needle

Thami: I went shopping with my mother and cried to her to buy me these needles. After being persistent, she bought them for me. I can now knit a jersey for Nhlanhla.

Participants choice of language for expression:

Whilst participants felt that they could express themselves better in Zulu, they preferred to share their stories in English so that their second language could be improved upon. The reason for my allowing them to use the Zulu medium was so that they could share their stories using the language of their "heart". A clear understanding of their story sharing enabled them to effectively mime their stories. This worked very well as most participants willingly offered to present their mimes in the large group. The objects that were used by the participants acted as a central focus to their stories and was not used as a piece of decoration by themselves during this activity.

Reflection:

The object story-telling activity was thoroughly enjoyed by most participants who briefly shared their stories with the whole group (App.C, Figure 8: 234). Most of the above memories were sad. Even though they possessed elements of fiction about them, they represented powerful images which were of importance to the participants. In most cases, participants spoke about people or objects that were important in their lives, what these people or objects meant to them and why.

For example, Sandile's dream of becoming a beauty queen came true. Sylvester did eventually come all the way from Lesotho to discover our vast ocean. Nkanyezi is a Christian, but is also very much in touch with ancestral veneration. Thami is a well-known dress-maker in his Sobantu community, and Walter enjoys wearing elaborate jewellery.

Final Impressions:

In this session, it became clear that participants had learned to develop their imaginations and ideas with the use of concrete objects. Participants effectively tapped into their imaginative resources and created some interesting stories. They had also learned the importance of body language (mime) and their uses for communication with each other. This session was visually exciting and kept the participants fully engaged in their activity. Participants were also able to acquire interpretation skills, which were useful during the miming activities that were performed. They easily gave voice to these. Story-telling and miming activities allowed the participants to acquire verbal interpretative skills and at the same time, developed their imaginations further. I am confident that their confidence levels have increased and participants are experiencing holistic development, in its true sense.

Session 9

Aim: Learning to stand together for one's democratic rights, using posters and whole group song and dance.

Main activity

- a) Poster-making - In pairs, participants create their own posters for a "Stand up for your rights" march. Participants show each other their posters and discuss them.
- b) Toyitoying - The whole group prepares for a march and chant to be staged for the president, with the aim of convincing him and his cabinet that they are no different from the heterosexual community and that they need to be treated with equal human dignity and respect.
- c) Victory dance - Participants spontaneously show their excitement after hearing that the law regarding gay rights has been accepted and passed by engaging themselves in a victory ritual of song and dance.

- d) Interviews by the media (reflection-in-role) - Gay celebrants are interviewed concerning their feelings over their victory.

Since active learning rather than passive learning is seen as a more effective way of getting people to look at their personal ideas, attitudes, problems as well as feelings, including the behaviour of others, this session was aimed at engaging participants in activities that they could easily identify with and at the same time enjoy doing.

In a previous group discussion, participants mentioned that they enjoyed drawing. Their interest in the poster making activity made it all the more exciting and helped to build belief for the "toyi-toyi" activity that was to follow. Participants were able to easily express themselves through their drawings. Most posters had common elements of "We want gay rights", "Viva gays", "We're African, we're black, we're Christian and we're here to stay." Vusi expressed his dislike for this activity saying, "This makes me feel like a child." Throughout all the other sessions, Vusi always chose the role of a grand-mother, thus earning the title "gogo". Interestingly enough, after encouraging him to draw anything he wanted to, he drew a sketchy picture of a stick figure surrounded by beautiful flowers, with a caption "Viva gays" above the stick figure. His drawing was childish but it had an innocent story to tell. "Gogo" was one of those who thoroughly enjoyed the "flowers and sunshine" relaxation exercise. He mentioned his love for flowers and plants whenever the opportunity arose. Here, in his picture, he saw himself as the "miserable" looking man surrounded by natural beauty, and trying to stand up for his rights in his own way. This for me was a powerful expression of himself. All that I did was provide a little encouragement, and this opened up a new level of expression and understanding for him.

During this extremely successful activity and those that followed, participants were enroled as gay people who were determined to fight for their rights. This enrolling technique allowed them to experience and express different emotions, from extreme anger to immense joy and excitement. In preparation for the march, S'bu and Nhlanhla spontaneously took the liberty of chanting the following song in Zulu:

Sibatshelile (we've told them)

Helele ma ziyez'inkonkoni (that the moffies are coming)

Ziyez'inkonkoni (the moffies are coming)

Hulumeni uvele wavala x 2

(the government has just closed the doors with our rights inside)

Zinkonkoni vulani (gays must open).

The rest of the group harmoniously joined in. There was enough tension injected in this activity, as the participants were told that the government did not think that they were a group of people whose lifestyles were worthy of acceptance.

Their presentation to the president was most moving. Participants seemed to be very convincing and serious in their joined endeavour to claim their rights. The president's refusal to publicly accept gays gave them a greater impetus to continue toying. This time, with greater determination to get what they wanted.

The victory dance engaged the participants in jubilant song, hugs, screams of "We did it", "Viva!" and a variety of traditional African dances, where single participants entered the circle and charismatically sang and danced. After all, it was worth the struggle, and there was indeed a need to celebrate.

This activity was interrupted by the Natal Witness reporter (person-in-role) who interviewed the joyous crowd (in-role). Responses of joy and excitement stemmed from the participants.

Reflection:

Later, in reflection, participants spoke about how realistic the sessions had been for them and how the prior warm-up and poster-making activity prepared them for the "main" moment of hearing the verdict. They also mentioned that the facilitator's role in the activity was very realistic and believable.

On a more joyous note, the session ended up with participants completing evaluation forms, receiving their certificates and fellowshiping around refreshments that were provided. Almost every session ended with refreshments, which allowed participants to adjust to their normal selves before leaving the drama space. Grainger (1990: 81) argues that in most cases, people who were engaged in dramatic activity are engrossed by the main activity that had taken place and very often, the closing phase is neglected. Most participants spoke about how empty their weeks will be now that the workshops were over and expressed a desire to continue with workshops

such as these.

5.3 Conclusion

Chapters One, Two and Three have been largely concerned with theory, while this chapter has focussed on putting the theory into practice with an actual group who volunteered to participate in a series of drama workshops. This chapter deals more specifically with personal areas of interest and concern to the drama group, ie. gay oppression and discrimination. It also deals with people, both within and outside the group, as well as their ideas, attitudes and emotions.

In this chapter, some of the important structural elements which underlie and support the educational, conscientising and therapeutic processes of drama are briefly described. This dramatic structure as Grainger maintains, "speaks the language of human intentions and emotions instead of merely using language to speak about them" (1990: 71). It was intended that participants, as a collective group, would dramatically explore and experiment with their ideas and experiences through imaginary contexts.

The initial creation of a democratic atmosphere, where people in the group got to know and learned to trust one another, provided an excellent foundation for effective group work to take place in later sessions. The first session, aimed at getting participants to know their bodies (Boal, 1985) and others in the group through dramatic play helped them to achieve a certain amount of group cohesion. It was here that they also learned to concentrate and to actively involve themselves in the group activities at hand. Throughout the workshops, participants were encouraged towards achieving higher levels of self-confidence and acceptance.

The use of appropriate games and exercises helped participants to focus, concentrate, increase their energy levels and to relax. During these activities, participants were given the freedom to enjoy themselves in ways that did not make them feel self-conscious or embarrassed. Concerning self-consciousness, Grainger (1990) points out that people can learn more about themselves and others by amusing themselves with activities that they do not usually engage themselves in. An example of this could be the movement exercise in session four, where participants exaggerated their movements so much so that these became unrealistic and comical. However, the lesson that they learned from this session was that their bodies have the ability to express themselves (Wethered, 1973; Boal, 1985). The element of humour did not deny participants their newly

found understanding of their body's abilities and limitations. This activity certainly enabled them to reach new levels of intellectual, spiritual and emotional self-consciousness. They themselves admitted that they felt more confident in themselves, and this confidence removes feelings of childishness or embarrassment.

Some participants who were initially a disturbance to the group or shy because of an introverted nature, became more engaged in later sessions. In sessions two and three, they managed to find support and inspiration from others in the group who confidently shared their stories. Also, the enrolling process helped to empower them through voice and form, which temporarily helped their belief in the drama. This approach of distancing oneself from "being me", helped those who were shy and afraid to share their experiences through another character, thereby safe-guarding them from others in the group.

Reflecting on these sessions, I feel that there has been a considerable move from a negative self-image, caused by the social stigma attached to gay people, towards a more positive self-acceptance. Participants managed to creatively and imaginatively respond to the challenges that they were faced with from time to time. A development of one's creativity and imagination (Way, 1967) as revealed in session two can help increase one's confidence level. An acknowledgement and acceptance of challenges approached in an imaginative and creative manner can help participants to cope with similar situations in the future.

The dramatic structure and flexibility of the role-play technique in session five provided participants with an opportunity to give vent to their innermost feelings and at the same time to develop empathy for others who did not quite understand them. Participants had a chance to talk about their experiences as well as live through these in the dramatic context. Another technique that allowed them a similar opportunity was the improvisation technique in session five which enabled participants to extend their imaginations by looking more deeply into their problems, through dramatic enactment, and by trying out various possible solutions to their problems, which they themselves came up with.

A common element in most of these sessions was that participants were able to communicate their hurts and pains through a new language of expression. Drama as this new language enabled them to give both voice and form to their previous experiences. This process of learning and empowerment helped them to gain skills for interpreting and analysing body language and

images which they could now easily identify with. It also taught them to work from action to reflection in order to consolidate their learning.

Each session concludes with a section on reflection / final impression, where participants were encouraged to reflect on what had happened in a spirit and atmosphere of safety and mutual support. They contributed to the reflection their experiences and in so doing added new dimensions to lasting and meaningful learning. Reflection worked well when it was shared, heard and appreciated, both in the small and large group context. In reflection participants were encouraged to critically evaluate the functioning of the group dynamic and suggest how it could be further improved.

The reflection phase also revealed whether any learning had taken place or not and whether the had drama worked for these participants or not. Some experiences were immediately internalised while others were rehearsed for future use (Boal, 1985). In drama, it is expected that people will take on various roles other than themselves. Unlike this traditional expectation, participants in these workshops were expected to remove their masks of pretence and to be themselves in the dramatic activity, unless otherwise stated. Even the fictional activities that they were dramatically engaged in were aimed at getting them to critically reflect on their own functioning as well as those of others. This is what made the "freeing the body, freeing the soul" workshops all the more unique.

CHAPTER SIX

AN EVALUATION OF THE "FREEING THE BODY, FREEING THE SOUL" WORKSHOPS

6.1 Introduction

Questionnaire Two (see App. F: 238) was helpful and rewarding for me because it revealed the success of the workshops. The overall sentiment expressed by the participants was, "We should continue doing this kind of thing [drama] with our own people [black gays]."

The answers to the questionnaire appear in the order that the questions appeared in the questionnaire.

6.2 A Summary of the workshops

Age:

Age (average age: 28)	22	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	34
No of participants (total: 14)	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	1

Relationships:

Relationship	Single	In relationship
No of participants (total: 14)	9	5

Religion:

All fourteen participants claimed they were Christians. I deliberately chose black gay Christian males for the purpose of this specific research because of the socio-religious component which affects their functioning as free-willed, practising gays. The aspect of Christian spirituality and the mainline Church's negative stance on gay Christians plays a major role throughout this research.

1. Did you have any previous training or experience in drama?

Previous drama experience	Yes	No
No of participants (total:14)	7	7

It is disturbing that only 50% of the participants had previous drama experience. Of those participants who had no previous drama experience, many hoped that they could have had an opportunity of doing drama at school and expressed a need for this experiential and empowering subject to be offered in the school curriculum. They based this desire upon the experience they had gained by actively engaging themselves in the "freeing the body, freeing the soul" drama workshops. Participants who had previous experience in drama claimed that they were involved in the following:

- acting in school and church stage plays;
- studied and acted at Indumiso College;
- acted in Zulu drama (a short play on HIV Aids).

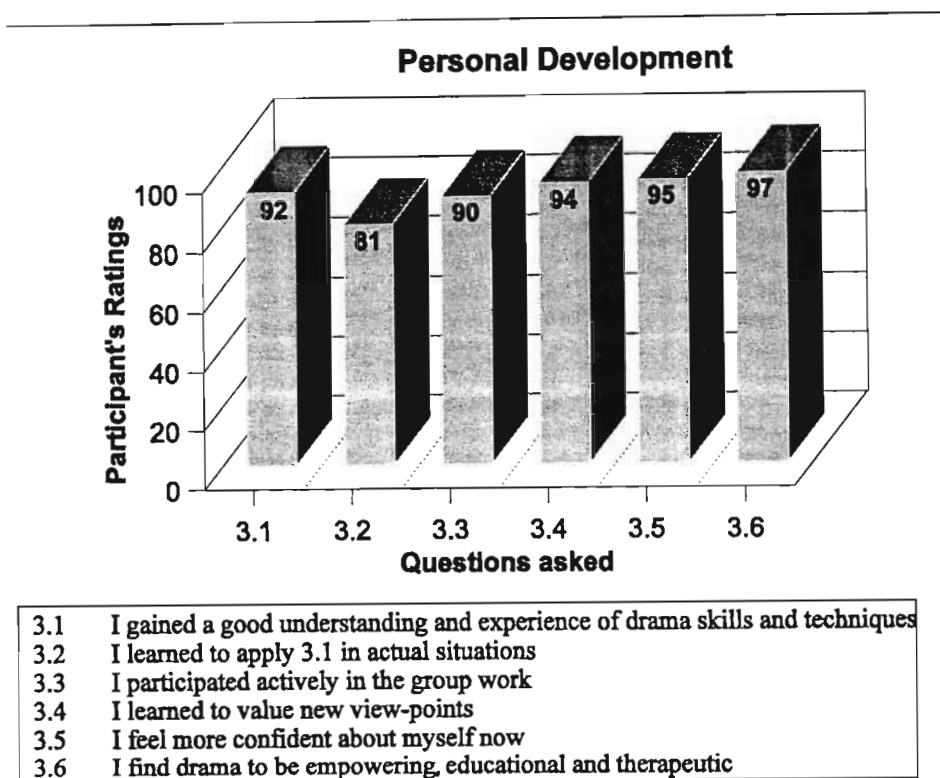
2. Why did you join the drama group?

The most common reason for participants joining this drama group were their keen interest in drama. For example, one participant wrote, "I never had the opportunity to do drama before." And another, "This may be a chance for me to prove myself." Others joined the group to acquire drama skills and techniques and to gain more experience in drama. At least three of them wrote of their need to communicate more easily with others. Four joined so that they could be together with other gays. Two of them joined because of curiosity and also because their friends were already part of the group. One participant wanted to improve his acting skills so that he could do stage plays.

