

## 5. THE ORDEAL

### Putting Theory to Practice

*There against a tree was the old soldier with the red beard, his arm in a sling, and dressed in his little jacket. "Oh my," he said, "what beautiful dancing shoes." Terrified, she tried to pull the shoes off, but as much as she tugged, the shoes stayed fast. She hopped on one foot and then the other trying to take off the shoes, but her one foot on the ground kept dancing even so, and her other foot in her hand did its part of the dance also.*

- *Women Who Run With the Wolves* (Estes, 1992: 216-219)

## 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters explored the relationship between art and nature, theatre and perceived reality, in order to shed light on how drama may be used to frame perceived reality so that it can be analysed. More specifically, it sought to find a way for drama to frame the *self* as one aspect of perceived reality, using dramatic characterisation to clarify the values that identify that self. By researching the distance between perceived reality and drama, self and fictional characters, a pattern has emerged which describes the personal growth of both fictional and 'real' selves. This pattern has been called the 'Hero's Journey' by Joseph Campbell (1988a, 1988b) and Christopher Vogler (1998), a 'Mythic Journey' by Dorothy Heathcote (Kanira, 1997: 133-136) and a 'Story-journey' by Alida Gersie (1992: 15). This thesis will continue with the first phrase since it puts the character who takes the journey, the hero, central. However, the phrase will be used to refer more loosely to the pattern as a whole, similar to the way in which Campbell employs it and not necessarily to infer the inclusion of all 12 steps, as did Vogler's description of it. As before, the focus will remain on the crossing of three thresholds in pursuit of an elixir.

Since the Hero's Journey describes the growth both of 'real' selves and of fictional selves (whether they are treated as individuals or as a community), it can be said that the journey of a participant entering a drama workshop where she creates a fictional character and joins that character on a journey of personal growth and then learns from the experience, is a journey within a journey and can be called a *double journey* (p.99). As mentioned before, the focus of this particular practical process is the personal growth of the individual participants and their characters while the communal growth that may occur is secondary. The question that remains after having researched the theoretical foundations of the recurring structure is a practical one: if the Hero's Journey explains the relationship between fiction and perceived reality from the perspective of personal growth through values clarification, how then is the relationship interpreted *practically* so that young people may learn from it and experience such growth? Secondary questions that may arise are: How and when does the teacher-director mediate between the two frames of fiction and perceived reality? What should the resemblance be between a character that is created and the person who is to learn from it? And: How important is it that a character and the playing of it, should be of high dramatic/artistic quality?

This chapter describes an attempt to take a group of 14-18 year olds on the double journey of personal growth through character development, where each participant creates their own character in pursuit of their own elixir. The focus group consisted of the members of the Y2Kids Youth Theatre Company - a company of secondary school learners from different schools in the Pietermaritzburg area, who come together every Saturday morning at the Hexagon Theatre to learn theatre skills from University personnel and students.

The programme started with 22 participants, three dropped out along the way because of school related duties. There were six boys: all white except for one Indian boy who left after the fourth session and 16 girls: five black, two coloured, one Indian and eight white, of whom two left. Three of the girls came from an all girls independent school, four came from an all girls government school and the rest from a mixed gender government school. This information is not mentioned to prove that the group was multicultural, because the working definition of ‘multicultural’ implies that all young South Africans are multicultural by virtue of the many cultural influences on each individual (p.16). It is important, however, to show that the group was not homogeneous in the sense that they may not all have similar combinations of influences from their multicultural contexts. This would more probably have been the case if they were all from the same school, same race and same gender.

Furthermore, although the group had some drama experience, of the 19 participants that continued to the end, only six had more than six months of such exposure in Y2Kids. A measure of experience was useful since the programme was experimental and did not allow much time to teach basic dramatic skills. Yet, it was important that the learners were still relatively unskilled, so that the different models of character creation and development (Izzo, 1997, 1998; Vogler, 1998) and their claims to be suitable for unskilled performers, could be tested.

Another significant factor was the fact that the group met at the Hexagon Theatre, a venue the teacher-director<sup>1</sup> could easily control. As the process developed,

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<sup>1</sup> From this point forward the teacher-director will be referred to in the first person since the process is described from the practical and experiential point of view of myself as researcher. So doing I recognise that any other researcher may have used the same theoretical principles in a very different manner. Furthermore, since the process involved specific participants, they will be referred to as either male or female depending on the persons that are being discussed. The same applies to the gender of specific characters. Example: Each participant created *his/her* character according to *his/her* own likes and dislikes. One created a female character, even though *he* was male. *He* called *her* ‘Tess’.

it became more and more important for me to be able to set up the venue ahead of time complete with video camera for the recording of the process.

Before embarking on a description of the process itself, it is necessary to give some general information about the research methodology and materials that inform the description, as well as about the initial planning process. These will be discussed in the subsequent sections 5.2 and 5.3 respectively. A chronological account of the process itself is given in section 5.4. An analysis of the process will follow in the next chapter.

## **5.2 Research Method and Materials**

In Chapter One (p.14, 196) participatory action research (PAR) is put forward as the main research method adopted for the project. The subject matter of such research is the problems of the teacher-director in implementing theoretical ideas and the main tools of data gathering are the observations and reflections of all participants. PAR is a transformative process in itself, as Dalrymple (1995: 73) writes:

Everyone in the project is involved, not as passive recipients, but as knowing subjects, capable of achieving a deepening awareness both of the socio-historical reality that shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.

Such a methodology is therefore ideally suited for this particular research project. This is not only because it enables transformation, or growth but because it requires participants to be immersed in the practical process and report on it as insiders (Nussbaum & Sen, 1989). Such type of enquiry has been identified as an ideal way of learning about values (p.118). The method does, however place a burden on teacher-directors who are, therefore, required to “plan, act, observe and reflect on their practice and explore ways and means to understand and improve their work” (Dalrymple, 1995: 72). With this in mind I have kept a computerised journal containing reflections on the planning before workshops, the lesson plans, and reflections on the implementation of the plans afterwards. This journal forms the basis of the chronological account given in this chapter.

In addition, however, it is of great importance in PAR, that the process also be observed and reflected upon by the other participants, i.e. the learner-actors both from within and from outside the drama. The aim of such multifaceted observation is to create as many snapshots as possible of the same event from different perspectives in

order to identify common patterns. These observations and reflections will form the basis for the analytical account of the process in the next chapter. These reflections and observations also need to be planned for by the teacher-director with research in mind. The following section describes this and other factors that impacted my planning as the first step of PAR.

### **5.3 Planning**

The main objective of the planning was to use the theoretical suggestions of the previous four chapters to shape the process as a whole, but let the group and the process dictate the detail. This decision was motivated firstly, by the learner-centred nature of educational drama that allows the participants to steer their own learning, and secondly, by the suggestion made in the previous chapter to use the Hero's Journey as a guideline for structuring a series of lessons (p.136).

The principle that I followed when planning the basic structure of the series, was to start with a projection of an ideal structure based on the theoretical research and the physical constraints of the group, and then adapt it as the process developed. Following is a summary of the theoretical suggestions made:

- Get to know participants' needs and make sure they are in accordance with the proposed content (Boal, p.29-32; Landy, p.49 and educational drama as learner centred approach p.107-113)
- Create a setting, *temenos* or Ordinary World, with clearly defined limits in terms of subject, environment, event and underlying problems/themes (Izzo, p.63; Vogler, p.90-96).
- Create characters to inhabit the space by clarifying each character's hierarchy of values: the core value (passion) and the supporting operational values (primary needs) with 'back stories' for flaws and passions to help an individual to understand how context influences beliefs (Izzo, p.71; Vogler, p.89).
- Develop that character in the context of a story where the character takes action and faces challenges, while ensuring that participants become increasingly engaged with the character to such a level that the character's actions are understood as being motivated by his beliefs (Vogler, p.89-90; Way, p.122).
- Develop the story using elements of the Hero's Journey by: 1) defining the problem in the character's Ordinary World, 2) letting the character answer the Call and cross over to the Special World, 3) bringing the character to a moment of insight as he faces his Ordeal, 4) testing the character's values in the Resurrection as he crosses back to his own world returning with the Elixir, a symbol for operational and core values (Heathcote, p.137; Vogler, p.90-96).

