



Synergy Workshop August 2005 - EMOTIONAL PROCESSES AND HEALTH: THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL DISCLOSURE

Listening to your body and playing with your voice – one way to emotional disclosure

Amorim, Edite Agra

Emotions and their expression assume a bigger and more important role not only in mental health but also in physical health. There are many diseases and affections in which alexithymia (the inability to express emotions properly) is found. For this reason, the emotional disclosure and expression gets a growing importance.

In order to make some light upon this kind of needs and to make common people sensitive to the importance of expressivity, a project was started: *Body and Voice at play*. This is a recent groundbreaking project that puts Psychology and Dramatic Expression together and it's being developed by two psychologists with experience in theatre and group work.

The aim of this project is to work emotional and relational skills, as studied by Psychology, such as interpersonal relationship, creativity, attention, relation with the body, the use of voice for a good expression among others. All of the work is done through simple games in which Drama techniques are strongly embedded.

Body and Voice at play does not have a therapeutic aim. Although it can be used in a therapeutic way, helping the emotional disclosure in some patients, such as cardiac patients or autism cases, the project was specially designed to be used in a health promotion perspective. It is based in the perspective that if we work in people's emotional promotion, we can have better results than if we work with them only when they are not healthy.

This project is being developed not only with children (in an elementary school) but also with adults. We have been working with children once a week, since last November. In each session we work a theme: relations, emotions, expressions, and many other things that help them to know and how to deal with themselves.

With adults we work in workshops. There are people from several professional backgrounds attending the workshops. In common they have the interest in learning how to use and deal with (good) expression. The main goal is to encourage people to become aware of their own ways of expression as well as exploring alternate emotional expressions.

We believe that with practice and dealing with different ways of expression, people can develop their expressive skills, allowing an emotional disclosure.

By using apparently simple Drama games, we just play. We play with their voice and help them to listen to their body.