From this question, it became obvious that participants had mixed expectations. Most of the above expectations, however, were covered in the workshops. A large percentage of the participants felt that it would have been good to do a stage play to conclude the workshops but unfortunately, the restricted time we had did not permit us to do this.

Also, it was not my initial intention to focus on the acting aspect of drama, even though I feel that it would have been interesting to workshop a play which deals with the various issues that arose from the actual workshops, using the various dramatic skills that participants had acquired in the workshops and to present it to each other or to an outside audience that they felt comfortable with.

- 3a. In terms of personal development, participants' ratings were as follows (see attached graph):



- 3b. How will you use what you have learned and experienced in these workshops?

Five participants wanted to use drama to do Church and community plays. Three of them mentioned that the workshops were already helping them to relate more easily to others

as they became more understanding of people within their home and work environments. One participant felt that he could use the new methods of drama that he acquired from the workshop to make his teaching career more creative and exciting, even though drama was not his teaching subject. Others had various reasons such as using the workshop

exercises and games with friends, entertaining children and youth in the Church and community, and teaching others who felt disempowered (for example, abused women in the community), to become assertive and to work together.

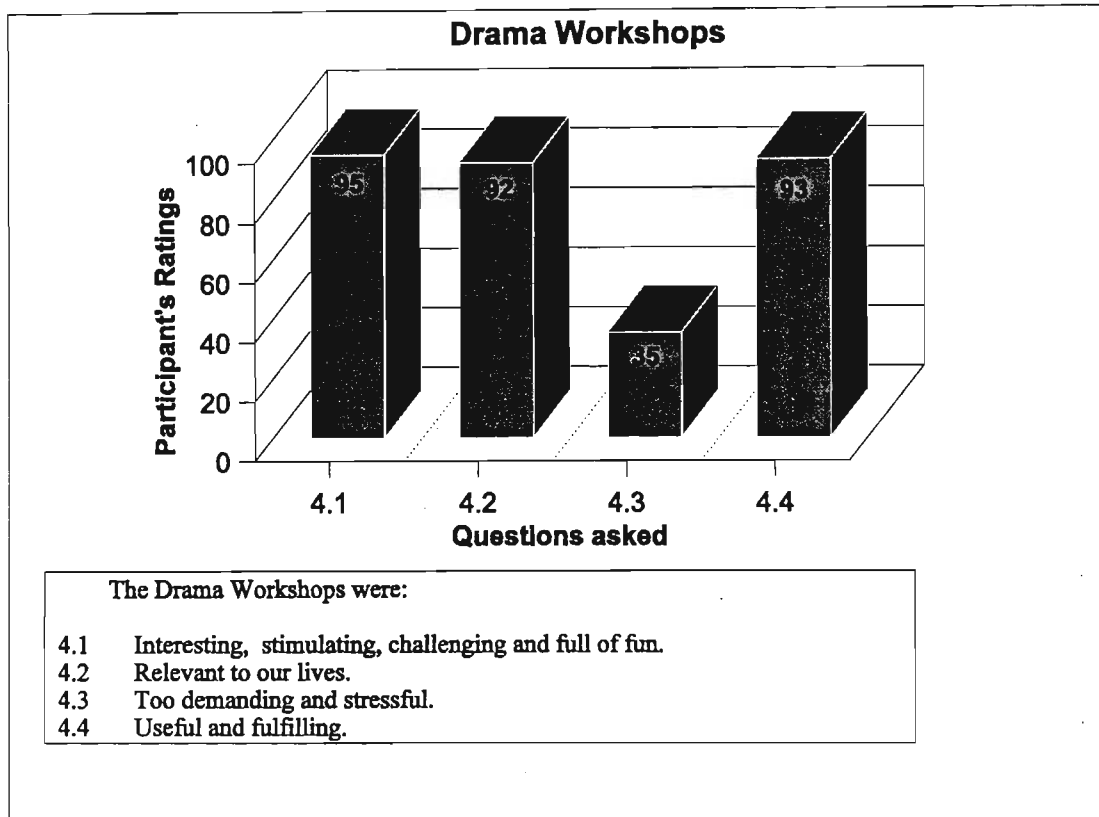
Those participants who showed a keen interest in doing stage plays, claimed that they now had a better understanding of acting and the basic skills that an actor needed. They were willing to pass this newly acquired knowledge and skill onto others who were interested in doing drama. One participant mentioned, "we are not called drama-queens for nothing, therefore, let's give them all that we've got". Another participant added, "all our lives, we are performing. We have to watch the way we talk, the way we walk, the way we dress... Some of us are so used to that way of life that it's now almost natural to us". These responses revealed that the workshops will enable those participants who are comfortable with their sexual orientation to do what is most natural to them with a new zeal. It will also enable those who are not as comfortable with their gayness, to find some kind of personal and social integration through their involvement in the drama workshops.

3c. What other issues / topics of interest would you have liked to learn about?

Participants wrote down the following issues which appear in order of popularity:

- gay counselling and support groups;
- AIDS and safe sex;
- drugs and alcohol abuse;
- gay bashing (cultural and constitutional rights);
- gay friendships and relationships;
- learning about other South African gay cultures;
- gay resources, especially educational information for closeted gays;
- how to do gay stage plays, including lesbians and gay friendly heterosexuals;
- personal and public behaviour of gays;
- gay role-models.

- 4a. In terms of the actual drama workshops, participants rated these as follows (see attached graph):



- 4b. The workshops were done primarily in English but opportunities were created for you to express yourself in your mother tongue (Zulu). Did you prefer it this way?

All fourteen participants preferred the above medium for the following reasons:

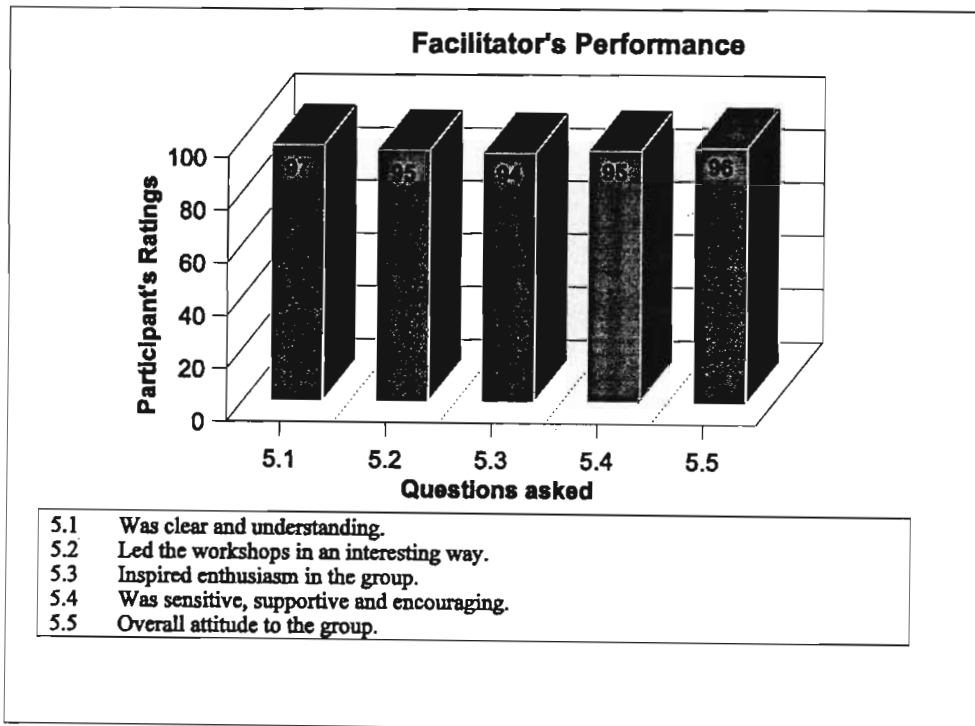
- they learned to speak English better;
- both languages offered them an opportunity to express themselves in the medium of their choice;
- their vocabulary was increased;
- they did not have to be afraid of making mistakes;
- they could communicate ideas more easily in the language of their choice.

One post-graduate student felt that the language medium of expression did not really matter much to him.

4c. How would you describe your attitude towards the workshops?

The overall response from the group was that the workshops were interesting, exciting, and different. Nine participants felt that the workshops were interesting, exciting and different. Three felt that they were interesting and exciting. One felt that they were exciting and another that they were different.

5a. In terms of the facilitator's performance, participants provided the following ratings (see attached graph):



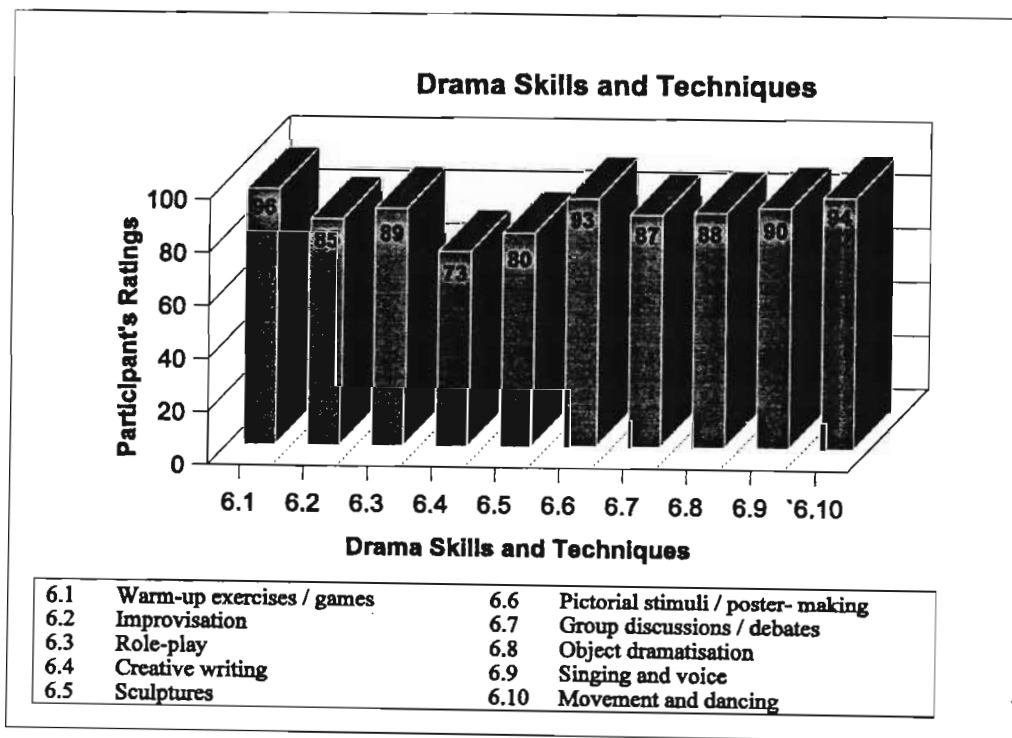
5b. What was it like working with a facilitator from a different race group (Indian) other than yours?

From the following responses, one can ascertain that participants had positive things to say about their Indian facilitator:

- it was just like working with my own;
- moving and enjoyable;
- for me race is not a problem, it is character that matters;

- this was the first time someone from another race or even from our own showed an interest in us;
- I felt encouraged. We worked as a rainbow team;
- working with him has taught me some of his culture too;
- it was a great experience - we felt comfortable working with him;
- I felt honoured working with him;
- it does not really make a difference to me.

6a. In terms of drama skills and techniques learned, participants rated these as follows (see attached graph):



7. What did you find most helpful about these workshops?

In trying to evaluate what was most helpful and what participants got out of these workshops, the following was noted:

- participants enjoyed various exercises and techniques that were taught to them. One participant also stressed the importance of body language and mentioned

how confident he felt after having discovered some of the new things that his body is capable of doing;

- participants felt good about sharing their ideas and experiences with others like themselves in the group. They mentioned how expressing themselves in different ways gave them a new sense of confidence. They were also pleased to know that they shared common concerns with one another;
- most participants were in favour of gays meeting together and being able to build group trust and a sense of solidarity. This coming together was for them the beginning of a new educational and conscientising experience;
- participants also wrote about how these workshops taught them to be more assertive and confident about themselves. One participant wrote, "I have discovered a new person within me. These workshops have helped me find the lost child inside me." Others wrote about how these workshops helped relieve them of their daily burdens and stress and how they looked forward to attending the drama workshops.

8. What did you find least helpful about the workshops?

While six participants wrote that "nothing was unhelpful", others made the following remarks:

- "I did not like being called a pig because the heterosexual community refers to us as pigs. They think that we are dirty". Vusi mentioned that he felt childish because he could not draw as well as the others in the group, and Eric mentioned how embarrassed he was at not being able to sing like the rest of them in the group;
- one participant was dissatisfied with the way in which participants often got together in their little cliques. He felt that we should have mingled with the others more, which would help us to learn more about those whom we knew little about;
- at least four participants expressed their disappointment in their not being able to do a stage play;

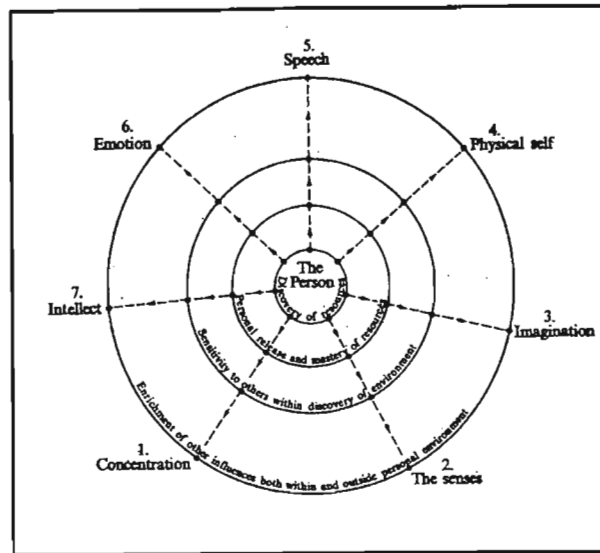
- S'bu mentioned that it would have been better if we found more concrete ways forward to the problems that we spoke about, which I thought were adequately addressed in the workshops;
- others felt that some of the warm-ups became boring and monotonous at times and preferred new ones;
- one participant expressed his dislike for group discussions and mentioned that they were sometimes boring.

9. Would you be interested in continuing with these drama workshops as a means of empowerment and healing in the future?

All fourteen participants agreed that they would like to continue attending workshops such as these, as this was the only constructive activity which they could engage themselves in as a collective group. Their only other meetings as a gay group was at the usual drinking venues or at private parties held in the townships. Even these had to be discreet or else they will have to bear the risk of being gay-bashed during or after these parties.