- In the story, use educational drama strategies and techniques to immerse learners in the Big Lie by building belief (Heathcote, p.128-130).
- Relate the story to everyday life using different techniques to relate reiterating patterns to the concrete contexts of the group and of each individual. (Boal, p.32; Heathcote, p.130-134; Landy, p.49-50).

This process is in accordance with the double journey of a participant growing by virtue of the personal development of her character (see *Diagram 3.1* p.99).

Apart from the theoretical suggestions, the physical constraints of the group and their meeting times also had to be considered. The group met on Saturdays from 9:00am to 12:30pm. I would work with them from 9:15am to 10:45am, one and a half hours. According to the calendar I had twelve such possible sessions. Together with the theoretical suggestions, I devised an ideal plan reflected in the first column of *Table 5.1* (p.156). This ideal was adapted twice. The first time it changed was when I was asked to take two full Saturdays one after the other from 9:00am-12:30pm early on, because the facilitator for the second half could not make it. Because my own work schedule was extremely full, I had to use these times fruitfully and yet do it without enough time for detailed planning. The first Saturday I decided to show a movie, not just an episode from a television series as originally planned, in order to analyse it according to the stages of the Hero's Journey. The second Saturday I was presented with an opportunity to let the group play a Live Action Role-Play game<sup>2</sup>, a *LARP*. This gave me the opportunity to create a *temenos* with all its necessary characteristics as well as provide the group with a repertoire of characters to choose from. Consequently, the ideal schedule changed considerably, reflected in the second column of *Table 5.1*.

The plan changed a second time, reflected in the third column of *Table 5.1*, after I was faced with various complicating factors most notably absenteeism of group members and long time lapses between sessions due to the fact that I had lost two sessions later in the term by taking them earlier. Another factor was the process of learning how to negotiate between writing/devising the story from outside the role-play and doing it from inside. This process will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

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<sup>2</sup> A role-playing game (RPG) is any game that allows a number of players to assume the roles of imaginary characters and operate with some degree of freedom – limited by the rules of the game – in an imaginary environment. A referee or game master facilitates the game. The most widely known example of a role-playing game is DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®. A LARP (Live action role-playing game) is a RPG played in real time and in a real space prepared for the game (Fine, 1983: 6).

As the overall plan changed, so too did the proposed end product of the process. The first ideal plan aimed at dividing the group into three and creating three different short plays within a similar setting, each focussing on one important value chosen by the group. After the LARP, the plan was to develop the characters more fully and devise their story in order to repeat the LARP on the second last session playing it out as planned. Finally, I decided that the entire process would be run as in the LARP, but using educational drama strategies and techniques, developing story and characters as we went along. This decision will also be elaborated upon in the next chapter. In spite of the changes to the overall plan, the process as a whole still followed the proposed double journey.

In the planning of each session, there was one more guiding principle throughout the process that needs attention. This was the intention to try and work toward a set form to be followed each session. The reason for following this principle is that a set form saves time when planning, as well as during the session, because participants know what to expect. Additionally, such a structure helps to ritualise sessions, making the participants feel safe and in control of their learning, as well as giving the facilitator a measure of control over the process and the group. By the fifth session the structure looked as follows:

- Recap and goal setting,
- Ritual for enrolling,
- Body of class focussed on main objective,
- In-role reflection.

By session eight the main body of the session had divided into two: small group work and whole group work. I do not suggest that one should force this structure in the future. Of course iterations are possible and often desirable, but even then structure is useful for the reasons mentioned above.

Following the theory, the physical constraints of the group and the need for internal structure, I embarked on the journey of putting it all into practice. What follows here, is a chronological account of the process. I tell the story by using my computer journal as back bone. The journal includes lesson plans and my reflections, where I evaluated each session and planned for the next one. Where appropriate the narrative will be supplemented by other research material, but these will become of greater importance in the next chapter where the process is analysed and critically evaluated.

Table 5.1

Dates	Ideal plan			First revision			Final revision		
	Planning component	No	Projected objectives	Planning component	No	Projected objectives	Planning component	No	Eventual objectives
16/8	Matching group's needs with workshop aims.	1	Get to know the group and explain workshop plans.	No Change	1	No Change	No Change	1	No Change
23/8		2	Watch and analyse an episode of <i>Charmed</i> . Find themes for group work.		2	Watch and analyse a movie. Find messages/themes for group work.		2	No Change
30/8	Create a <i>temenos</i> .	3	Find a setting environment and event. Clarify the underlying problem.	No Change	3	Play a LARP to find a setting environment & event and to clarify underlying problem.	No Change	3	No Change
6/9	Create characters.	4	Choose characters with back stories/ Ordinary World	<i>Session lost to other facilitator</i>			<i>Session lost to other facilitator</i>		
13/9		5	Use exercises to clarify passion, primary needs, primary activities, weakness, virtue.	Create characters	4	Choose characters with back stories/ Ordinary World.	No Change	4	No Change
20/9		6	Create and explore the Special World: Friends, enemies, tests and trials.		5	Use exercises to clarify passion, primary needs, primary activities, weakness, virtue.		5	No Change
27/9	<i>School holiday</i>			<i>School holiday</i>			<i>School holiday</i>		
4/10	<i>School holiday</i>			<i>School holiday</i>			<i>School holiday</i>		
11/10		7	Recap and planning for the Ordeal.	<i>Session lost to other facilitator</i>			<i>Session lost to other facilitator</i>		
19/10	The second threshold.	8	Improvising the Approach to the Inmost Cave and the Ordeal. Seizing the Reward.	Let the character cross the first threshold.	6	Create and explore the Special World: Friends, enemies, tests and trials.		6	No Change
26/10	The third threshold and the Elixir.	9	Devising a Resurrection on the Road Back and identifying the Elixir.	The second threshold.	7	Improvising the Approach to the Inmost Cave and the Ordeal. Seizing the Reward.		7	Friends, enemies, tests and trials: Extended
2/11	Rehearsal.	10	Playing through the story.	The third threshold and the Elixir.	8	Devising a Resurrection on the Road Back and identifying an Elixir.	The second threshold	8	The Elixir and Approaching the Inmost Cave.
9/11	Relating story to everyday life.	11	Showing the story to parents and friends.	'Rehearsal for revolution'	9	Playing through the story.		9	The Ordeal and conflict between the Reward and the Elixir.
16/11		12	Reflection.	Relating story to everyday life.	10	Reflection.	Relating story to everyday life.	10	Reflection.

## **5.4 Chronological account**

This account is the story of a teacher-director who is constantly mediating between the two journeys of the *double journey*. That is, she is dancing between the participants' own journeys and those of their characters in the fictional drama. She is responsible for the participants' journeys in and out of the fictional drama so that they can learn about their own values, but she is also responsible for giving them the tools for guiding their own characters in and out of their Special Worlds. This is, in fact just another way of describing how the 'play for the teacher' and 'the play for the learner' (Morgan & Saxton, 1987: 168) can work together. In my planning, I was very aware of this role as gatekeeper. Hence I structured the planning by firstly stating my objectives overtly and then structuring the lesson so that the 'play for the learner' and the 'play for the teacher' would be clear. Sometimes I found it important to let the participants in on my objectives and other times I found it more useful to keep them hidden and let the drama do its 'magic'. Yet, I had to know at all times what the purpose of each exercise was. This was important, not just for the participant's learning, but also for my own as researcher. In other words, a third journey was happening outside the double journey of the participants: my own journey in and out between practical workshops and theoretical research. This journey is recounted in my reflections at the end of each execution of a lesson. It is this journey, my own learning as participant-observer, which drove the planning and, in fact, the whole endeavour. This, then, is my story as it is told by my plans, observations and reflections.

### **5.4.1 SESSION 1 – August 16, 2003**

As the objectives illustrate, my first desire was to get them hooked into the material. I was not prepared for their enthusiasm.

