

USING PSYCHODRAMA FOR CHILDREN TO SUSTAIN MENTALIZATION

– poster –

Mentalizing is the capacity to understand our own reactions and that of others as motivated by inner mental states such as feelings and intentions. Developmentally, this capacity is linked with prefrontal cortex maturation. While 5-7 year olds still need the help of adults to understand behaviour of other children at the playground, by middle childhood we can see a growing capacity for mental state attribution.

The four dimensions of mentalization are: implicit/automatic vs. explicit/controlled; interior focused vs. exterior focused; cognitive vs. affective; other focused vs. self-focused

We can use psychodrama for children to improve mentalization and reflective functioning capacities:

- using the group, as a whole and individual members, to provide examples of otherness
- using soliloqui to provide examples of emotions and thoughts (cognitions)
- using supportive double to provide examples of explicit, controlled mentalization
- using the story as a way of providing examples of interior vs. exterior mentalization

The poster will offer some drawings of children participating in a psychodrama group, to look for examples of mentalization.



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In her work she is using many lenses: Systemic, Narrative, Mentalization, Ericksonian, Emotionally focused, Psychodrama for children, Schema therapy for children, Open dialogue.

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