6.3 Conclusion

While the dramatic experience may have been visually exciting, stimulating and successful, one must be aware of the reflective process that occurred in the group as well. The workshops were structured in such a way that both the elements of experience and reflection were included in it. The findings from the above study reveals that participants were actively engaged in an experiential and reflective process. This holistic development of participants is fundamental to Way's (1967: 13) philosophy, which views the individual in terms of concentric circles with the individual at its centre, surrounded by circles representing one's use of personal resources, sensitivity to others and the influence of the environment.



Way's Concentric Circle Diagram

From the group's responses on their personal development, it is evident that a large percentage of participants (more than 90%) were able to move through these levels thus deepening their own understanding and functioning, and ultimately leading them towards an awareness of self in relation to others.

In terms of the actual drama workshops, almost 93% of the participants agreed that these were of interest and relevance to their particular context. While Way (1967) argues that it is not fully possible to observe each participant because of the facilitator's active involvement in the drama, I found it extremely helpful to work in role, where I was able to project an attitude instead of putting on a performance. The danger of putting on a performance is that it would cause the rest of the group to stop their action in the drama and to watch me, thereby removing the element of belief that may have been built in the drama. My participation in some of the activities encouraged others in the group to participate as free and equal partners in a democratic learning environment. Thus, my involvement both from within the drama (in role) and from outside (observer) confirms their claims that these workshops were interesting, stimulating, challenging, full of fun and relevant to their lives. This two-way process (involvement of facilitator and participants) makes their claims about the workshops being successful, all the more authentic.

With regards to the facilitator's performance, a large percentage of the participants (almost 95%) unanimously agreed that they thoroughly enjoyed working with a facilitator who was sensitive,

supportive and encouraging to them. They found that he was able to lead and involve himself in the workshops in a clear and interesting way, which inspired them to remain committed to the group. It was interesting to note that besides this being a first time for some participants to work through the medium of drama, it was also a first time for some of these black gay men to work with someone outside of their own race. They expressed their appreciation for the facilitator's interest in their lives and the issues that affected them.

Participants expressed a need for more groups such as these to be formed with the intention of promoting gay unity. They admitted that some activities that they were engaged in were effective in bringing about a new understanding and change in their attitudes and that these could be used in a positive way to get gay people to work and play (and even eat) together in the future, thereby creating more unity among themselves. They also mentioned that one of the most important lessons learned from these workshops was that they are special and that they should be proud of who they are.

They maintained that they felt a renewed sense of hope, optimism and empowerment through drama, and hoped that others like themselves may have a similar liberating and empowering experience. They also hoped that others (including heterosexuals), in their communities (as they knew of some who supported their plight), could be invited to participate in similar activities so as to create a better understanding between themselves (gays) and others whom they constantly related to (heterosexuals).

This is a positive sign and only reveals that participants had acquired skills and techniques that they found to be important for themselves and for others. In a sense, they had found meaning through drama by experiencing actual moments of dramatic encounters and by objectively analysing them so that these encounters made sense to them. Hopefully, this new self-awareness may shift from being a mere individual experience towards something that is more collective and communally empowering.

Allowing participants to develop critical and analytical skills, has enabled them to boldly move away from their initial responses of, "we enjoyed everything in the workshop" to more assertive responses concerning those aspects of the workshops which they felt were least helpful to them. This in itself is proof that participants had progressed outwardly, as seen from Way's (1967) circles of development, and freely expressed their likes and dislikes. They had obviously

developed a sense of trust and openness with the facilitator and with others in the group, even though it may have been easier for them (especially South African blacks, because of their traditional respect for their elders and "educators") to say good things about the workshops so that they do not deliberately cause any hurt to the facilitator's feelings.

Overall, the data obtained from this evaluation questionnaire revealed that participants were engaged in dramatic activities that have allowed them to look at themselves, their beliefs and attitudes, and those of others, from a new light. All the findings in this chapter point to one truth: that participants had gone through an experiential life-changing process. However, the degrees to which these experiences affect each individual may differ from person to person, since everyone functions on different levels. The important thing to bear in mind here is that participants have been equipped with skills and techniques that may last them a life time, and perhaps some day, when the need arises, they would tap into their own life-resources which they have gained from these workshops.

In terms of the drama skills and techniques that were employed during the workshops, these will be discussed in more detail in the chapter which follows.

CHAPTER SEVEN

AN EVALUATION OF THE DRAMATIC TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED DURING THE WORKSHOPS

7.1 Introduction

The process that took place during this research was determined by the aims and objectives of this project (which appear in Chapter Five: Session 1), and was based on the empowerment of the individual participant within the drama group context, using various drama techniques. This section focuses on an evaluation of the various drama techniques, strategies and devices that were used in the workshops. Most of these led to positive growth and empowerment of the participants involved. (See participants' responses in Chapter 6: 162ff).

7.2 Drama Techniques/Strategies

The following techniques/strategies were used:

- 7.2.1 Planning for a workshop
- 7.2.2 Games / warm ups / exercises
- 7.2.3 Questioning
- 7.2.4 Reflection
- 7.2.5 Group discussion
- 7.2.6 Forum theatre
- 7.2.7 Free-writing and story-telling
- 7.2.8 Improvisation
- 7.2.9 Role-play
- 7.2.10 Sculpture (image theatre)

I shall now attempt to evaluate each of the above techniques that were used in the "freeing the body, freeing the soul" workshops.

7.2.1 Planning

Byram argues that

planning is one of the ingredients of a successful workshop. The clearer we are of what we hope to achieve and what we want participants to learn, the easier it will be to plan a workshop. In order to ascertain whether we have achieved a goal, the objectives need to be measurable or observable. They should state the activities participants should be able to perform (1985: 45).

I agree with Byram that proper planning is an essential ingredient which helps one to determine the success of a workshop. The active involvement and responsibility of the participants helped to achieve the planned objectives. For example, with this particular drama group and their context, planning each session was equally important in preparing the group to be introduced to a new medium of self-expression. Proper planning in this case ensured that the participants were gradually taken through a sequence of dramatic techniques which eventually helped them in reaching a new level of self-actualization. One can easily tend to place the "cart before the horse", whereby the workshops may be conducted with very little or even no prior planning. Even the most experienced of people who are involved in workshop-facilitation-type of drama work will admit that inadequate planning may give rise to numerous problems of uncertainty, confusion and finally, disinterest on the side of the participants.

For the sake of practicality, each of the nine sessions as outlined in [App. B: 214-231], provided me with a basic structured frame-work within which I worked. For instance, in session four, I knew that I wanted participants to be able to express themselves through dramatic movement. The warm-ups and other exercises were planned in such a way that the aim of the session would be met. While one may argue that the outcome of the sessions' content (especially in community theatre) cannot always be guaranteed, one must realise that the form can exist as part of a structured session.

Considering the nature of this drama group, the workshops were tailor-made to suit their needs. A main feature of these workshops was that all nine sessions were carefully structured to ensure that participant's potential and capacity to develop were fully stretched without them having to feel intimidated or to lose interest in the workshops. The strategies that were used in each session enabled participants to acquire new life-skills and techniques. It also allowed them to take whatever had happened in the dramatic context and to process these in ways that helped individuals to draw on the group's experiences in a personalised way. Thus, this became an individual learning experience as well. Each session was designed to allow participants to gain a good intellectual and emotional grasp of the issues affecting them. The reflection phase (see 7.2.4 for more details) allowed participants to come to terms with their emotional experiences. More importantly, proper prior planning allowed me to work on the aims, objectives and outcomes of each session and ultimately the entire workshop in a progressive and constructive way.

7.2.2 Warm-ups / games

This technique was used throughout the workshop process. The initial session, being the first, was basically a series of warm-ups and other simulation games that participants were introduced to (See App.C, Figures 1-6: 232-233, for some examples). It was deliberately intended that participants become more acquainted with each other, with their facilitator and the type of work that they were getting themselves involved in. Also, it was in this session that I would have been able to deduce what kind of games and exercises they preferred and those that they tended to dislike.

Warm-ups and games were included in every session (even though they were not absolutely necessary for every session, depending on the group's state of development and the facilitator's intent) so that participants were engaged in playful activities which provided them with immediate ways of working together and of releasing their tensions as a group. These activities were aimed at facilitating individual and corporate growth and development by allowing participants to draw on their physical, emotional and psychological resources, in a relaxed and enjoyable manner. The energising warm-ups worked as a powerful tool which raised the participants' energy levels and easily led them to participate in the dramatic activity which followed. In most cases, the warm-ups, unbeknown to them, allowed participants to engage their total selves in the dramatic activity without any physical inhibitions or feelings of embarrassment.

I noticed that a great deal of touching one another in warm-ups such as "tag" and "group huddle" worked well in establishing group trust. Some participants spoke about how alienated they felt from the heterosexual community, and surprisingly from the gay community as well. They also mentioned how important touch was to them and how it made them feel special and more human. O'Toole (1976) asserts that it is necessary to engender security in the group, especially if they may have come from previous situations of struggle. For those participants who found it difficult to make sense of some of the issues that arose in the session's activities, the warm-up phase helped to gradually introduce them to those issues and experiences in a less- threatening and approachable way.

Through the warm-ups participants were able to easily learn new skills and techniques. The warm-ups also served to reinforce the need for focus, concentration and co-operation, in a way that enhanced their confidence levels through their active engagement in difficult situations. Also, participants needed to become aware of their vocal and physical resources which are important qualities for sustaining and developing their levels of confidence and self-esteem.

It was observed that in the early stages of the workshops, some participants initially displayed a sense of lethargy and disinterest, but in later sessions, when they had developed a relationship with me, and had become more familiar with what was expected of them, and when I had learned to give clear and concise instructions, most of the warm-ups were approached with a new sense of enthusiasm and interest, which proves that participants generally enjoyed the warm-ups and exercises that they were engaged in. Thus, it can be said that this technique was effective and successful.

7.2.3 Questioning

The questioning technique was constantly used before, during and after the dramatic activity. This technique ensured that the instructions given to the participants were clearly understood. It also helped to encourage creative thinking and allowed participants to critically reflect on their experiences. Probing, open-ended questions allowed for more personal, indepth answers from the participants. They were also encouraged to critically question their choices of words and actions, as well as those of the group's. This enquiring questioning approach helped them to gain a better understanding of themselves, others and the situations surrounding them.

Questioning was helpful during reflection as it allowed participants to process their actions of the dramatic activities that they were engaged in and to verbally express these newly formed opinions and views to others in the group. This process enabled them to gain a better understanding of themselves. Bolton (1973) warns one that if the participant has not gained a good intellectual grasp of his experience on an emotional level, and this can be determined by asking reflective questions, then the entire experience may become emotionally distressing for him. Participants were well aware that they were still being protected within the dramatic context, which encouraged them all the more to make genuine and honest contributions to the group.

In terms of gauging what learning had occurred for the quieter participants, it should be noted that questioning and responding to questions asked, does not necessarily have to be verbal, but can take the form of various body gestures as well. For example, occasional gestures made by myself, such as nodding the head, raising the eye-brow or pointing to a participant in the group helped to encourage and affirm them. It was observed that this proved successful in getting participants to openly express their inner views and opinions with the rest of the group. In most cases, participants would direct their contributions to the facilitator with the hope that these may be appreciated and accepted by him. The questioning technique encouraged them to share their learning experiences on a deeper level, thereby inspiring others in the group to make similar contributions as well.

7.2.4 Reflection

This was a tremendously useful device used when facilitating the group towards change. In most cases, facilitators rush through this phase because of time constraints. In this workshop, the reflection was as important as the warm-ups or the main activity. I tried to be flexible and to learn to respond to each participant's contributions in a positive and constructive way.

After each session participants came together and sat in a circle on the floor to reflect on their experiences of the session. Tamakloe (1976: 23-4) regards the circle as a symbol of God who is unseen in the universe. The earth is referred to as mother which revolves around the sun (father). The sun impregnates the earth so that the people of the earth can have food in abundance. Thus the circle becomes an African symbol reassuring the community [in this case the drama group] that God is energizing them. My personal view of the circle is that of a womb, which has the liberative force present within it and which after much theatrical discourse and emotional activity

has the potential to give birth to a liberational force within the lives of those participants who were engaged in the dramatic activity.

By the end of the ninth session I had managed to develop my questioning skills by critically reflecting on the content of the actual lesson done and also by going through researched material on the theme at hand. Participants were required to articulate their feelings in and out of role and also in relation to the dramatic techniques that they were engaged in during the workshops in a spirit and atmosphere of safety and mutual support. They also reflected on their feelings in relation to their daily life experiences and in so doing added new dimensions to lasting and meaningful learning.

Reflection also allowed for a time of peaceful closure, both for the participants and for myself, after having evaluated the session as a whole and determining whether it had worked for the participants or not. For example, session seven was a very intense session, in which participants debated the issue of, "being gay is a choice". This statement which was made by Sylvester proved to be an excellent tension injector and stimulated serious debates. Unfortunately for Sylvester, the angry group almost simultaneously bombarded him with a multitude of questions. Because of his firm stand on this issue, the group expressed more anger towards him and could not understand how a fellow gay person could make such a statement. While this "thorn in their flesh" statement worked well in getting participants to open up in verbal and non-verbal ways, I found it absolutely necessary for them to resolve their feelings of anger towards Sylvester. Later, during the reflection phase, participants were able to make peace with him. Had this peaceful closure not occurred, Sylvester would have been viewed as an opposition to the group, which could have created further problems of alienation and discrimination within the group itself.

The various methods of reflection that were used during the workshops were:

- Worksheets / questionnaires
- Writing their impressions on sheets of paper
- Drawings / pictorial stimulus
- Whole group discussion at the end (questioning technique)
- Small group discussions
- Expressions (Here, participants were asked to express their emotions using only

facial expressions.)

- Sculptures (Still or frozen images have the potential of capturing ones thoughts and creates many opportunities for participants to enter into dialogue with one another.)
- In / out of role (role-play and improvisation)

Reflection in role proved to be useful in following ways:

- it worked well as a control device;
- it allowed the facilitator to gauge what learning had taken place for the participants;
- it provided the facilitator and the participants with opportunities to find ways of moving the drama forward.

For example, participants were asked about their feelings towards writing and sharing their personal experiences of pain and humiliation [session two]. By asking individual participants these questions, their responses encouraged others in the group to relate their experiences to the other participants' responses. Reflection in role was used to find out how participants were feeling towards the government and their attitude towards gay people [session nine]. Listening to what this meant to them was most insightful. In reflection participants were encouraged to critically evaluate the functioning of the group dynamic and how it could be further improved. It must be noted that reflection worked well when it was shared, heard and appreciated in the group context. In most cases, the judgements made from the reflection phase affects the planning of future sessions. In a sense, this assessment process can help the facilitator to plan for more relevant and contextual sessions, which the group can easily identify with.