#### ***Objectives:***

- *To introduce the Hero's Journey as a way to create good stories,*
- *To introduce the idea that the Hero's Journey is mirrored in real life when individuals grow personally.*

Focus	Activity (Play for them)	Strategy (Play for me)
What the process wants to achieve	<p><u>Questioning:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What are some of your favourite movies/children’s stories/TV programmes?”</li> <li>• “How many of you have become emotional during a movie?”</li> <li>• “Have you been moved?”</li> <li>• “Would you like to know how they do it?”</li> <li>• “Would you like to make stories that move people?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building need and interest while getting to know the group and their needs and desires.</li> </ul>
Names and personality	<p><u>Games</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Name circle</i>: “Everyone in a circle. Call out someone else’s name, start walking towards him/her. S/he calls another name and must leave place before you get to her. Never move before you have named someone else.”</li> <li>• <i>Name game</i>: “Choose an adjective that describes yourself and starts with the same letter as your name e.g. Purposeful Petro. Add a movement/gesture to it as you say it. Everyone repeats it before the next person goes.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to know them.</li> </ul>
The Hero’s Journey	<p><u>Group discussion</u> :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator uses examples from earlier answers, and applies the Journey to everyday situations such as when someone falls in love/ changes schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the structure/recipe and making them feel empowered because they can see how it works.</li> <li>• Introducing the ideal that the journey also applies to everyday life.</li> </ul>
Being dishonest about what you believe	<p><u>Pair sharing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In pairs participants tell each other of a time when they succumbed to the pressures of a situation and kept silent about what they believed/thought/felt.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing pace, focus and redirecting attention while staying implicitly with the material.</li> </ul>
What you want the world to know	<p><u>Large group discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If you could send a message to the world, what would you want them to know?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliciting core values and a sense of purpose.</li> </ul>

### **Reflection**

*I did not expect them to be so overwhelmingly interested in the subject matter. I guess I was afraid it would all be for nothing and my work would be useless. I’m sure*

*this fear was bigger than I admitted to myself. Now that they take to the material, I feel a tremendous sense of relief. I wonder, though if I will be able to sustain this interest and deliver the goods. I have made huge promises:*

- *to show them how to make stories with “soul” that are not shallow and corny, as they call it,*
- *to discover why people do things when they know they should not, or not do things when they know they ought to.*

*This is a tall order and I will have to trust my research and my own ability to interpret it. But it is a challenge I am willing to take on. I am so curious to see how things develop.*

*The Name Game, if they take to it, could be used as a starting ritual for every session. We’ll see.*

The name game did indeed become our starting ritual, probably because I thought it was a good idea, but also because the group did not object. Looking back at the promises I made now, I see that I have definitely delivered on the latter. In fact, it became the single most important driving force of the journey and the focus for the Ordeal. The former, however, seemed to lose importance as the process developed, because of the way in which the workshop changed over time from focussing on the development of a product (three short plays that focus on values), to living through the drama and focussing on the process only. Still, it was with this promise in mind that I planned Session 2.

#### **5.4.2 SESSION 2 – August 23, 2003**

##### ***Objectives***

- *Applying the theory of the Hero’s Journey to an actual movie,*
- *Identifying main themes for the short plays.*

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Activity (Play for them)</b>	<b>Strategy (Play for me)</b>
The 12 stages in the Hero’s Journey linked with the hero’s personal growth	<u>Group discussion:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembering the stages of the Hero’s Journey based on hand-out (Appendix 1).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap and refocus so that the video can be watched critically.</li> </ul>
Video: <i>Unbreakable</i>	<u>Video:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants watch the movie while filling in the stages that are recognised on the hand-out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying the knowledge.</li> </ul>

The Hero's Journey	<u>Group discussion:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on what participants saw and what stages they recognised when watching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidating the knowledge.</li> </ul>
Warm-up	<u>Game:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Group forming:</i> as the facilitator cries out numbers, form groups matching the number of people in the group with the number called e.g. 3,6,2 etc. The game ends when there are three groups with even numbers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redirecting focus and energising the group after the long sit.</li> <li>Using the game to make three groups with the same amount of pupils put together randomly to work together.</li> </ul>
A message to the world	<u>Group discussion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>In large group:</i> “What did the movie <i>Unbreakable</i> want the world to know? What are some of the things you want the world to know? Are these things compatible with the belief system underlying the South African constitution? What are some of the values that support this core idea?”</li> <li><i>In the smaller groups:</i> “Decide on your main message and start to think of a main character that can learn this lesson. What other people may populate your story?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introducing the idea of core values that are supported by other values in a system.</li> <li>Finding central themes for their stories.</li> </ul>
The main problem	<u>Beginnings of image theatre:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants create a single ‘snap shot’ of the problem/message their group is tackling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translating ideas into physical image – concretising the abstract.</li> <li>Consolidating the days work.</li> </ul>

### **Reflection**

*I have very little time to think and write, but some important things struck me:*

- They insisted on switching off all the lights and settling in ready with water, sweets and comfortable positions. I protested that they would not be able to make notes on their hand outs if there was no light. They replied that they would think afterwards. They want nothing to “spoil” the experience. I thought to myself that they were well trained: a movie is an entry into a Special World and they were already expecting to go through an emotional experience in identification with it. They wanted to make sure nothing would interfere with this identification. At this point I identified strongly with Boal (1979: 48) in his irritation at Hollywood for evidently not only training audiences to be passive and non critical, but for also training them into a very narrow-minded interpretation of the Hero's Journey, using the dark movie theatre to coerce the audience into entering the world they have prepared and making them see this as the norm. I did not know if, as the educator, I should insist on a light to remain on, or if I should let them be, because I will get my chance to pull their experience apart when discussing the structure*

*and stages of the journey afterwards. I gave in to the pressure and went with the second option.*

- *During the discussion on what messages the group had for the world, one was mentioned that never became part of any of the final themes. One chap said he wanted the world to “chill” and “be free”. His comment interests me enormously because, he was very passionate about this message and his passion was in contrast to the message itself. I hoped I would be able to pick up on this value later on. I am afraid that it might be lost completely amongst all the other very serious values that were mentioned.*
- *Finally the groups came up with very similar ideas: the two sides of the same coin. Two groups wanted to tell the story of how a person was being ostracised for being different. Their message was about tolerance. The other group wanted to tell about one person’s victory over oppression as she discovered herself and made peace with it. The oppression they portrayed was rather violent: people hitting and shouting at her. The actions were, however, meant more symbolically than literally. So two groups had the message for the oppressor: ‘be tolerant’, and one had theirs for the oppressed: ‘be yourself’.*

*I think next week I will complete the Image Theatre session by letting them create an image of the ideal solution to the problem and then of the image of transition as they see it.*

It was after this session and during the next that the first major adaptation to my planning occurred because of the Live Action Role-Play game. The Image Theatre process was never continued. Still, I used many of Boal’s ideas and some of his exercises throughout the process. However, I would never again lead the participants out of the fictional setting to make up stories about their own issues, consciously. From the LARP onward, all the action and story making occurred within the boundaries of the Big Lie. When their values were externalised, it happened unconsciously as they immersed themselves in the characters and the setting. As expected, this distance between ‘real selves’ and ‘fictional selves’ proved very successful for externalising values. In fact, the participants became just as immersed in this Special World of outer space, the LARP presented, as they did in the Special World of the video. The only difference was that the group had more influence on the creation of the world and the characters that they identified with. They were not so completely manipulated into identification with the fictional characters as they were in the dark with the movie, or were they? Was I only less worried about manipulation because I was on the manipulating side when running the LARP? This issue of control and manipulation will become important again later in the evaluation and analysis of the process in the next chapter.

In relation to the participant who wanted the world to ‘chill’, I have to report that, sadly, this issue did not come under the magnifying glass of reflection again. The only observation I can offer, is that this particular participant chose a character – the leader of an alien race – that was so overpowering in demanding obedience from those around him, that he made it very difficult for anyone to ‘chill’. He also played the character with passion and took part with commitment. There was not sufficient reflection time at the end to overtly address this contradiction in what he expected of others and what he exhibited himself. There was also no evidence in any of his journal writing to suggest that he discovered it himself. This lack of sufficient reflection is also addressed in Chapter 6. None of these potentially critical issues were at the foreground of my mind, however, as we prepared to enter the world of outer space and interstellar warfare. All I worried about was whether or not the participants were skilled enough to cope with the demands of the game and whether or not they would be able to immerse themselves in it and enjoy it.

### 5.4.3 SESSION 3 – August 30, 2003

#### *Objectives*

- *To establish a setting and repertoire of characters,*
- *To gauge the learner’s improvisation skills and dramatic abilities.*

Focus	Activity (Play for them)	Strategy (Play for me)
What to expect	<p><u>Explaining the LARP:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We are going to play out a game scenario where everyone receives a character sheet with a predetermined character on it in a predetermined setting. The game will be run by Gerhi, the Game Master, who you may consult at any time for help.”</li> </ul> <p><u>The game:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Game Master explains the rules of the game and the scenario (Appendix 1.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facilitator hands over the reigns.</li> </ul>
Character sheets	<p><u>Characters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners are enroled by the Game Master and handed a costume with a character sheet. They are also given a starting place and time, e.g. “in your ship/station about to land at 10 o’clock Earth time.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enroling.</li> </ul>

The game	<u>In and out</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The scenario is played from when ships land until there is too much chaos and the game is called to a halt for a break and reorganisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is often necessary especially when some essential plot lines are being over looked, or players do not follow conventions like the chain of command and common sense like you can not kill someone in plain sight.</li> </ul>
The game continues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The game is resumed and called to an end 15 minutes before the time is over.</li> </ul>	
Reflection	<u>Journal writing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each participant is handed a journal and asked to write down what they liked/disliked about their characters and what they think can be used in the future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To see if the participants think the scenario and characters could be used for the rest of the journey.</li> </ul>

### **Reflection**

*At first, before embarking on the project as a whole, I did not plan too carefully, because I did not know the group and their needs and abilities. After the first couple of classes I was faced with the problem of how to create a Special World within which to play out the different stories about tolerance and oppression and within which 20 or so different heroes can experience growth. I was handed a golden opportunity when: 1) I was asked to take 3 hours of the workshop on the week that I was supposed not to see the group, and 2) a colleague suggested playing a LARP which he had developed for another group and which was still set up with costumes, signs etc. I jumped at the opportunity because a LARP would create an entire temenos within one session as well as come up with a repertoire of possible characters, each with their own passion and story within the larger context of the Special World. The LARP itself did not work so well because the learners were inexperienced in this kind of role play, but the idea appealed to them greatly.*

*They were so wired after the game and so intrigued by it that they battled to come out of it and reflect on its possible usefulness for the process of creating a Hero's Journey. I think I will use it anyway based on their ability to engage with the material and their excitement in spite of obvious difficulties. The difficulties include:*

- Inability to stay in character.*
- Insecurity in what to do when.*
- Violation of chain of command.*

- *Difficulties of imagination.*
- *Selfish role-playing, not using other's ideas.*

*All these, I think, can be rectified by proper characterisation and an understanding of the setting. This was another reason not to just let it go, but to use it.*

*I do have to make sure, though, that they find characters that they can really identify with. They have to choose their own characters and be able to adjust them to suit their needs. If they can not identify, then there is no point, because the character must externalise their own belief systems. The character has to become a vehicle for the growth that they need. As Landy (1993: 46-47) says, the unconscious chooses the role that needs integration or balance. Matching the characters with the right people must be the goal for the next meeting.*

*I have a slight itch as to whether or not all of the learners will be able to identify with the space theme. I don't know if the girls will be all that interested. I also wonder if they will be able to make up a world without having enough of a frame of reference from science fiction TV. I also wonder if there is a difference between white and black and Indian girls in this regard. I have a feeling there would not be a problem with the white boys, but I might well be stereotyping. I hope next week will give me an idea. I am basing my big decision on how much they enjoyed this game, but is it enough?*

The LARP scenario presented the participants with a choice between five kinds of people: Humans from the EECC (Earth Exploration and Colonisation Company), Aliens from the Dekamon Empire, Station Personnel of Maverick 463 and Free Agents, some of whom were pirates and others who were ordinary merchants. Within each group there was a hierarchy, or command structure, that described the status of each character in relation to other characters in the group. As can be seen from the character sheets in Appendix 1.3, the parameters of the characters were very prescriptive. They were even told what their attitudes were towards each other and towards the negotiations that were the central event of the drama. Because it was important to me that participants should be able to identify with their characters and play them with conviction, I spent the next three sessions on getting the participants to adjust their characters to fit their own preferences as opposed to expecting them to adjust to the characters as was the case with the LARP. I also took care to help the inexperienced girls to find their own ways of identifying with the scenario, so that they could learn to trust their own imaginations and stay in character.

#### 5.4.4 SESSION 4 –September 13, 2003

*Although the group was unable to decide the week before whether or not they wanted to use the LARP scenario as back drop for their stories, because they were still wrapped up in it, I decided to do so anyway, based on their ability to engage with the material. In this way the whole group is part of the same scenario, but every character is free to undergo his own journey of development. This is a much more challenging prospect than the three plays idea from before.*

#### **Objectives**

- *Choosing characters that learners like/can identify with.*

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Activity (Play for them)</b>	<b>Strategy (Play for me)</b>
Goal for the day	<u>Questioning</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Do you think your stories about tolerance and oppression could play out in a space age setting?”</li> <li>• “Would you agree to explore the setting further?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facilitator needs to make sure the participants are on board and agree with the plan.</li> </ul>
Establishing personal identity	<u>Warm-up game</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Name Game.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher wants to remind herself of learner’s names, but is also establishing a ritual for enrolling and de-roling that will be used later on.</li> </ul>
Character sheets	<u>Enrolling</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners are enrolled as creatures from another dimension searching for bodies to inhabit. They have a database of suitable hosts (the character sheets) and must now choose who will inhabit who. They are experts on characters and what to look for in a suitable host.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A version of ‘mantle of the expert’ where learners feel they have the knowledge to make good choices and are given the responsibility of choosing critically.</li> </ul>
Characters kept	<u>Introductions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners who like the characters that they were given during the LARP are asked to introduce their chosen host with his strengths and weaknesses. They are to boast about their clever choice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who were not at the LARP had to get to know what the characters are like as a way of catching up with those who were in the game. Those introducing their characters also had to get a clear sense of who they chose.</li> </ul>

Characters sold	<u>Auction</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A character auction is organised. Each person is given a certain amount of play money with which they could bargain. People who have characters they want to get rid of are asked to give commercial-like presentations of the character's strengths and weaknesses and then, to auction the character off. Those who are buying could buy for themselves or for a friend who is absent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People who did not want to keep their original characters, or who were not at the LARP had to choose characters they could play with. It was also necessary to choose characters for people who were absent.</li> </ul>
Establishing fictional identity	<u>Closing game</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The name game is repeated, but this time, participants must use the names of characters together with adjectives that describe them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a way of summarising the characters and consolidating the choices. It will be used in future for enrolling the group.</li> </ul>

### **Reflection**

*They agreed that the space station was an ideal setting for exploring the themes of tolerance and oppression especially since it involved different kinds of people and very clear power hierarchies. I was pleased with this and ready to help them choose characters they can relate to. I was very aware of the fact that many did not like the characters that they landed up with the week before and I devised the character auction for them to choose others. Ironically enough, faced with the choice, many decided to stay with what they had with the understanding that they were allowed to adjust the things they disapproved of.*

*In the end only a few characters were auctioned off and very little of the money was used because there were not many buyers. However, people did commit to certain characters. Unfortunately quite a few were absent and friends then bought characters for them without knowing whether or not they will really be suitable.*

*I also worry that many of the girls are still very unsure of the kind of scenario we are talking about. I don't know if they are able to identify with the space thing. When I asked them at the beginning if they agreed that our stories could play out in the space setting they agreed, but I did not really leave it open to them and give them another option. I more or less just explained the decision and did not really make them part of it. I may have to pay for this in the future and I must remember to make the theme as accessible as I can by including problems and issues that they will be able to identify with. If they see that there is nothing they have to 'get right' but that*

*their own imaginations are good enough, they should relax and be able to offer their own ideas.*

Again I seemed to be controlling the Special World like a movie director. I did not pay so much for it at the end, though. In fact by then it was running very well with all participants fully engaged. In their game play, they have already shown that the issues of status, ‘otherness’ and power appealed to them. Over the next sessions I would learn how to use their interests and strengths to overcome their inexperience and weaknesses in terms of playing the characters. I would also discard the character sheets entirely to make room for spontaneous character development.