7.2.5 Group discussions

Working in small groups helped participants to gain a greater sense of autonomy. Every participant was given the opportunity to express his views and opinions. Participants agreed that larger groups were a little intimidating, especially for the quieter ones. For instance, some participants mentioned that they felt more comfortable sharing their personal experiences in pairs before sharing it with the large group [session three]. This one-to-one sharing enabled them to build up more courage which later became evident in the large group setting.

As their facilitator, I used my skills to tap into their knowledge, perspectives and experiences. It was not my task to be the sole speaker but rather to listen more to what they were saying and to guide them within certain boundaries. It was therefore absolutely necessary for me to interview people (formally and informally), and to gain background knowledge of their existing practices, beliefs and attitudes. This happened either before, during or after the sessions. Another major source of help was the information I obtained from thirty gay respondents [Chapter Four: 104-113].

This technique helped in finding out what the participants thought and felt. It was an immediate and honest way of exchanging ideas and hearing suggestions from the group. Another advantage of this technique was that it allowed us as a group to work through some of the language difficulties that existed between some of us. A deliberate attempt to break down this barrier helped us all to understand each other on a deeper level. Also, a problem related to one's second language can stifle participants' levels of confidence and self-esteem by making them feel out of place [Session Two].

I have observed that participants were not able to work well when left alone. They were not able to focus or motivate themselves as effectively as they would have if a facilitator had been present in their group. Allocating participants from the large group to facilitate small group discussions and activities, may have helped to relieve the "leader" of some of his responsibilities. This would have also encouraged "leaders" to emerge from the group itself. Once again, participants learned to develop skills of assertiveness and empowerment within small group contexts [Session Three]. I feel that any group's development can be easily measured through the use of this technique.

7.2.6 Free-writing and story-telling

I learned this technique from the Walk and Squawk Performance Project, an American Theatre Company who spent a three month residency in the Drama Studies Department, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg in 1997. Directors Erika Block and Hilary Ramsden asked us (10 cast members who were in the process of workshopping a play based on culture, geography and identity), to do a free-writing exercise on a given theme. We were also asked to go away and write of an experience where we felt out of place. I personally found this exercise to be most liberating and somewhat therapeutic. Personal real life stories can be a powerful medium for expressing oneself, coming to terms with reality and making oneself vulnerable to the other members in a group. This process can dramatically alter the group dynamics and can create a

deeper level of openness, sharing and intimacy, which is democratic and inclusive (Barnes, 1999: 165).

I was at first unsure of getting participants to write their stories, but later realised that once the experiences were thought out and put down on paper in the language of their choice, that, thereafter sharing the experience might be easier for the participants. My intention was not to test their writing or vocal skills but to find alternate ways of expressing their experiences, firstly, in a non-verbal way (through writing), secondly, in a verbal way and thirdly, in a dramatic way (through movement). The ritualistic act, i.e. dramatic movement (Grainger, 1990), has the potential of enabling participants to effectively "share" their experiences without them having to look for words or scripts of eloquence, which may distort the real experience.

Story-telling (Omodele, 1988; Holden, 1866) and oral narratives (Theal, 1970) are as old as history itself and started among hunter / gatherer societies. De Graft (1976) maintains that South African oral drama played a crucial role in the social and psychological well-being of the African society. He points out that drama as a distinct form,

begins to body forth, to precipitate from everyday life ... the element of impersonation or role-playing, as a means of achieving certain ends. On the surface these ends are many and varied; but at the deepest psychological level they are closely related to man's compulsive need, and therefore search, for sanity and security in a world that threatens from all directions (de Graft, 1976: 3).

It is clear that the social functions of African theatre, especially story-telling were spiritual, communal, educational and therapeutic. Marivate (1973) claims that African folk tales can be regarded as drama because in the telling of a story,

the narrator is often, at once, a poet, a singer, a musician and an actor ... The performance is total theatre in another sense, too, involving as it does the active participation of the audience (Schipper, 1989: 82).

During the free-writing and storytelling session (session two), some participants felt a need to own their experiences and wrote honestly and in depth, while others wrote superficially. The actual sharing of their experiences took a twist as those who had written superficially later gained encouragement from others in the group to openly share their own authentic experiences. For

Grainger (1990), it is exactly these narrative experiences that provide a link between spirituality and dramatic healing, allowing participants to express and explore their experiences at the deepest level of awareness. What was noticed from the documented stories and those that were spontaneously shared was the vast difference between vague and impersonal anecdote and specific, personal stories which aroused intense emotions.

The group empathetically listened to each others' stories. Not just because they wanted companionship or to be entertained, but because as gay people, they shared common concerns. Through listening, Gersie (1992) believes that participants are making an attempt to enter into someone else's life-experiences, thereby making that experience part of our own. This sharing of each other's experiences, enabled participants to deepen their knowledge and understanding of each other (Barnes, 1999) and increased their level of sensitivity to one another. Through the listening process, they hoped to find images within others' experiences which they could identify with. Many participants said that they felt a sense of catharsis through writing, telling and miming their own stories and by listening to others' experiences which were similar to their own. It is during times of crises (if the group sees their present condition as one), that people should be given opportunities to reflect on their experiences so that a clearer perspective of their situations may be gained and change may occur (Gersie, 1992). The writing and sharing session was a journey of struggle for this group, which opened up some new avenues of reflection and understanding that participants had never clearly understood before.

7.2.7 Forum theatre

Forum theatre includes techniques such as improvisations, role-play and sculpturing and proved to be an excellent problem-solving technique. No real conclusion may be reached in this type of theatre, but participants are able to use and understand what possibilities they have available to them. This definitely gave them a clearer understanding of their present situations and how those situations may be changed. After all, Boal argues that in forum theatre, "the participant has to intervene decisively in the dramatic action and change it" (1985: 139).

The forum technique proved to be an effective one, because of the pedagogic element of collective learning that was present in it. There was also a strong presence of dialogue, which helped to promote an atmosphere of democracy and inclusiveness. The absence of a judgmental and competitive spirit enabled participants to make some thought-provoking and challenging suggestions. The skits presented during this session [session five] were innovative, apt and

stimulated much discussion and dramatic action. Participants were easily engaged in dramatic situations which affected them, both on an individual and group level.

One of the problems encountered during this activity was that some of the participants were in the habit of dictating to others what they should do. Boal (1985) clearly suggests that the changes that people propose should be immediately enacted in order to test out the ideas. The quieter participants benefited from working in small groups, as they were gently encouraged by the rest of their group members to present their ideas. For example, Chris who was initially shy to intervene during a scene, was reminded of the idea that he suggested in the small group. An acknowledgement of his idea by his group made him feel that his suggestion was significant. This immediately motivated him to play out his suggestion.

In reflection, Chris and others like himself mentioned that the forum theatre technique made them feel good about themselves. They also expressed the appropriateness of this technique when dealing with issues such as theirs. According to the group, this was the first time that they had encountered such a straight-forward and realistic approach to dealing with their problems. Some of them believed that this technique must have been created especially for gay people. Their appreciation for this technique then only confirms my assessment of it as being a technique that was extremely beneficial to the group, and which will no doubt be utilised in real situations outside of the drama context. This is in keeping with Boal's (1985) belief that theatre is a rehearsal for the real thing that is yet to come.

7.2.8 Improvisation

This technique helped the group realise the issues and problems which existed among themselves and which needed to be solved. Dramatic improvisation helped participants discover themselves more clearly by placing themselves in difficult human situations. Participants were confronted by situations which changed their way of thinking and their attitudes towards certain issues because of what they faced when dealing with the dramatic challenges. Open-ended situations were easier for them to engage themselves in than more concrete situations. This technique required participants to assume the following: imagined place, imagined time, imagined situation and imagined character and relationship.

Short scenes were created by members in small groups, reflecting particular issues which they found problematic, for example, they used this technique to show the problems of "coming out"

as a black gay male in a heterosexual community [session five]. As a result of that improvised scene, all the group members suddenly realised that the issue of "coming out" was an important one that needed to be dealt with. The final product of dramatic improvisation is the experience of it. As Courtney (1970) asserts,

the ultimate expression of the process which characterises us as human and, therefore, must be explored, whole and complete, in practice and in theory within any valid Department of Drama ... Our job is to view the [dramatic] process and the [theatrical] form within the context of the special environment (Courtney, 1970: vol. 19 no. 3).

My task as facilitator was to show that improvisation could be used as a basis for enacting and discussing important issues. This process of spontaneous exploration into their problems, allowed the group to deepen their level of understanding. While we are aware that improvisation cannot always provide solutions to people's problems, what we can be definitely sure about is that it can provide people with a clearer understanding and realisation of the situation at hand.

7.2.9 Role-play

This technique is very similar to improvisation and at the same time different. Role-play is putting oneself in somebody else's shoes with the aim of increasing one's understanding of that role particularly in terms of perspectives and feelings. This is more useful if the group needs to develop an understanding of or realise a particular situation in someone else's context. However, unlike improvisation, where the group explores possible ways of finding a solution to their problems through drama, in role-play, participants were provided with opportunities to safely explore situations which did not affect them directly. For instance, role-play was used to assess their gayness and how that issue affected heterosexual people who were concerned about them, by putting participants in those people's shoes. Moving into this new world of imaginative possibility allowed participants to explore ideas and experiences from a safe aesthetic distance.

The role-play technique helped the participants to understand their heterosexual counterparts' initial reactions to them. Participants became more aware of this particular situation because they were able to explore issues from someone else's perspective. Role-play is relatively unstructured and unpredictable. It is also an activity without an audience as such. I have observed that role-play is a very loosely structured technique that requires people to spontaneously say and do things without any prior rehearsal. This "unpreparedness" helps to immediately engage the

participant in situations that lead him to a deeper involvement and understanding, which makes the aspect of personal exploration all the more intense and effective. In terms of educational value, role-play, because of its use in real group situations, allows participants to tap into their critical and analytical faculties. This skill will enable them to cope in real-life situations of a similar nature.

The term "de-role" cannot be divorced from role-play. These two go hand in hand. Participants have to get rid of the roles that they have been playing and return to being themselves. The danger of not de-roling a participant is that he may be left with unresolved feelings which emerged in his role. Another danger is that the group may continue to regard him as the role that he played and may continue to relate to him in that context which can be harmful to the participant himself and which can also alter the dynamics of the group.

It was evident that participants were making an attempt to act out the outer aspects of the person that they were role-playing. They were also able to try and understand how the person whom they role-played thought and felt. This technique was enjoyed by the group because of the practical experiential element that is required.

7.2.10 Image theatre (sculptures)

The use of sculptures proved to be a good non-verbal method of gauging participants' feelings during or after an activity. Depending on the group dynamics, the success of this method varied from time to time (App.C, Figure 7:234). Gersie et al. (1990: 358) assert that body images are "the physicalisation of the inner activity, the externalisation of inner life". As the facilitator, I made no attempt to interpret what the group portrayed. Rather, I allowed the rest of the group to share their impressions of what they viewed and also encouraged those participants within the sculpture to express what they were trying to portray. My interpretation of their sculptures would contain my experiences and perceptions which may possibly block participants from making sense of that experience for themselves. This process helped them realise the importance of peer support and group co-operation because of this activity's need to have participants work together as a collective group and not as individuals. The success of this technique depended on both those who were sculpted and those who viewed the sculptures and tried to interpret them.

The group did not prefer to use this technique as a main activity because of the following two reasons: firstly because it did not require a great deal of physicalised energy from them. And

secondly, because they did not enjoy working in the abstract [session six]. For these reasons, I did not impose the idea upon them. This technique was used however as a method of reflection [session seven] which was linked to the main activity of this particular session. Their dislike of this technique did not in any way disprove the effectiveness of using drama methodologies to bring about healing with this group. It proved to me that not all the dramatic techniques are practically possible and enjoyable with every theatre group attempting to use them. I felt that it was good, however, that I introduced this technique to them so that they could become aware of the various possibilities drama has to offer them.

7.3 Conclusion

It was important to make the sessions and the dramatic techniques that were introduced to the group as enjoyable and appropriate as possible so that the aims and the objectives of the workshops could be easily achieved. In most cases, the group managed to show a high level of interest in the different techniques that they were engaged in. Occasionally, some participants displayed low energy levels and a lack of enthusiasm in certain techniques [see 7.10 and certain warm-up exercises in Chapter five]. Their disinterest in certain techniques sometimes rubbed off onto others in the group, especially if they were influential members of the group. This inevitably alters the group dynamics. A more positive observation made over the course of the sessions was that most participants were present at almost all the sessions. Moreover, their interest and commitment to the workshops was evidenced by their willingness to encourage their friends to join the group as well. This was a positive sign of their interest in the drama work and the techniques that were being employed in these workshops.

Through various drama techniques and contexts employed, participants were able to get to know other gays in the group better and to gain a better understanding of their communities at large. Because of the intimate way in which people are required to work when using some of the above techniques, the group had definitely progressed in terms of team-work and peer-support. Initially, participants were somewhat withdrawn and shy of one another. Later, it was observed that the situation changed as participants had learned that each of them had the same democratic right to be empowered and to speak out in a safe and conducive environment. Although there were personal differences between some participants, these were often put aside when involved in the drama sessions.

I have no doubt that the drama techniques, especially the warm-up phase with the various "getting to know each other" and "trust" exercises, enabled participants to reach higher levels of confidence and self-esteem. This was evident as the sessions progressed. Another reason why their confidence levels increased was my own understanding of working with this group. Also, I chose drama techniques that I was most familiar with and which I thought they would enjoy. My own familiarity with the dramatic techniques and methodologies enabled me to foresee some of the possible changes of behaviour and understanding that I hoped may occur. For example, having developed a relationship with some of the group members before the actual planning and implementation of the workshops helped me to ascertain whether they would enjoy certain drama techniques or not. For instance, I knew beforehand that the group will enjoy the "be a queen" exercise and some of the improvisation activities. However, this was not totally true of every technique or activity, because different participants responded differently. Nevertheless, it was interesting to note that this being the first experimental workshopping experience for me and the group, it allowed me the flexibility to choose whatever techniques I thought were appropriate for the group.

It also helped to have a variety of techniques as opposed to a few, because participants have more options available to them. Another reason may be that some participants may become easily bored with just a few techniques, more so if those were the ones that they least enjoyed. Overall, one can conclude that most of the drama techniques that participants were engaged in were enjoyed and worked effectively to fulfil the aims and objectives of this workshop.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to explore the use of drama methodologies with a group of black gay men. The hypothesis was that the drama techniques employed would be valuable tools in the educating, conscientising and healing process of this drama group.

I began this dissertation by arguing that the Church's attitude (Boswell, 1980) towards gay people has been and continues to be one of repression, judgement and intolerance. It is my contention that the Church's intolerance stems from a deeply entrenched hetero-patriarchal theology which is a socio-religious construct.