I did pay for my directiveness, though, during this and the following session because it combined with three other major factors that slowed the process down. These factors were absenteeism, time lapses between sessions and my own focus on too much theoretical input. I will analyse and evaluate this further in the next chapter but this is the story of my successes and failures in getting them into their characters and starting the Hero’s Journey.

#### **5.4.5 SESSION 5 - September 20, 2003**

##### ***Objectives:***

- *Deepen characters through exercises that will clarify passion, primary needs, primary activities, weakness, virtue.*
- *To establish the character’s Ordinary world and initiate The Call to Adventure.*

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Activity (Play for them)</b>	<b>Strategy (Play for me)</b>
Goal for the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants are told the goal for the day: to flesh out the bones of the characters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing the attention.</li> </ul>
Starting ritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The name game.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing personal identity.</li> </ul>
Character sheets	<u>Remembering who is who</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone gets time to read their sheets and remember their characters.</li> <li>• The name game is repeated with fictional identities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap of characters.</li> </ul>

A day in the life of...	<u>Characterisation exercises</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Version of Boal exercise: 'Remembering yesterday' (1992: 161). People have to imagine what their characters would be doing at a certain time of the day and mime it as the times are called out.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating an Ordinary World for the character by finding occupational activities.</li> </ul>
The primary needs and Passion	<u>Characterisation exercises continue</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "You are in the open in a public space, something is burning within you, the thing you want most in the world. Thinking about it makes your heart beat faster and your breath shallow and short. You cannot take it any more now shout it to the world."</li> <li>• "Go back to a time of day when you can reflect, when you are not busy with your chores and activities."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding primary needs and passion from within the character and his setting.</li> </ul>
The Call	<u>The story begins</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "You are at your work station and you get the message that you are needed for a mission. Invent your own communication device."</li> <li>• "What is your reaction? Write it in your diary/logbook."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliciting a reaction to the call. Some characters may resist, others may grab the opportunity.</li> </ul>
Meeting the crew	<u>Group improvisation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to the board room of your workplace. There you will meet the other people who have been called on the mission. Get to know them and find out how they feel about the job.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first part of the journey towards the first threshold is started and first friends/enemies are made.</li> </ul>
Back stories as reflection	<u>Characterisation: strengths and weaknesses</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A discussion is held about weaknesses and virtues with examples (Spiderman and the Charmed Ones).</li> <li>• "Choose someone you have met to tell them how you came to have the weakness you have."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By telling a story about their character to a friend, the work of the day is reflected upon in role and the Ordinary World is further deepened.</li> </ul>
Closing ritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name Game with real names.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back to ordinary world.</li> </ul>

### ***Reflection***

*At the start I realised two things: 1) they were losing interest in the process as a whole and, 2) that I was going to expect a lot of individual creativity and, to prepare them, I asked the following questions: Who here wants to be able to make independent choices? Everyone raised their hands. Who would also like to consult their friends*

*once in a while to make sure their choices are agreeable? (Again everyone raised their hands). I had their attention, but I still needed their co-operation. I said that it is often difficult to know which is appropriate when, but that today, I am going to expect a lot of the first kind. I reminded them that in drama there is no right or wrong, only a well motivated or poorly motivated choice. I urged them to trust their own creativity. In spite of this, however, in between individual exercises (for which I received very good concentration even though some of them found it hard to execute all the tasks) they came out of character and discussed things with their friends, even at times when I asked them to stay in role. More on this and other difficulties below.*

*In terms of the planned order of events: I got the order a little mixed up and I cannot quite remember exactly what I did. I do know that the way it happened flowed one into the other and I managed to keep all the elements that needed to be covered in mind. All in all I think it went very well, but I find it difficult to engage them fully. The class worked very well. They responded to the input and were able to execute the exercises. The only worrying things were:*

- *There were so many absent.*
- *Some were here today for the first time since we started this specific scenario and characters.*
- *The moment they had to work in the group, it seemed like they lost their characters and wanted to engage on a meta-level with their friends talking about the character rather than as the character. I have to work harder at using methods to build belief and to engage them into the setting. I consider at this point whether to change strategy somewhat. Until now the plan, as I explained to them, had been to develop our characters, work on the story through different exercises and devising games and then, when they feel ready, to play the LARP again. I know now that this plan is not in line with the principles I have been learning about. The characters must be developed within the context of the story. I think, maybe I should let them devise short episodes and improvise them in groups. We may then start playing out the scenario much sooner than anticipated...?*
- *Something else was bothering me, that many do not seem to have enough background, or frame of reference, to make up things their characters would be doing in a space age setting. They seem stuck and very unsure, I am not sure they are able to imagine themselves so far in the future. They also do not seem to function well individually and keep checking their decisions with their friends. This is to be expected, they are 16 year olds. Even though I asked them to trust their own ideas, they seem to have a void when it comes to being creative, like they need something to feed off. Again group improvisation seems to be a good idea. I want to give them the opportunity to feed off each other's ideas. I should then also work on a greater sense of the collective,*

*especially for each of the four groups: EECC, Dekamon delegates, station personnel and free agents.*

*I wonder how it would have been different had I let them devise their own temenos from the start. I would like to try that in the future. It would mean, however, that we start with the fictional story first, before identifying themes, or messages because once the themes are there, the participants already create people around them. This is something Izzo also suggests (1997: 41).*

And so the eventual goal seems about to change again and, maybe, for the better. I would also later discover that the choice for more group improvisations would save the day. If only I had settled on the goal change before the next session and tried the group improvisations immediately, but I was too focused on the theory and trying too hard to maintain continuity between sessions amidst the absenteeism and time lapses.

#### **5.4.6 SESSION 6 - October 11, 2003**

##### ***Objectives:***

- *To consolidate characters and give them life.*
- *To work them through the stage of crossing the threshold and tests, friends and enemies.*

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Activity (Play for them)</b>	<b>Strategy (Play for me)</b>
Starting ritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Name Game.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing personal identity.</li> </ul>
Character sheets	<p><u>Recap</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group look at their characters and remember who they were.</li> <li>• I teach them the distinction between value objects, loci of values and underlying value. “Make a list of the things (objects) your character values. Write down what makes these things valuable to your character. Then try to identify the underlying value and whether it links to your character’s passion from the week before.”</li> <li>• Participants use their lists and try to sort out the value system of their characters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap and making sure that everyone understands how values (for their characters at least) work.</li> </ul>

The space ships and space station	<u>The setting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ships/station is drawn or orientated in space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a spatial understanding of the <i>temenos</i> so that action will be focussed and meaningful.</li> </ul>
Characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name game with character names</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enroling.</li> </ul>
Crossing the threshold and first Tests	<u>Group improvisation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The groups prepare an improvisation where they set the scene as being on their ship or station. Something happens that threatens to upset their preparations for the peace negotiations. Each character's reaction and attitude must be clearly communicated.</li> <li>The scene is performed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actualising characters through action and determining from the teacher's point of view if everyone is engaged. Also to start creating relationships and history among characters.</li> </ul>
Closing ritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name Game with real names.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back to ordinary world.</li> </ul>

### **Reflection**

*Today did not go well. To my great annoyance some people wanted to change character, again. They find it very hard to choose one character and stick with it. I am not sure if it is because the character was not their own creation to begin with, or if they just keep thinking other people's are better, or if they don't find their character to be playable. I think it is a combination of different factors. Mostly the character is not playable because they don't identify, or because they do not have the skills or confidence to make up the missing detail, or because they think they can identify better with their friend's work. I also discovered that some only realised now that they are severely impaired if they do not like their character despite the fact that I had given them various opportunities to change their minds. So, because it is of central importance that the characters are liked and identified with, I let them change anything they wanted except their relationship with other characters. "If you are the ambassador's aide, you stay it, if you are the captain's lost sister, you stay it." I let them change gender, names and even attitudes. I finally asked them if the passion that they identified the week before still applies, they answered a resounding "yes". This was positive.*

*I was also very annoyed with people who were absent the week before. This meant that they did not understand the activities, needs, passion distinction and I had to explain it all over. This time, however, I was unable to take them on the whole experience once again, because I wanted to move on. This was probably not the best*

*choice, but I had not prepared a whole different way of helping them to find their passions and I could not use the same exercise as the week before, because people who had already done it, would not be able to add anything new to the experience yet. I, therefore, used the “Charmed” ones as an example and explained the differences again. This was the plan since I wanted to challenge learners who had not yet got to the bottom of their character’s passions (e.g. the alcoholic head of security).*

*Some enjoyed this analytical exercise very much and became completely absorbed in choosing activities, objects, then needs and then the passion. A very interesting remark came from one who said she did not know what the character’s passion was. If you look at what he wants, I said, can you not guess using your knowledge about humans in general? She answered, she wanted a husband, because she wants love but that was corny and stupid. She said she would prefer growing with her character as the character is taken on the Hero’s Journey and see then what she finds out. I thought this was very interesting and asked her to write this down in her journal. She did not.*

*The last thing that really irritated me, was when someone asked me what the purpose of the process was. “Are we making a play?” Again it was someone who was absent twice who asked the question. However, when I asked the others to answer the question, it seemed like they did not know/remember either (it was three weeks ago and the plan has changed from originally being to make three short plays, to now just preparing us for one more big role play session). I explained that we are busy with what is called ‘process drama’ where the process is more important than the product so, no, we are not making plays, we are learning how to make stories where the characters undergo change. I asked them if this is still something they would like to find out and they answered in the affirmative. “Let us get off our feet then and start playing”, I said.*

*Because we had taken so long with this and many people had changed their characters significantly, I now had the problem that they did not know each other anymore and some had not had the luxury of getting to know themselves the way the others did the session before. Instead of getting them to create their physical surroundings on paper, I just asked them to create it spatially with their imaginations and get right down to preparing the improvisation. We did not get time to view these.*

*When I use a group like this again, I would find a way of ritualising their commitment with a contract/pact or something. I will explain to them before that a*

*journey will take you nowhere if you start at the same place every week. A journey is not easy to catch up with once it is underway. If one misses a section, one's fellow journeymen are held back and oneself has missed great opportunities in completing the journey successfully.*

*Even though I realise that changing the plan constantly could be potentially unsettling to the group, I have decided not to play the LARP in its original form, but with deepened character, again. Rather we will slowly immerse ourselves in the story and never come out of it again until we are satisfied. From next week on there is no distinction between preparing the story and playing it, the two processes merge completely. Again I realise that I need to trust my theoretical research: without immersion, no learning, and immersion takes time and careful planning. From now on: much more careful planning. I realise these insights should have been obvious, but when one is caught up in a practical process, one does not always remember one's theoretical foundations. Personally I find myself very comfortable thinking about the story, rather than being in the story: it is the same with the participants. Therefore, what I expect of them, I need to expect of myself. This is not their journey, but mine.*

With my own lessons learned and my own fears and weaknesses faced, I finally let go and dived into the practical drama, taking the participants with me.

#### **5.4.7 SESSION 7 – October 26, 2003**

##### **Objectives:**

- *To build belief and get the students to engage with their roles*
- *To overcome the first tests and complete the journey to where the ships dock at the station*

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Activity (Play for them)</b>	<b>Strategy (Play for me)</b>
The big picture	<u>Questions about the process</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What are we trying to accomplish or gain?”</li> <li>• “Where are we in the process?”</li> </ul> <u>Goals for the day</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facilitator tells the group what she would like to accomplish: to complete the journey up to the point where the ships dock at the station.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap.</li> </ul>

Starting ritual	<p><u>The name game, both versions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This time, instead of taking turns, everyone goes at once on the count of three. They do it three times with increasing commitment and conviction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing personal identity and enrolling.</li> </ul>
Tests and Trials	<p><u>Group improvisation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scenes of the week before are rehearsed.</li> <li>• The scenes are performed one by one. With each scene: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the scene is run without interruption,</li> <li>○ the scene is repeated, this time the facilitator stops the scene to ask questions or make suggestions about staging (spacing/grouping/movement),</li> <li>○ the other participants are invited to do the same.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants must be drawn into the play and their characters must develop within the context of the story and setting. The facilitator uses the devices of stopping the drama to question and using space/groupings and movement to build belief and create focus. Participants are encouraged to take part in each other's work and learn from one another.</li> </ul>
Friends and Enemies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Character relationships</u></li> <li>• Relationships which are mentioned in the character sheets, but have not yet been established/explored are isolated and improvised. The facilitator coaches from the side. She also invites the participants who are watching to offer opinions as to the believability of the improvisations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants must get a chance to build their characters within the context of significant relationships.</li> <li>• They must also be made sensitive to the importance of total immersion and commitment to the process.</li> </ul>
A map of the part of space the station is in with approaching ships	<p><u>The setting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An image of the space station is drawn on the board with the ships approaching it.</li> <li>• Participants give suggestions and the facilitator draws.</li> </ul> <p><u>Questioning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "What do the ships/station look like?"</li> <li>• "Who is closest and will arrive first?"</li> <li>• "Which directions are they coming from?"</li> <li>• "How big are they in relation to one another?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using pictures and questions to build belief.</li> </ul>

The night before arrival of the parties	<u>Journal entry</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone is asked to collect their journals and find a space where they are by themselves.</li> <li>• “You are in your private quarters on your ship/station. The ships are approaching the station. The big day is approaching. In character, write how you feel about it all. Your attitude must be very clear.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-role reflection is used to consolidate the day’s work.</li> </ul>
The journal entries	<u>Sharing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers share their entries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group must get a feel of their accomplishments and where they stand as a group.</li> <li>• Sharing attitudes also builds belief.</li> </ul>
Closing ritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <u>name game</u> repeated as before with character names first and then personal names.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De-roling and closure.</li> </ul>

### **Reflection**

*Today was much more satisfying. Although there were three important members absent, we were able to put the stories together for the tests and the beginnings of relationships. The groups who had missing people were despondent, but I told them that the setting (temenos) and their own characters gave them enough to work with and cover for the ones who were absent e.g. the chief negotiator of the EECC was absent and so was their doctor. They decided that these two were in an important meeting and were not allowed to be disturbed. The chief of security was placed in command and had to deal with any arising situation. Station command missed their chief of security and they decided that, since he had an alcohol abuse problem, he was at an AA meeting under orders of the commander to get himself sorted out before the arrival of the delegates.*

*Before the improvisations started, however, I told them of the plan not to play the LARP as is again, but to develop the story slowly and effectively. I also said that we will now get into the story and immerse ourselves in the plots and the situations so that our characters can develop within it. Everyone reacted enthusiastically.*

*This version of the name game worked very well, it gave a sense of group energy and the change from self to ‘other’ was clear. The ‘self’ names were done with vigour and presentation, while, overall, the character enrolment was darker and more mysterious.*

*The improvisations were surprisingly intriguing. What stood out was:*

- *That the chain of command and status of characters were mostly clear, and where they were not, it was challenged by those who watched (e.g. pirate scene).*
- *Some people become stuck in a conflict mode without clear motivation e.g. the emperor and his wife, the brother and sister who made contact for the first time in many years. To me this speaks of a lack of depth in character. This may change as we go deeper into the drama.*
- *Some people feel alien to their characters and use improvisation to change and adapt characteristics they do not like: e.g. the nurse, who did not like being underhanded, confesses all, leading to two more confessions. This may also be the only energy they can think of to use in order to propel the scene without reverting to conflict. This scene spoke of character growth, but being so early in the journey, for this specific character, it can also function as her Call. With all the confessions made and secrets revealed, I am anxious and excited to see how their story will unfold.*
- *Each character has his own arch and it does not necessarily flow with the communal journey the group is on.*
- *If I realised group improvisation would work so well for creating and building the characters, I would have done it ages ago.*