I have also argued in chapter two that patriarchy and heterosexism (Hopcke, 1987) is supported by nearly every important cultural institution. The patriarchal and heterosexist biases and denial of femininity in men has created the stereotype that gay men are effeminate. Based on Hopcke's theory of gay men and femininity, I have sought to challenge gay men to incorporate those denied aspects of their sexuality in order to become integrated and wholesome beings.

From the above two chapters, one can argue that spirituality and sexuality play an important role in the communal lives of black gay males. While this can be to the detriment of their social lives, a change in their understanding and attitudes towards issues concerning their sexuality and spirituality, and also those of the community, can assist them to move away from disharmony within themselves and with others, towards an open communion and creative integration with themselves and others in their societies. According to respondents' profiles (p.114), 69% of the respondents believe that change in their community's attitude towards gays, is possible.

Chapter Three of Part One provides the evidence from various theorists and drama practitioners who have used the drama medium with different groups of people in experiential ways. The literature presented in this chapter provides a strong argument for the use of drama methodologies with this gay drama group or with any other oppressed groups of people. Drama, if contextually utilised, has the potential of bringing about personal and social healing with black gay men.

This study reveals that drama isn't by nature psychosystemic, neither is it natural but it can be constructed within the psychosystemic paradigm. Many drama therapy approaches such as Landy's role Theory, Emunah's Acting for Real and Grainger's Spiritual Drama Therapy, are not rooted in the psychosystems paradigm.

Part II of this study which focussed primarily on the application of the theory discussed in Chapters One, Two and Three with the actual drama group of black gay males confirmed the presuppositions made in the introduction of this study. The information in Chapter four, concerning black gay males' culture, spirituality, identity and sexuality which was obtained from thirty black gay respondents in the Pietermaritzburg area was helpful for the planning process of the workshops. Chapters Five, Six and Seven focus respectively on critical evaluations of the "freeing the body, freeing the soul" workshops by myself and by the participants; and of the drama techniques that were employed during the course of the workshops.

In the sessions attended, scientific proof could not be provided to determine what learning and healing had taken place. As mentioned earlier in Chapter Three, there are no clinical tests, assessments or treatment procedures that were used in this study. However, with the wide range of drama techniques that were effectively used, their appropriateness could be identified for this particular group. From the evaluations made of the workshops and the dramatic techniques employed during the workshops, made both by myself and the participants involved in the actual drama process, it became evident that participants were able to gain a better understanding of their involvement in the workshops. By the end of the course of sessions, participants seemed confident enough to apply the dramatic skills and techniques which they had gained from the workshops, in their everyday lives. This project had served as a stimulus to some of the participants. For example:

- one participant organised a Miss Gay Pietermaritzburg.
- two participants were selected for a Choir Group which won the Regional Choir Competition. They also took part in another competition held in Port Elizabeth;
- some of the participants volunteered to take a youth service at the Anglican Cathedral with the intention of enlightening young people on gender and gay issues.

What was useful here, was that participants felt empowered through drama as revealed by their responses (see Chapter Six). Drama did provide participants with empowerment, skills and opportunities to reach self-actualization, and at the same time, it provided the researcher/facilitator with opportunities to observe participants' expressions concerning their beliefs about themselves and others.

This experience of planning and implementing the above workshops has been an invaluable learning process for me. It gave me a realistic view of the problems faced when working with people who are in many ways like myself, but also in other ways not quite like myself. This group of people had different concepts, expectations and cultural needs from my own. Through this process, I have realized my own strengths and weaknesses as a facilitator in terms of planning, controlling and executing drama sessions. This experience of planning and executing workshops of this nature has taught me that there is no one, "correct", prescribed way of running a workshop.

The way in which a workshop is planned influences the way evaluation will occur. Different participants experience learning on a different level. Invariably, the facilitator has to rely on the visible, externalized behaviour of the participants in order to assess what learning has taken place for them. O'Neil et al. (1982) point out that because learning is often an inner experience, this can sometimes be problematic.

The following methods have formed a basis for evaluating these workshops:

- video recordings of most sessions;
- a detailed journal of each session's reflection phase;
- a detailed workshop evaluation questionnaire completed by participants;
- Active participation and critical observation of participants' behaviour and development in the sessions;
- determination of whether the aim and the objective of each session was achieved.

As the facilitator of this group and as a researcher, I feel confident to say that the "freeing the body, freeing the soul" workshops were predominantly successful. The project had its strengths and weaknesses, but for the participants and myself, the process was one of experiential learning.

Both the theoretical and the practical research for this dissertation have proved that drama, when formulated as an integrated educational, conscientising and therapeutic discourse can, can be psychosystemic. Not all drama techniques and methodologies, however, have the potential to bring about the desired results for change in a drama group. For instance, image theatre ranked lowest on the dramatic techniques graph (see chapter six). One of the reasons why participants disliked this particular technique was that it did not require a great deal of physicalised energy from them. Another reason was that most participants did not enjoy working in the abstract. As much as drama may have proved itself to be an effective medium of empowerment and development, it can still have some limitations and negative effects on a drama group, the reason being that not every drama technique will be relevant and appropriate for every group that employs drama to this end.

During the reflection phase which was held on the ninth session, participants mentioned that:

- they explored, through various dramatic methodologies alternate ways of coping or dealing with their issues (educational process);
- they became aware of issues which affected them either directly or indirectly (conscientising process);
- they developed a new sense of self-confidence, self-esteem and hope (healing process).

If gay oppression is to be challenged through the dramatic medium, then there is a need to return to the ubuntu style of drama where people can collectively dramatize the issues of concern amongst themselves. The ubuntu style of drama which I propose, is one where people can explore the various possibilities of empowerment and development without the fear of being gay-bashed or "domesticated." Such was the experience of the black gay drama group.

As a way forward, I would like to suggest that people in the arts, especially drama specialists and practitioners, look within their own communities and recognize, accept and celebrate this group of people waiting for their liberation. And if the Church or their communities cannot provide that for them, then let self-actualization which can be achieved through the medium of drama, become their source of hope. Gay / friendly drama practitioners can provide gays with various drama options that are aimed at developing individuals and communities. Initial fear and withdrawal, both on the side of the facilitator and the learner is understandable, but can be

overcome by encouraging more people to create more opportunities for those interested in using drama as a medium for empowerment and development.

Although this "queer" type of drama work which I have implemented with this group has been done on a small scale, and this obviously has its limitations, it was an invaluable step towards developing a more gay / friendly type of drama within a psychosystemic paradigm, for the oppressed with the hope of engaging gay people in a process of healing.

I do not intend to conclude this discussion by offering an exaggerated view of the potential that drama has to educate, conscientize and to heal marginalised and oppressed groups of people. On the contrary, I am well aware of the extent to which gay people have been socially and religiously oppressed. The drama intervention that took place during this study only serves to confirm that the deeply entrenched beliefs which are socially constructed will continue to overtly and covertly oppress and try to marginalise gay people unless history dictates otherwise.

My original assumption concerning the natural systems theory and its potential to enable people to gain a better understanding of the relationships that exist between themselves, others and their environment, with the hope of bringing about harmony and integration, still stands. However, the presence of social injustice and political disorder seems to hinder the realisation of that state of harmony. In view of the above, I do not presume therefore that drama can alter the attitudes and behaviour of all gay people who attempt to use it as an empowering medium. Rather, I admit that it can become possible for those who purposefully choose to use it to that end. Anyway, Jennings argues that, "No therapist would claim that healing is ever finally accomplished. To be alive is to meet problems" (1990: 25).

It is therefore my contention that drama and spirituality have a liberating and therapeutic force. These forces (Wilson, 1981) encourage wholeness and integration, and this, I believe, is what the gay drama group has experienced. This psychosystemic approach offered gay Black men an opportunity to locate and identify their oppressions. A conscious knowledge of their oppression provided them with choices to reconstruct their identities based on liberation found in spiritual, drama, education and therapy discourses and practices. In a broader sense, drama also has an important role to play in the lives of people who are oppressed and disempowered, particularly in the South African context, where oppressed communities can be enabled to come to terms with and to begin to counteract the fragmentation and repression caused by a patriarchal and heterosexist society.

We wept, o yes we wept
but when the weeping is wept
and the wounds are slept
the weeping must die.

(Weeping must die by Kgafela Oa Magogodi)

Dance Africa dance,
Dance ejaculating freedom,
Dance eyes of a future we can find,
Dance twinkling stars in your heart,
Dance clapping waste of liberation in copulation,
Dance in a tapestry of victory.

(Dance Africa by Siphiwe Ka Ngwenya)

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APPENDIX A

CULTURE, SPIRITUALITY, SEXUALITY AND IDENTITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Research number: _____

Please note that all information will be kept strictly confidential

1. Name (you can choose to remain anonymous)
(Igama (ungazifihla uma uthanda) _____
2. Age
Iminyaka _____
3. Place of residence (e.g. Umlazi, Imbali)
Indawo ohlala kuyo (isibonelo - Umlazi, Imbali) _____
4. Type of residence: home[] relatives[] friends[]
alone[] other _____
Uhlobo lwendawo (isibonelo - isekhaya, ezihlotsheni, nabangani, wedwa, noma ukunye)
5. Highest standard of education passed
Ibanga lemfundo eliphakeme onalo _____
6. Are you presently in a relationship?
Ngabe unaye othandana naye manje? _____
7. What are your hobbies? (e.g. reading, cooking, baking, music, dancing, singing, eating out, clubbing, caring for others, flower arranging, interior decorating, hiking, gym, gardening, fishing,) other
Yiziphi izinto ozithandayo? (isibonelo - ukufunda, ukupheka, ukubhaka, umculo, ukudansa, ukucula, ukuyodla ngaphandle, ukunakekela abanye, ukuba semaqenjini,

ukuhlela izimbali, uklungisa endlini, ukujima, ukulungisa ingadi, ukuqwala izintaba, ukudoba,) okunye.

A. SPIRITUALITY

Circle / tick the answer of your choice []

(Kokelezela noma uthike impendulo efanele).

8. To me God is

uNkulungulu kimi u

- a) a loving merciful parent (mother, father)
umzali onothando nobubele (umama, ubaba) []
- b) a judge who punishes the sinful
Umahluleli ojezisa izono []

1. a) God loves me as I am

Unkulunkulu ungithanda ngiyilokhu engiyikona []

b) being gay is a sin

Ukuba yinkonkoni kuyisono []

10. When I die

a) I think I am going to heaven

Uma ngifa ngicabanga ukuthi ngiya ezulwini []

b) I am going to hell

ngiya esihogweni []

c) Unsure

Anginaso isiqiniseko []

11. a) I go to church

Ngiyaya esontweni []

b) I do not go to church

Angiyi esontweni []

Give reasons for your answer

Nikezelaizizathu zempendulo

12. How you think God views you as a gay Black person?

Ucabanga ukuthi uNkulunkulu ukubona kanjani ukuthi ungumuntu omnyama oyinkonkoni?

13. As a gay person, how do you cope with your church's teaching, the attitude of your fellow Christians and the attitude of your pastor towards gays?

Njengenkoni, umelana kanjani nezifundiso zesonto lakho, nendlela abanye abazalwane abakuthatha ngayo, kanye nendlela umfundisi wakho enza ngayo kubantu abayizinkoni?

B. SEXUALITY

14. At what age did you first discover that you were attracted to other men? Describe the experience.

Wawuneminyaka emingaki lapho waqala ukubona khona ukuthi uhuheka noma uthanda abantu besilisa? Chaza okwenzeka

15. Which of the following can you identify with?

Yikuphi kulokhu okulandelayo ongazichaza ngakho?

- a) Fantasizing about and being attracted to the male body

Ukucabanga nokuthanda kumbe ukuheka emzimbeni womuntu wesilisa

[]

- b) Embarrassed thinking about having sex with other men?

Uba namahloni uma ucabanga ngokuhlangana ngokoncansi nabanye abantu besilisa

[]

16. Are you out of the closet? Yes No
Uyaziwa yini ukuthi uyinkonkoni? Yebo [] Cha []

Give reasons for your answer

Nikezela isizathu ngempendulo yakho

17. If you are out of the closet, who was the first person you first told about your sexual orientation? Why?
Uma waziwa ukuthi uyinkonkoni, ubani umuntu wokuqala owamdalulela kumbe owamtshela ngalokho? Kungani?
-
-

18. In bed I prefer playing a passive role / active role in a relationship. Why?
Embhedeni ngingakhetha ukuba njengowesimame / ukuba ngowesilisa
-
-

19. What type of a man would you prefer? Masculine / feminine / both?
Luhlobo luni lwendoda ogalukhetha? Ejimile / Ezenza intombi / Kokubili
middle-class / educated / other. Describe.
Ocebileyo / Ofundileyo / okunye. Chaza.
-
-

C. CULTURE

20. How does your culture regard gay relationships?
Lithini isiko lakho ngezinkonkoni?
-
-

21. Do you foresee any changes in your cultural attitudes towards gay people? Name them.
Zikhona yini izinguquko ocabanga ukuthi zingenzeka ngendlela abantu abayizinkonkoni abathathwa ngayo ngokwesiko lakho? Zisho.

22. What are the cultural expectations of you as a man?
Ngokwesiko lakho yini elindeleke kuwena njengomuntu wesilisa?

23. Will you be able to fulfil any of these expectations? Name them.
Kukhona yini oyokwazi ukukwenza kulokho okulindelekile kuwena? Kusho.

24. How can you make a positive contribution towards a gay community?
Yini engcono ongayenzela umphakathi wabantu abayizinkonkoni?

25. According to your experience, do you think that there are enough available resources to the gay community (e.g. books, entertainment, support groups, etc).
Ngokubona kwakho, zanele yini izidingo zempilo ezikhona emphakathini wezinkonkoni? (izibonelo - izincwadi, okokuzithokozisa, izinhlangano zokugquguzela).

26. Do you know of any men who prefer gay sex but were forced into "straight" marriage?
How do you feel about their situation?
Bakhona yini abesilisa obaziyo abakhetha ukulala nabesilisa abaphoqeletwa ukushada abesimame? Uphatheka kanjani ngesimo sabo?

D. IDENTITY

27. I feel more like a : man woman
Ngizizwa kakhulu njenge: ndoda [] ngowesimame []
28. I would prefer a sex change. Yes No
Ngingakujabulela ukushintshwa ubulili. Yebo [] Cha []
29. I think I was : born like this [] I copied others []
Ngicabanga ukuthi ngazalwa nginje / Ngakopela kwabanye
30. I like
men's clothes [] women's clothes [] both []
Ngiyazithanda izingubo zabelilisa / zabelimame / kokubili
31. In society I prefer an
active (male) role [] passive (female) role []
Ngikhetha ukuba owesilisa onomdlandla / owesimame ongenamandlandla
empakathathini
32. My role models are
male [] female [] both []
Amaqhawwe ami abesilisa / abesimame / kokubili
33. I regret being gay [] I do not regret being gay []
Ngiyazisola ngokuba yinkonkoni / angizisoli ngokuba yinkonkoni
34. I think that fear in gay people is lessening in the New South Africa
Yes [] No []
Ngicabanga ukuthi ukusaba ngokuba yinkonkoni kuyancipha eNingizimu Africa
Yebo [] Cha []
35. As a gay person, some of my greatest fears are:
Njengomuntu oyinkonkoni, ezinye izinto engizesaba kakhulu yilezi:

36. If I had the power to change society, I would do the following things:

Ukuba nganginamandla okushintsha umphakathi, ngangiyokwenza lokhu okulandelayo:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Siyabonga ngesikhathi sakho ukuphendula lembuzo.

APPENDIX B

OUTLINE OF THE "FREEING THE BODY, FREEING THE SOUL WORKSHOPS"

Session 1

Aim: To create a sense of ubuntu among the participants and the facilitator through dramatic play.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- (a) "It" - the facilitator is "it". Participants run away from the facilitator who chases them all around the room. The first participant that the facilitator touches becomes "it". The facilitator is no longer "it". Participants try not to be caught. This action continues until everyone has a chance to be "it".
- (b) Tag (3s) - Participants position themselves in groups of threes and link arms with one another. One extra person becomes the cat and another the mouse. The only way in which the mouse can save himself from the cat is by linking arms with someone in the small group. The last person in that link which the mouse has now joined himself to becomes the mouse and has to flee to safety. When the cat catches the mouse, the mouse becomes the cat and the actions continue.
- (c) Relaxation exercise (bird in the nest) - Participants are asked to find a comfortable space on the floor and to close their eyes. They slowly breathe in and out, becoming aware of their bodies against the floor. They imagine themselves now as birds in a nest, ready to start flying and to explore the world.
- (d) Name and action game - The group forms a circle. Each participant gets a turn to take a step into the circle, say his name aloud and does a quick action which tells the group something about himself. The participant then steps back into his original position and the entire group repeats the participant's name and action together.

Introduction:

- Aims and objectives of workshop
- Our expectations: Participants were divided into two groups and brainstormed their expectations from the workshops. Each participant had a turn to write his expectations on a large sheet of paper. These were then brought to the large group, where individual participants verbalised their expectations.
- Negotiation of contract / group rules / questions

Voice and breathing:

- a) Facial gymnastics - Participants stand in the circle with their arms hanging comfortably at their sides. Shoulders are relaxed and backs straight. Using all the muscles on their faces they make a variety of facial expressions and later add sounds to their expressions.
- b) Big lungs, small lungs - Individual participants are asked to place the palm of their hands on the bottom of their rib carriage. With their shoulders remaining relaxed they breathe in softly through the nose. The abdomen gets bigger. Dropping their jaws so that their mouths are slightly open, they breathe out through their mouths.

In pairs, participants take turns to place their hands on their partners' abdomen. They should feel the abdomen move when the partner breathes in and out. After a while they swop partners.
- c) Voice projection (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) - Participants stand in a circle and try to find a release for their voices. Starting off very slowly and softly, they sing: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 in staff notation. Each new round takes them onto a higher scale. An image which worked well here was for participants to imagine themselves having to use their voices to move an elevator up and down a sky-scraper.

Focus and concentration:

- a) Mirror game - Participants find a partner and face each other. They decide among themselves who is to be A and B. A is the controlling force and makes a variety of big and small movements with his entire body. B tries to be a reflection of A,

imitating A closely. After a short while, A becomes B and the exercise is repeated.

- b) Wa! - Participants stand in a circle. One participant stands in the centre and suddenly shouts out wa! which is accompanied by a movement. Everybody in the group has to try and copy the leader almost instantaneously. This activity continues until everyone has a turn.
- c) Be a queen - The facilitator calls out short, action-phrases. These phrases must be appropriate and relevant for the group. For example, the facilitator calls out phrases such as, "Be a queen", "Pray to God", "Smile at a guy", "Put on some make-up", "Say I am special" and so on. And the participants almost instantaneously enact these phrases. After a while, the routine gets faster until the actions become almost senseless and humorous.
- d) Transformation ritual - Participants form a circle. One person starts an action which everyone imitates. Moving in a clock-wise direction, each participant is given an opportunity to transform the existing movement. Sounds later accompany to the movement, thereby adding a new layer to the transformation ritual.

Reflection: Whole group reflection using the questioning technique in order to gauge what cognitive and emotional learning had taken place for the participants. Some of the questions asked were:

- Was it easy to make new friends with others in the group? Why?
- What was it like working with people you were not familiar with? How did it make you feel?
- What did it feel like when you wrote down your expectations of this workshop?
- What did you enjoy most / least about this session? Why?
- Now that we've reached the end of our first session, what are your gut feelings? What was this experience like for you?

Refreshments and departure

Session 2

Aim: To encourage spontaneity and creativity through free-writing personal experiences and paired story sharing.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- a) Tag (2s)
- b) Freeze in guise - This is an activity which is similar to "be a queen", where participants walk about exploring the space. While walking, they imagine themselves on walking on hot coals, in thick mud, on a thin rope, in high heels, angry, drunk, frightened, sad, and so on. During each of these guises, they are asked to freeze. Participants have a chance of viewing the frozen images.
- c) Bounce the ball and call a name - In the circle, a participant bounces the tennis ball and calls someone's name. The person who is called runs to the centre, catches the ball before it falls to the ground, bounces it and calls out another name. This continues until everyone's name is called.
- d) Greeting game - All the participants are asked to walk around the room. The facilitator calls out various kinds of greeting. For example, "Greet the person you walk past with your knees, noses, elbows, feet, shoulders", and so on. During this greeting, participants are sometimes asked to freeze, giving others in the group an opportunity to look at one another's greeting.

Welcome:

- Repeat workshop aims
- Document participants' details

Voice and breathing:

- a) Facial gymnastics
- b) Voice projection and playing with sentences

Participants are asked to slowly repeat the following tongue twisters:

- Red leather, yellow leather
- She sells sea shells on the sea shore
- The big black bug bit the big black bear and the big black bear bled blood.

Focus and concentration:

- a) Mirror game
- b) Be a queen

Main Activity:

Free writing exercise - Write about a time when you felt different, embarrassed or ashamed as a gay person, using either English or Zulu.

Reflection: Questioning technique

- What was the free writing experience like for you? Good or bad? Why?
- Did you prefer to use English or the Zulu medium to write down your stories? Why?
- Was it easy for you to share these stories with others in the group? Did you prefer one to one or whole group sharing?
- Do you think that this session encouraged spontaneity and creativity within you? Why?
- What did you like / dislike about this session? Why?

Refreshments and departure

Session 3

Aim: To help participants develop the courage to start the healing process by sharing individual stories of oppression in a group setting.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- a) "It"
- b) Moving lines - Participants stand in two lines directly across each other. Each person has a partner in the opposite line with whom he is to maintain eye

contact. The two lines of people start walking towards each other very slowly. When partners are about to bump into each other, they quickly move aside to avoid collision and continue moving towards the other end of the room. When participants reach the other side, they quickly re-establish eye contact. This exercise is repeated a little faster until the two lines cross each other running.

- c) Scarf competition - In two groups, participants stand in a line facing each other. The facilitator stands on a block up centre front. Each person in both lines are given a number. When the facilitator calls out a number, the respective participant from each group runs to grab the scarf. Upon return to his original position with the scarf, the group gets a point. Points are also awarded for good behaviour and team spirit.
- d) Spider web - Participants stand in the circle and slowly walk towards the centre with hands lifted in the air above their heads. Participants close their eyes and stretch their arms forward. They clasp their fingers with two other people in the group. They can now open their eyes but must still remain attached to the group. The task that lies ahead is for them to untangle themselves without letting go of anyone's hand. This sometimes requires climbing over / under one another and moving around. This exercise relies on team work and thinking collectively and at the same time finding the most appropriate way to solve the difficulty for themselves.

Welcome:

- a) Register

Focus and concentration:

- a) Sharing feelings in groups - Each participant has a chance of saying how he feels today. This gives the group a better sense of how they should relate to each other concerning the group's mood and feelings.
- b) Sound, name and dance - Participants walk around the room making eye-contact with one another. One participant makes eye contact with another, makes a sound

and calls a person's name. The participant whose name was called runs to the person who called him, links arms with him and does a little jig, while the rest of the group claps their hands and ululates. Another participant's name is called.

- c) We're gay, we're proud of it - Participants divide themselves into two groups, sitting away from each other in parallel lines. Participants in line A say, "We can't hear you" to line B. Participants in line B say, "We're gay, we're proud of it" in reply. Each line takes a step backward and they repeat their phrases. Each line has a turn to say, "What, we can't hear you". and the other line chooses a new phrase.
- d) Magic wand - Participants have a turn to be fairy god-mother, waving a magic wand over the group and turning them into various characters or inanimate objects. For example, a participant will wave the magic wand and say, "I turn you all into fairies, pigs, sangomas, Miss Universe", and so on. The wand is then passed on to someone else who turns everyone into whatever he chooses.

Refreshments Break

- e) Broken telephone - Sitting in a circle, the facilitator whispers a short message to someone in the group. This person in turn whispers that same message to someone else in group. The last person to be told the message says the message out loud.

Main Activity:

Enroling: Story sharing at annual conference - Participants are taken out of the room. A box of hats is placed in front of them and each chooses their hat. The facilitator asks participants to close their eyes and to imagine themselves at the Annual PAGA (People Against Gay Abuse) Conference. Participants are to think about who they are, how old they are, where they come from, why they are attending the conference, who else will be at the conference, how they should walk, speak, and relate to others at the conference. They are asked to open their eyes and the facilitator briefs them on the conference which they are about to attend in five minutes time. The facilitator enters the room and as the

chair person (person-in-role) and welcomes each participant to the tenth Annual Conference and shows them to their seats. After an introduction of themselves, which countries they came from and their concerns, participants began to share their experiences.

Reflection in role:

- Which country do you represent?
- How does it feel being with other delegates who share similar concerns with you?
- What do you hope will transpire from this conference?
- Do you think more conferences such as this should be held in other countries? Why?

Reflection out of role: Questioning technique

- What made the group work well in the "spider web" exercise?
- Were there any leaders in the group? Who?
- How many of you allowed others to lead while you just followed?
- Did everyone work equally hard? How did this affect the group dynamics?
- What are your feelings towards the "We're gay, we're proud of it" exercise?
- How did you feel when you were enrolled as delegates at the conference?
- Did you find it easy to share your experiences with others? Why?
- How did the wearing of the hats make the dramatic experience different?
- Was the facilitator's role as the chair-person convincing? How?
- What exercise in the session did you least / mostly enjoy?

Departure

Session 4

Aim: To explore alternative ways of expressing oneself through dramatic movement.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- a) Tag (3s)
- b) Freeze in guise

- c) Musical cushions - The facilitator shakes a lufah while the participants pass a cushion to each other in the circle. As soon as the music stops, the person who is holding the cushion is out. The person who is out has to join the facilitator and add more sound to the shaker by either whistling, clapping or humming. Eventually everyone joins the orchestra, adding their own music to it.

Welcome:

- a) Register

Voice and breathing:

- a) Voice projection

Focus and concentration:

- a) Relaxation exercise ("flowers and sunshine") - participants find a comfortable space on the floor and close their eyes. Focussing on their breathing, they slowly become aware of areas of stress and tension in their bodies. Participants travel on an imaginary journey through a dark gloomy forest into an open meadow of flowers and sunshine.
- b) Be a queen
- c) Doyle sticks - Participants are paired off, each with a half-metre long stick. The stick has to be picked up by the couple with their middle fingers. When the stick is sturdy, they walk slowly around the room, trying not to drop the stick. After a while, the couple needs to maintain eye contact with each other. They take turns to try and dominate the other partners' movements. This exercise is more effective with back-ground music.

Refreshments Break

- a) "It"

Main activity:

Exploring movements with individual stories - Using their personal stories, participants choose three movements which they like or dislike. For example, Thami could use the following three movements:

- (1) walking in town with his mother
- (2) admiring a doll he saw in a shop
- (3) crying for the doll which his mother refused to buy him (because dolls in the Zulu culture are meant to be girls' toys).

Participants work on their movements individually, using normal human size movements. Next, they do their movements as small as possible, with the minutest of details and precision. Later they enact their movements in an exaggerated, larger than life style. Each of the above phases are viewed by the rest of the group.

Reflection: Small and whole group reflection.

- Brainstorm labels that heterosexuals attach to gays;
- How did you feel during / after the relaxation exercise?
- What was the doyle-stick movement exercise like for you?
- What are your impressions of the main movement activity?
- Why was there lots of laughter?
- Was this exercise easy / difficult for you? Why?
- What did you enjoy most about this movement exercise?

Departure

Session 5

Aim: To develop empathy for others through the use of role-play and improvisation techniques.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- a) Tag
- b) Wa!

- c) Pass the object - Participants stand in a circle. One participant passes an imaginary object to someone in the group who then transforms the object into something else, and thereafter passes it on to someone else. The object continuously changes in size, shape, and weight. The game continues until everyone has a few turns.

Welcome:

- a) Register
- b) Broken telephone

Focus and concentration:

- a) Fishing ritual - Participants are divided into two groups. Standing together tightly, they follow their leader, imitating everything he does. This is similar to a shoal of fish swimming closely together and moving almost instantaneously. Participants use movement and sound, turning the exercise into a dramatic ritual.

Main activity:

- a) Role-play - In twos, participants are given roles which they play out. Each participant has a turn to take on both roles. For example, Role one is that of the respectable, Christian uncle who is furious after finding out that his favourite nephew is gay. Role two is that of the much loved nephew who lives a secretly gay life and who is petrified of being confronted by his uncle. After participants enact their roles, the roles are reversed. Afterwards, participants de-role and share their experiences with one another and talk about what it feels like being in different roles.
- b) Improvisation ("coming out") - In groups of three, participants prepare little scenarios concerning their "coming-out." Each group has a turn to perform their scenes for the rest of the group. Some scenes are selected by the group, and re-enacted with minor changes made by the group itself. These changes were later discussed.

- c) Free style improvisation - Not more than five participants are allowed to be in the acting space at the same time. Participants improvise anything that comes to mind at that point in time. They enter the stage area, make their contributions and exit.

Reflection:

- How did you feel about the fishing ritual?
- What did you like / dislike about the role-play? Why?
- What did you like / dislike about the small group improvisation? Why?
- What did you like / dislike about the free-style improvisation? Why?
- Did you prefer the small group or the free-style improvisation?
- Why did you specifically choose scenes two and five to be re-enacted?
- Was there anything about this session you did not enjoy?