*The stop and think exercises worked very well. I noticed that the group that was watching was picking up inauthentic traits in characters and questioning them, especially after the first time I questioned it. This is very interesting. It shows that they are learning to see the relationship between belief and action.*

*It was easy to place the ships in relation to the station and to decide on shapes. I was afraid I would lose their interest, but they were right there with suggestions. We did not have time to share reflections but everyone reflected seriously and in silence: a very good sign of having been engaged. Mission accomplished i.e. engaging the participants in the Big Lie.*

#### **5.4.8 SESSION 8 – November 1, 2003**

*Now that we are immersed in the drama, I start wondering if we aren't losing track of the original themes/messages we wanted to work with i.e. tolerance, equality and being oneself. I am thinking of using a device completely outside the drama, like a questionnaire, to bring those themes to the fore again.<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> This questionnaire is discussed and evaluated in Chapter 6. A copy of it and a summary of the participants' answers can be found in Appendix 2. For the current chapter, I want to remain focussed on the drama.

**Objectives:**

- To start the approach to the inmost cave,
- To consolidate characters and clarify their goals.

Focus	Activity (Play for the m)	Strategy (Play for me)
The big picture	<p><u>Questionnaires</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants are asked about their views on the needs of today’s youth.</li> </ul> <p><u>Organisational remarks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The goal for the day is to play through the welcoming event and meet all the other characters.”</li> <li>• “Two cameras will be used today, the stationary one that usually just captures the session, will be set up in a corner and is available for individuals to bare their souls in character. The other will be used in the drama as you will see.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires hopefully recapture the original themes without compromising their engagement.</li> <li>• Organisational remarks refocus their attention on the story.</li> </ul>
The Reward	<p><u>Group work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups are each handed an object and asked to brain storm its meaning for the group.</li> <li>• The object is placed in safe keeping/with a trustworthy person.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of role. The experience is taken to a deeper level of meaning. Attitudes and goals are concretised through symbolisation. Group identity is also strengthened.</li> </ul>
Starting ritual	<p><u>The name game, both versions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeat as last week, but this time in their small groups instead of in one large circle: everyone goes at once on the count of three.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing personal identity and enrolling.</li> <li>• Also building belief with costumes.</li> </ul>
Preparation for arrival	<p><u>Facilitator takes a role</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator introduces herself as Inter-stellar Peace Officer (ISPO) Schnell, appointed by a United Nations type organisation to ensure that negotiations are running smoothly.</li> <li>• The station commander and the pirate captain are each handed an instruction sheet containing preparation orders from the ISPO. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Free agents must get their reasons for attendance in order and strategize.</li> <li>○ Station personnel must get the welcoming venue organised.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of Schnell gives the facilitator power from inside the game to press and probe and shape the drama.</li> <li>• Written instructions buys her the time to work with other groups.</li> </ul>

<p>Approach: arrival of all parties</p>	<p><u>Arrival</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visiting parties (EECC and Dekamons) arrive in their ships and go through customs. The arrival of ships is done slowly, one by one in the order determined last week. Space/sound and movement is used.</li> <li>• Everyone must move through customs controlled by ISPO Schnell: Delegates are asked name, purpose for being there and to declare valuables and hand them in for safe keeping. The papers are signed (See Appendix 1 for Customs Clearance forms).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ritual of custom papers and interviews by Schnell builds belief and is used to press for authentic role-play. Especially around the important objects, but also to establish duties and goals.</li> </ul>
<p>Approach to the Inmost Cave</p>	<p><u>The welcoming event</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schnell is at the door checking papers and interviewing those who were on the station already (personnel and free-agents).</li> <li>• The Chief of Security uses a camera to record everyone who enters at the door.</li> <li>• The camera in the corner is set up as a place where people can speak in private to the Peace Officer. Here they can be real and get anything they want to off their chests. The ISPO is impartial and incapable of judgement. He is there to listen and make sure that emotional humanoids have an outlet.</li> <li>• Everyone else mingles and chats until Schnell is finished with his paper checking.</li> <li>• Leaders of groups give their ceremonial speeches, after which the mingling continues until the time is up.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The camera is for anything that individuals feel they want to air. In private they can tell the camera what they think of other people and of the party and coming negotiations. It helps them to clarify their attitudes for themselves so that they can play them with greater ease toward other people.</li> </ul>
<p>After the party reflection</p>	<p><u>Journal entry</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone is asked to collect their journals and find a space where they are by themselves.</li> <li>• “You are in your private quarters on the station. What is going through your mind after the party as you get ready for the big negotiations?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-role reflection is used to consolidate the day’s work.</li> </ul>
<p>The journal entries</p>	<p><u>Sharing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are asked to share their entries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group must get a feel of their accomplishments and where they stand as a group.</li> </ul>
<p>Closing ritual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <u>name game</u> repeated as before in small groups with character names first and then personal names.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De-roling and closure.</li> </ul>

## **Reflection**

Generally everything went as planned. Just the out of role reflection afterwards was left out because of time constraints. Also, the hand video camera for taping the customs ritual was malfunctioning. The second stationary camera worked like a bomb. It is a convention that they are familiar with because of reality TV programmes.

### Specific events:

- *I am not sure whether or not the plan with the questionnaires worked or not, but certainly issues of tolerance and feelings of oppression were themes during the drama. (This became even more evident after I watched the video material). It could just be due to the principle that drama externalises belief system, or it could be because the questionnaires brought those issues temporarily to the fore just before the session started.*
- *The object brain storm: Pupils found it difficult at first to understand what I wanted. After some explanation and examples, they responded and came up with some very nice meanings for their collective object. However, when they were asked to declare it at customs, they did it without even thinking twice. It is clear that it should have been something that was brought in earlier so that there would have been a more developed relationship between the object and the characters. This was also true of the 'flux generator' that belongs to the pirates, they already had a relationship with it, because they used it in their previous improvisation. If I had more time, I would have run an improvisation around the objects to strengthen their meaning for the group<sup>4</sup>.*
- *The landing of the spaceships went very well. The EECC flew and landed their craft as if it was an aeroplane, while the aliens had a complete still glide and a sinister thud as they docked.*
- *The ISPO worked as a device of control and order, but his accent became tedious for me to maintain and for the group to tolerate.*
- *The customs clearance forms only partially worked as a press. As mentioned earlier, the items were relinquished without question. However, I did come up with all sorts of standards to make the situation carry more weight. I questioned medical personnel on their professional papers to show their competence, accepting the doctor, but not the nurse and making the doctor sign for accepting full professional responsibility for her. I also gave the pirates a hard time getting in, asking them to clarify their reasons for being there, making them sign for 25% profit sharing for all goods traded in neutral space. One in particular said that she was a pirate, forgetting to be deceitful and she had to quickly make up for it. She came up with interesting solutions, proving her membership of an inter-stellar approved trading union. I questioned most of them on their specific duties so that their actions inside the play space would have purpose. When these were vague, I asked them to elaborate, or explain how they plan to achieve their objective. I was annoyed*

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<sup>4</sup> More on these symbolic objects in the next chapter.