Refreshments and departure

Session 6

Aim: To develop sharing, communicating and interpretative skills using pictorial stimulus and image theatre.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- a) Tag
- b) Trust game - Participants form a tight circle behind each other. Slowly bending their knees, they lower their bodies to sit on somebody else's knee. Everyone sits lightly, carrying the weight of the group together.
- c) Doyle sticks

Welcome:

- a) Register

Main activity:

- a) Pictorial stimulus - Five different pictures are displayed at various places in the

room. Participants walk around the room and view the pictures in silence. Each participant stands next to the picture he identifies with most. Individual participants around the individual pictures, form a small group who share their impressions of the pictures with others in their group. Each group has to find a suitable caption for their picture. Volunteers share their impressions with the large group.

- b) Image theatre (small group sculptures) - after sharing their impressions, participants create small group sculptures, portraying a common theme which arises from their impression. Other groups view these sculptures and share their impressions of these tableaux.
- c) Paired sculptures - Participant A is the clay and B is a sculptor. A must be sculptured by B to show gay oppression. Participants must use their whole bodies and facial expressions. The facilitator taps the sculptures on their shoulders who then express their feelings, using a word, phrase or sound. A now becomes B and B becomes A.
- d) Whole group sculpture - One participant is a sculptor and the whole group becomes the clay. There is no sharing of ideas involved here. The sculptor shapes the group into how he perceives gay people to be treated by the Christian community. The sculptor explains his image. A frozen participant de-roles and re-shapes the existing images as he pleases. This process continues until a few participants have their turns to be sculptors.

Reflection in role: Sculptures are tapped and asked the following questions:

- What / who do you represent?
- How do you feel in this position?
- Do you prefer to be A or B? Why?

Reflection: Questioning technique

- Did you enjoy the trust game? What was the experience like for you?
- Was easy for you to share your impressions of the picture that you chose? Why?

- Do you prefer working with a small or large group?
- How did it feel using sculptures to express common themes which arose from your impressions of the picture?
- Do you prefer talking about the impressions or using image theatre to express yourself?
- Do you prefer paired sculptures, small group sculptures or whole group sculptures? Why?

Refreshments and departure

Session 7

Aim: To develop assertiveness by challenging gay discrimination through debates and sculpturing and by working from action to reflection.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- a) Transformation of gesture
- b) Stealing space - In pairs, participants link arms with each other and stand in designated positions. One pair stands in the centre, desperately waiting to occupy another pair's space. The pairs on the outside can only change spaces with another outside pair by making eye-contact with them. During the quick move, the pair in the centre must try and quickly occupy their space.

Welcome:

- a) Register

Focus and concentration:

- a) Be a queen
- b) Fishing ritual

Main Activity:

- a) Pictorial stimulus review and debate - Various small groups share their impressions of their pictures. The existing small groups join together to form a large group that is anti-gay, and protests against the small group's presentation,

their impressions and views.

- b) Sculpture feelings arising from debate - In pairs, participants decide to be either A or B. A becomes the oppressor who is more powerful than B. A freezes in his position. B who is in an oppressed position takes on a more assertive, dominating and more empowered role. B tries to make himself more powerful than A and freezes in that position. Participants are questioned in role.

Reflection in role:

- How do you feel in this situation?
- Do you prefer to be A or B?

Reflection: Questioning technique

- What are your feelings concerning the debate?
- Did you take an active or passive role in it? Why?
- What was the oppressor / victim sculptures like for you?
- What did you enjoy most / least in this session?

Refreshments and departure

Session 8

Aim: To develop our ideas and imagination to create memorable stories using objects and mime.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- a) Cat and mouse - Participants form a large circle. One person volunteers to be the cat and another the mouse. The group has to try and help the mouse to escape from the cat by keeping either the mouse or the cat in or out of the circle.
- b) Group huddle - Participants come together as quickly as possible and huddle together. They then try to squeeze themselves into the smallest ball after which they try to make the largest circle with their fingers barely touching each other. They finally try to balance themselves on one block as quickly as possible.

Focus and concentration:

- a) Pass the object

Welcome:

- a) Register

Voice and breathing:

- a) Facial gymnastics
- b) Voice projection

Main activity:

- a) Object story telling - Participants are paired off into two groups. Each group is given different objects. Participants have to choose an object and make-up gay related stories, using these objects. They are to imagine that these objects were lost when they were six years old and now finally recovered. This discovery could bring good or bad memories.
Participants sit facing each other. Each participant tells the other his object story in the mother tongue, Zulu.
- b) Mime - After each participant shares his story, he mimes the story with facial and body expressions and movements to his partner. After some time, participants voluntarily mime their stories with the large group which tries to guess what the story is.

Reflection: Questioning technique

- What was the object story-telling experience like for you?
- Was it easy for to use real objects or would you prefer imaginary objects? Why?
- Was it difficult to create stories around these objects? Why?
- Did you prefer sharing your stories in Zulu / English? Why?
- How did it feel not being able to use words to express yourself?
- What did you like / dislike about the session?

Refreshments and departure

Session 9

Aim: To stand together for our democratic rights using posters, song and dance.

Plan:

Warm-ups:

- a) Electric current - Participants stand in the circle, joining hands. One participant squeezes either his right or left hand and that current moves to the person besides him who, in turn squeezes the next hand. This current moves around the circle. After a few rounds, the group develops speed and changes the direction of the current.
- b) Transformation of gesture
- c) Mirror game

Welcome:

- a) Register

Main Activity:

- a) Poster-making - In pairs, participants create their own posters for a "Stand up for your rights" march. Participants show each other their posters and discuss them.
- b) Toyi-toying - The whole group prepares for a march and chant to be staged for the president, with the aim of convincing him and his cabinet that they are no different from the heterosexual community and that they need to be treated with equal human dignity and respect.
- c) Victory dance - Participants spontaneously show their excitement after hearing that the law regarding gay rights has been accepted and passed by engaging themselves in a victory ritual of song and dance.
- d) Interviews by the media (reflection-in-role) - Gay celebrants are interviewed concerning their feelings over their victory.

Reflection in role:

- How do you feel now that the government has given them their rights?
- What are you going to do now that you have what you have been waiting for years?
- How do you feel about these news?

Reflection: Questioning technique

- What was the poster making experience like for you?
- Was it easy / difficult working with your partner? Why?
- How did it feel during the toyi-toying march?
- Did you find it difficult / easy getting into a joyous mode and dancing with others in the group? Why?
- What did you enjoy most / least in this session?
- What do you think you will take with you from these workshops?

Workshop evaluation and handing out of certificates

Refreshments, farewell and departure

APPENDIX C

PHOTOGRAPHS OF SOME DRAMA TECHNIQUES THAT WERE IMPLEMENTED IN THE DRAMA WORKSHOPS.

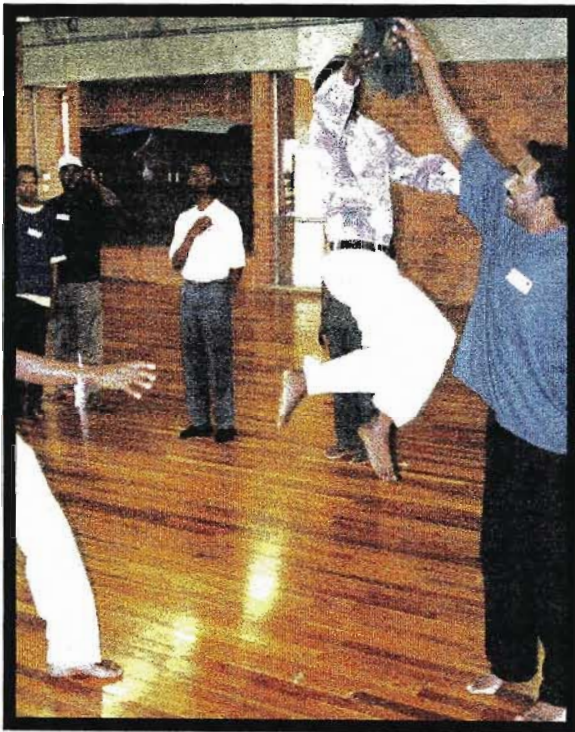


Figure 1: Trust Game

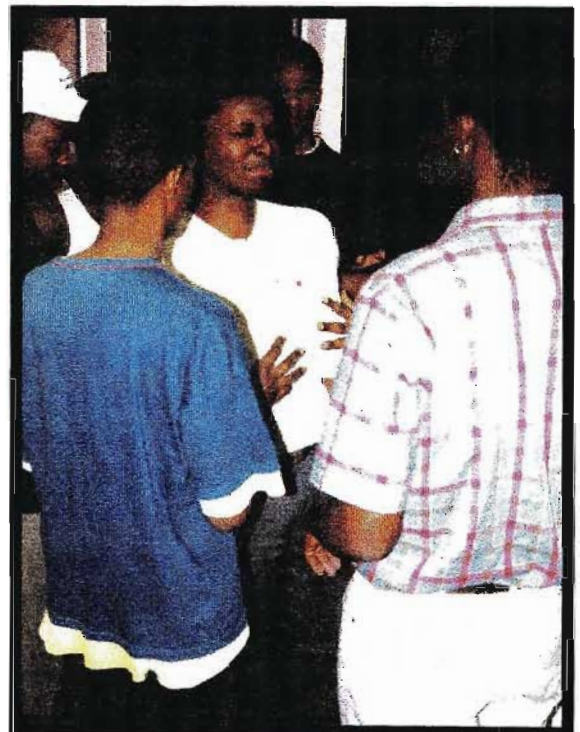


Figure 2: Scarf Competition

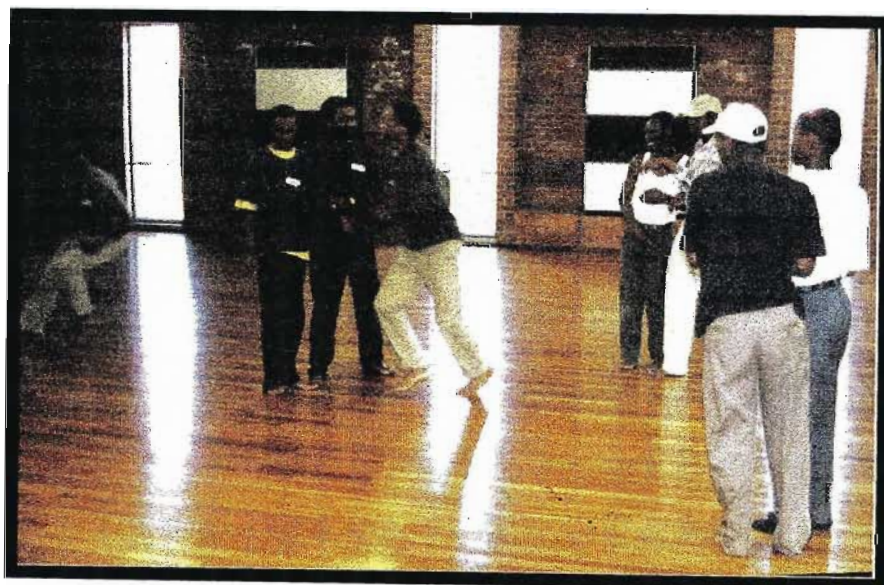


Figure 3: TAG

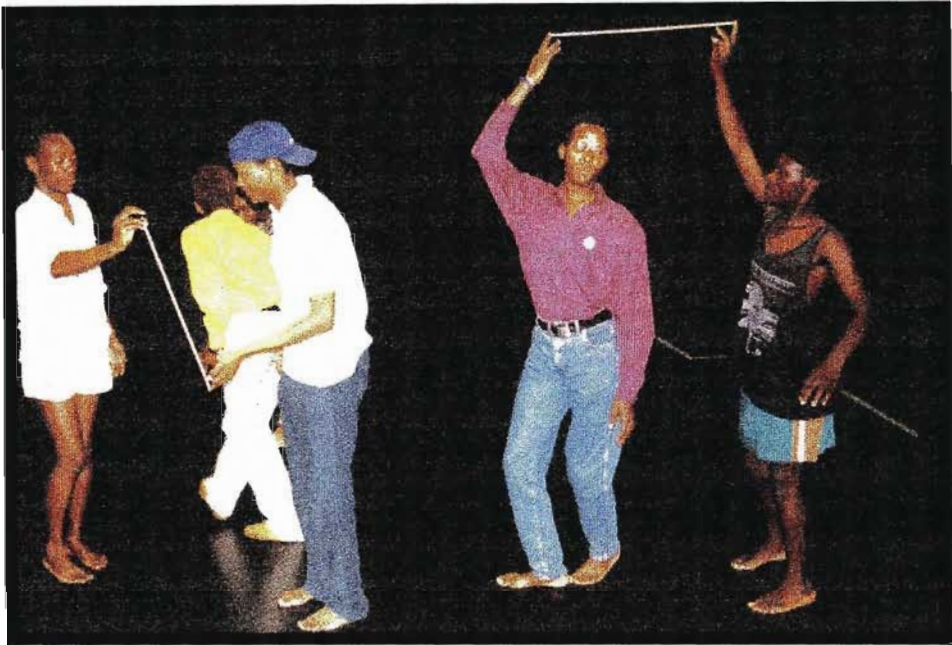


Figure 4: Doyle Stick Movements

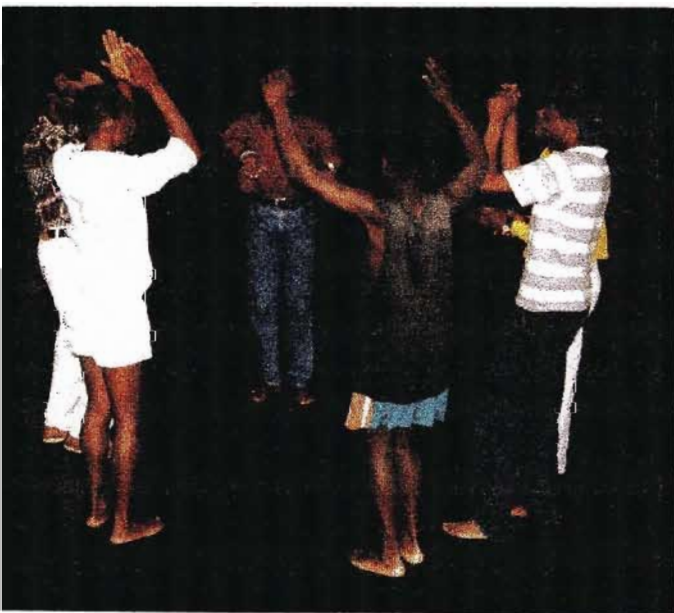


Figure 5: Transformation of Gesture

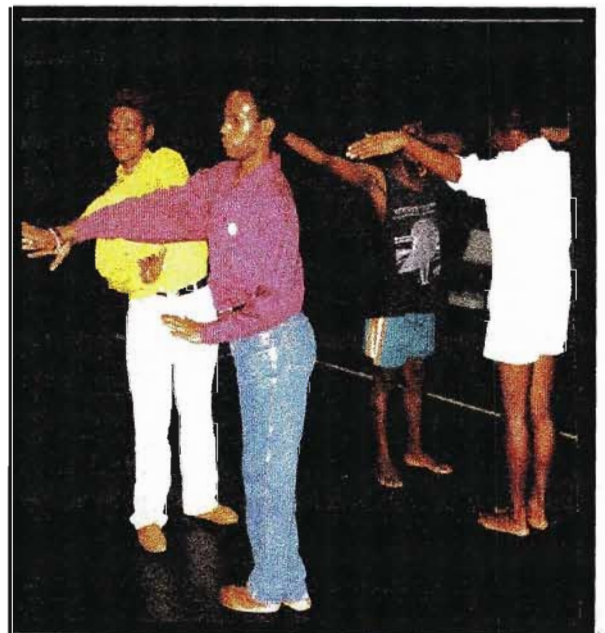


Figure 6: Mirror Image

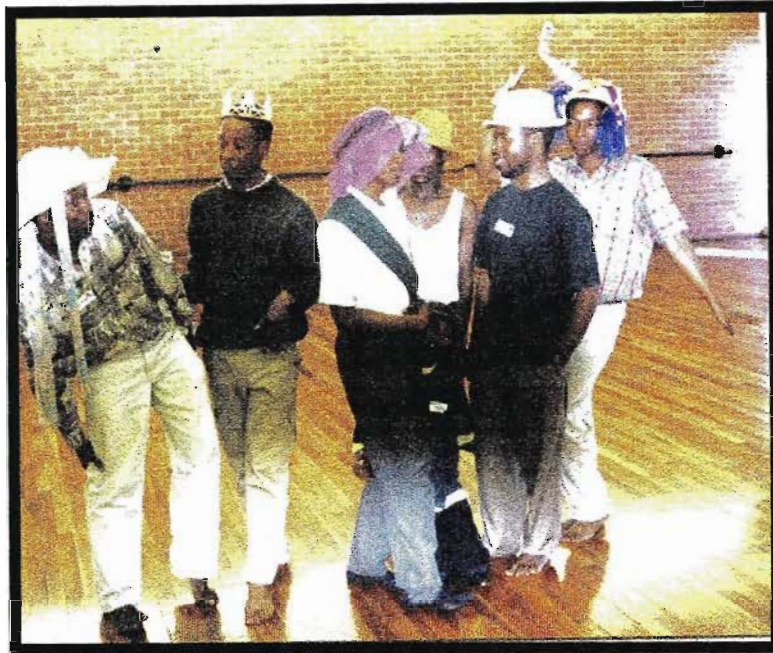


Figure 7: Improvised Sculpture

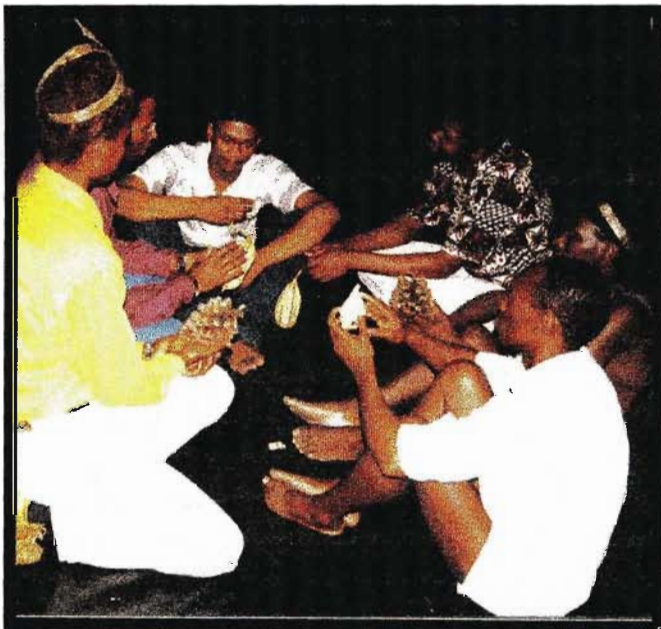


Figure 8: Object Storytelling

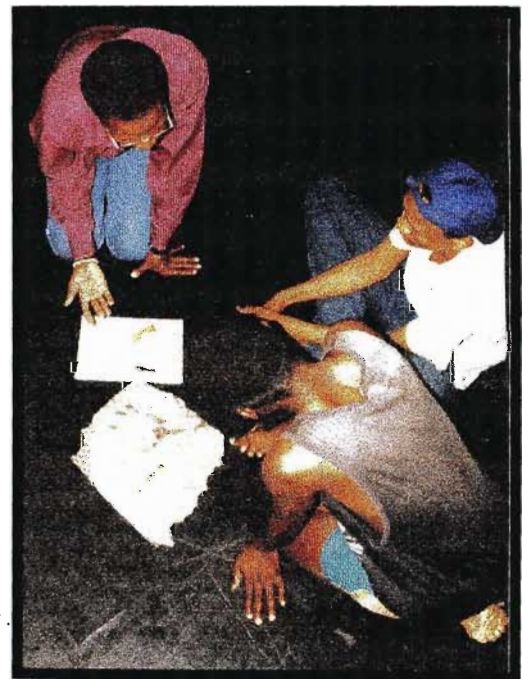


Figure 9: Pictorial Stimulus

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLES OF SOME STORIES OF EMBARRASSMENT AND OPPRESSION SHARED AND MIMED BY THE PARTICIPANTS.

STORY ONE

It was a Sunday morning at a church service in Edendale. One of the Church Stewards was reporting on a meeting held the day before. All of a sudden, she announced that I had been taken out of the preachers' roll, for the year 1996. I was so embarrassed when she called out my name before the congregation. Even though she did not mention the reason behind their action, I already knew why: because I am gay. However, I felt that as a Church Steward, she should have called me after the service and spoken to me in private. I was so embarrassed and felt out of place, wondering how many people already knew about me.

STORY TWO

In 1997, I was training as a teacher at a so-called "Christian" Teacher Training College, when I was asked to drop out because of my sexual orientation. People at home, previously congratulated me, saying that I was fortunate to attend a tertiary institution, and that they were proud of me. Going back home was a traumatic experience for me as I had to provide reasons for my return. Whilst my family was sympathetic towards me, others in the community mocked me. Because of the trauma, I even had to go for counselling. To this day, I cannot go to college because of that reason!

STORY THREE

I was a sixteen year old in grade ten. My neighbour (male) was my role model. He was handsome, had many girlfriends and played soccer. I wanted to be exactly like him. I was alone at home one day when I noticed that he did not go to work for some reason or other. I played my music very loud and he came over to visit me. During that time, he asked if he could dance with me. That came to me as a shock because I did not think that boys could dance with each other. It also made me feel good within, after all, someone showed an interest in me. Whilst dancing, he became forward and even aggressive, and started touching me all over. Then he raped me. It was my first experience, and I felt embarrassed, ashamed and dirty. I blamed myself for what had happened to me. I hope that other lonely people like myself will not fall prey to men such as the type that I had a nasty encounter with. The physical pain lasted for a short while but the emotional hurt that came with it remains with you for a life time.

STORY FOUR

I was young and new in this [gay] life. I was involved with a handsome gay guy, who was my second lover. I was still staying with my parents and did not have enough time to spend with my boyfriend. I visited him at a flat where he stayed on weekends. I did not understand much about gay sex. He wanted it "at the back" (anal penetration), but I was so scared and refused to allow to do that to me. During the night, I woke up only to find him trying to have sex with another guy whom he called a friend. This was the most horrible feeling for me. Fortunately for me, the guy refused. My sweetie tried to come back to me to ask for forgiveness but I was too upset to do that. He kept begging me for forgiveness until I eventually forgave him. I soon realised that he was not the relationship type, but it was too late. I was already in love with him and my heart was broken. I shall never forget that day, for it shows that people can be so cruel.

STORY FIVE

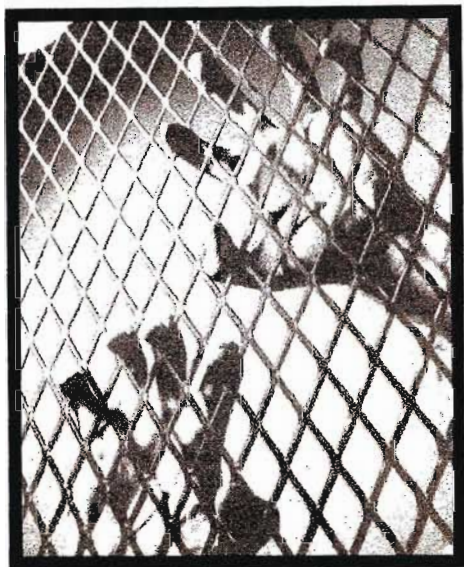
My friends and I went to Marabi club one Saturday night. We were having a lovely time, dancing, drinking and "flirting" around. When we were about to leave the place, some jealous guys began to harass us. They verbally abused us, calling us *izitabani* (derogatory names) and thereafter became violent and threatened to shoot us. We were asked to run from that place and never to come back there again. That was the most frightening experience for us and it took us a while before we went to that place again.

STORY SIX

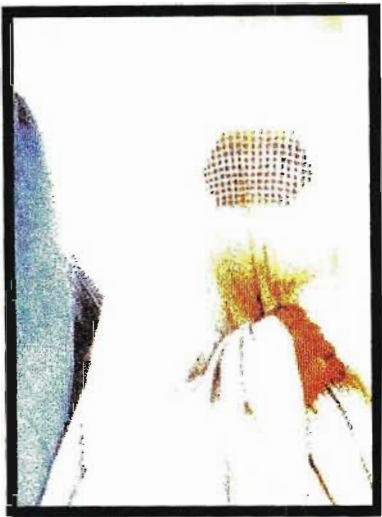
When I was still seventeen years old, I fell in love with another guy living in my township. The first couple of months were very good. I used to visit him at his house and go to town with him. One day, he phoned me and told me that his parents are not very happy about our friendship and that he needed to join better company. I asked him if he wanted that and he told me that he wants to only be with me. We began to hide and see each other in the township and at the library in town. We decided to go away to Durban for the weekend and had a lovely time at the club with some friends. When we got back on Sunday afternoon, his brothers were waiting at my house for me. They began to hit me and threatened to kill me if they saw me with their brother. I felt so embarrassed because my family were shocked to know that I was gay, when all they knew was that I was a good church-going Christian. My mother told me that it was God's way of showing me that what I was doing was wrong and that I should change my ways. I am still in love with him. His family had to accept that he is gay and I did not change him to become like that.

APPENDIX E

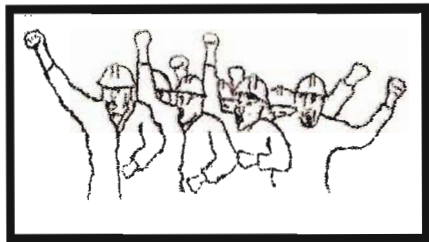
PICTURES USED FOR STORY-TELLING SESSIONS 6 and 7.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5

APPENDIX F

PARTICIPANT'S EVALUATION OF THE "FREEING THE BODY, FREEING THE SOUL WORKSHOPS.

Circle your response to each question in this questionnaire.

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Good

Name: _____

Age: _____

Single / in relationship: _____

Religion : _____

Highest level of education completed: _____

1. Did you have any previous training / experience in drama? Yes [] No []

Ngabe kukhona ukuqeqeshwa / ulwazi onalo ngomdlalo weshashalazi ?

If yes, describe

2. Why did you join the drama group?

Kungani ujoyine leliqembu lomdlalo weshashalazi ?

3. a) Personal development:

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | I gained a good understanding and experience of drama skills and techniques | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.2 | I learned to apply the above in actual situations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.3 | I participated actively in the group work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.4 | I learned to value new view-points | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.5 | I feel more confident about myself now | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.6 | I find drama to be empowering, educational and therapeutic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

3.b) How will you use what you have learned / experienced in these workshops?

3. c) What other issues / topics of interest would you have liked to learn about?

Yiziphi ezinye izihloko / izinkinga obungathand aukufundangazo?

4. a) Drama workshops:

- | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. 1 | Were interesting, stimulating, challenging and full of fun. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. 2 | Were relevant to our lives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. 3 | Were too demanding and stressful | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. 4 | Were useful and fulfilling | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4. b) The workshops were done primarily in English but opportunities were created for you to express yourselves in your mother tongue (Zulu). Did you prefer it this way?

Yes [] No []

Why?

Umhlangano bewenziwa ngolimi lwesingisi nakuba bewunikiwe amathuba okusebenzisa ulimi lwakho (Isizulu). Uzizwe njani ngalokho?

4. c) Which of the following best describes your attitude towards the entire workshops?

Kulokhu okulandelayo yikuphi okuchaza kangcono indlela ozizwa ngayo ngalomhlangano?

Interesting [] Boring [] Different [] Exciting []

5.a) Facilitator's performance:

5.1	Was clear and understanding	1	2	3	4	5
5.2	Led the workshops in an interesting way	1	2	3	4	5
5.3	Inspired enthusiasm in the group	1	2	3	4	5
5.4	Was sensitive, supportive and encouraging	1	2	3	4	5
5.5	Overall attitude to group	1	2	3	4	5

5. b) What was it like working with a facilitator from a different race group other than yours?

Uzwe kunjani ukusebenza nomchazi wohlanga oluhlukile kunolwakho ?

Describe (chaza)

6. Drama skills and techniques:

6. 1	Warm-up exercises / games	1	2	3	4	5
6. 2	Improvisation	1	2	3	4	5
6. 3	Role-play	1	2	3	4	5
6. 4	Creative writing	1	2	3	4	5
6. 5	Sculptures	1	2	3	4	5
6. 6	Pictorial stimuli / poster-making	1	2	3	4	5
6. 7	Group discussion / debates	1	2	3	4	5
6. 8	Object dramatisation	1	2	3	4	5
6. 9	Singing and voice	1	2	3	4	5
6. 10	Movement and dancing	1	2	3	4	5

7. What did you find most helpful about these workshop?

Yini oyithole inosizo kakhulu kulomhlangano ? Why ? Isizathu ?

8. What did you find least helpful ? Why ?

Yikuphi okuthole kungenalo usizo kakhulu ?

9. Would you be interested in continuing with these drama workshops as a means of empowerment and healing in the future?

Ngabe ungathand a ukuqhubeka nalemihlango yomdlaolo weshashalazi ukuze uzithuthukise futhi uzisize ngokuzayo ?

Yes [] No []

10. Any other comments / feelings / impressions ?

Kukhona okunye ongathanda ukuphawula ngakho

THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE
SIYABONGA NGESIKHATHI SAKHO UKUPHENDULA LEMIBUZO