*because the camera that was supposed to capture these interviews malfunctioned.*

- *The speeches went well. I was very pleased with the venue set up. The chairs were oddly arranged – to accommodate alien customs. There was live food ('but food') as well as dead food, and the security officer took pride in keeping the rowdy free agents under control. The commander made a good speech and, in absence of the chief negotiator, the secretary of the EECC took charge, being very courteous to the aliens. The latter responded with threats of letting them be attacked by the bodyguard (a vicious creature indeed) or overpowering them with their superior technology.*
- *The camera in the corner was used well by most, especially the pirates who had stolen all the goods that were to be kept in safe keeping by the ISPO, and told the camera all about it.*
- *Time is just never enough. I must look at a way of dealing with it. Today the absenteeism did not bother the process so much. Most of them were there, and for those who weren't, the others were able to improvise and cover successfully.*
- *Finally everyone was able to reflect in silence and with great concentration as they retreated to their private quarters. With them I await the negotiations with mounting anticipation...*

#### **5.4.9 SESSION 9 - November 8, 2003**

##### **Objectives:**

- *To play through The Ordeal and the climax of the story,*
- *To identify opportunities for growth in the characters.*

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Activity (Play for them)</b>	<b>Strategy (Play for me)</b>
The big picture	<u>Organisational remarks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal for the day: to play through the negotiations.</li> <li>• One camera only, capturing the session for research purposes, as usual.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap and organisation.</li> </ul>
Starting ritual	<u>The name game, both versions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeat as last week: everyone goes at once on the count of three. This time they do it only once, then freeze and breathe into the freeze to establish attitude. They put on their costumes and repeat, maintaining the attitude everyone now goes to discuss their points for negotiation in groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing personal identity and enrolling.</li> <li>• Also building belief with costumes. Freezing and breathing into the freeze helps to establish attitude.</li> </ul>

<p>Group planning</p>	<p><u>Small group work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone is seated in groups. The facilitator reminds them of the situation between Earth and the Dekamon empire: the reasons for the peace negotiations.</li> <li>• Group leaders are each handed a piece of paper and a pen. The group is asked to organise their thoughts for the big meeting as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>EECC and Dekamons</i>: write down what you want and what you are willing to give in order to get it.</li> <li>○ <i>Station personnel</i>: lay down the rules to be followed in order for security and order to be maintained.</li> <li>○ <i>Free agents</i>: write down what you need from the negotiations in order to ensure freedom for your business to continue.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups prepare a framework that could guide their responses and talks during the meeting.</li> </ul>
<p>Ordeal: Peace or not?</p>	<p><u>The meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the door everyone's clearance papers are checked. If anyone did not bring it, they are seated at one end of the room and not allowed to participate.</li> <li>• EECC sits on one side, Dekamons opposite, free agents sitting on a third side, ISPO on the fourth side opposite them with station personnel dispersed, one standing at each corner of the meeting space.</li> <li>• ISPO opens the meeting by reading international rules for neutral space. Then station commander explains security rulings. Then EECC gets a chance to state their point of view. Dekamon next, then free agents. Thereafter the floor is opened and chaired by the ISPO.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TIR is in charge of proceedings. Learners carry consequences of not being prepared. They then learn negotiating skills and the difficulty of negotiating with people who do not agree with your point of view.</li> </ul>

<p>Ordeal: the stolen objects</p>	<p><u>Climax</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the heat of the argument, the ISPO declares that he has received an urgent transmission: there is a thief on board: all the declared items have been stolen. It is ISP regulations that the negotiations be interrupted until the villain is cleared out.</li> <li>• The teacher interrupts the drama by asking all to freeze. As she taps each character on his shoulder, he is to voice his overriding emotional reaction to the news, excluding the free agents (who are guilty).</li> <li>• She then asks everyone, on the count of three, to point to who they think (or want others to think) the guilty party/parties are. She touches them again to express emotion, this time including the free agents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the previous session the special objects were stolen by the pirates (the facilitator was told this by the learners who wanted to make sure it would be picked up and used in the story's unfolding). This is now used to focus the emotions of the group and to crystallise them into attitudes. It is important for learners to see that emotion always translates into attitudes toward other people. They do not happen in a void. This is true for both innocent and guilty, innocent ones want to find the guilty parties, guilty ones want to evade discovery.</li> <li>• Because order still needs to be maintained in the midst of potential uproar, freezes are used to focus the emotion and give each a chance to express their individual reaction.</li> </ul>
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<p>The Ordeal: Which characters grow?</p>	<p><u>Character growth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facilitator instructs them that she will count to 5 and shout ‘freeze’ again. During the counts the characters are to play out what they feel like doing as reaction to their emotion and then freeze at the height of action. This is done and again they are asked to express themselves as they are touched on the shoulder.</li> <li>• Out of role the class is asked if any of the proposed actions are in the service of peace. The answer will probably be ‘no’. She then explains that they have come to the moment where the characters who are ready, can now change and react contrary to their weaknesses. She also asserts that only the characters who feel ready, are allowed to change. No magical solutions will be allowed, it must be well motivated from within their characters.</li> <li>• The 5 counts are reversed so that all are back where they were before they acted on their emotions. The group is unfrozen and the role-play is resumed. The ISPO together with the station personnel maintain order and give different characters a chance to respond to the situation. Depending on where the action leads, the negotiations are concluded. This may, or may not, include the identification and arrest of guilty parties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitudes now need to be translated into action. Because of heightened emotion and verging chaos counts and freezes are used to maintain order and to focus action while giving every character a chance to act on his feelings.</li> <li>• The group is then called out of role to remind them of the highest good of the community: peace. Now all characters need to be given the opportunity to change if they are ready for it, and to retain their course of action if they are not. There needs to be room for those who can change to do so, but for those who are not ready to try out the consequences of reaffirming their course of action. This includes the guilty pirates. Each learner’s plans for their character may not work out because it may conflict with other learner’s plans. The role of the ISPO may be used to mediate between different proposed courses of action. Learners must discover, however, that it is not so easy just to ‘grow’ because it always happens in a context where other people are also growing or not. To leave the negotiations without conclusion is also an option, as long as there is some sense of closure of the story.</li> </ul>
<p>Reflection on their way home</p>	<p><u>Journal entry</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone is asked to collect their journals and find a space where they are by themselves.</li> <li>• “You are on your way back from the meeting to Earth/Dekamon empire/home base. What did your character learn?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-role reflection is used to consolidate the day’s work, especially if the end was not neat and tidy.</li> </ul>

Closing ritual	<u>Name game</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It must be final and forever. The name game repeated as before with character names first and then personal names. This time costumes are folded and placed in the containers for the last time. They are therefore not just dumped, they must be neatly folded and handed to the facilitator who will thank the learner and tick off her name.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De-roling and final closure.</li> </ul>
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### **Reflection**

*Wow, what a session! Everything went perfectly according to plan until they resumed play after they were reminded of peace and that they can now grow. I must admit, I myself was so immersed that I may have forgotten to refocus their attention on the peace part of the negotiations. I will have to check the video to see if I actually did. What I do know, is that if I cannot remember having emphasised it, it probably did not come across as being emphasised.*

*Firstly, I enforced a security lock down. This meant that no-one was allowed to leave the room. However, the pirates have moved the special objects out of the room to hide them and they wanted to get to it. Station command also wanted to leave the room to search for them and to lock up their prisoners so that negotiations can continue. However, I stuck by my guns and allowed no-one to leave. The question was: what do we do now? One officer came forward with information of what he saw earlier and I suggested we run a court type hearing to listen to witnesses etc. This was agreed upon, but it did not work too well. I think it was because we did not appoint new rules and the old rules for negotiation did not apply. I tried to give all who wanted to give an opinion the opportunity to talk, but, needless to say, emotions were running high and everyone started talking at once.*

*Secondly, because of the emotional level of the talking, all sorts of grievances now showed themselves, most notably, the frustration of not being able to voice your opinion, or of not being able to play your part of the story creating a feeling that the story was going nowhere.*

*I then called a stop to the role-playing and asked if I could just give a summary of the attitudes so that it was clear to all. This did not work because no-one could agree on the summary. Different attitudes and different opinions about*

*attitudes were flying around and the time out discussion became just as chaotic as the in-role one. Other issues that now surfaced were issues of interpretation of what kind of acting/role-play/improvisation they were doing. Some said it was getting too personal, others said, that that was the point: a character allows you to become personal, if you do not invest personal emotions in your character what's the point? One clever boy remarked that this was probably a central point of my research. Another remarked that one race should not invent background for another race, this was unfair. I first agreed with this and then corrected myself saying that this was a principle of improvisation: you take what is given to you and you work with it. The problem was, some said, that they were not given the opportunity to respond to others because one person will start talking and then not hand over the focus. We then came up with the idea of letting the person who wanted to talk come to the middle and those who wanted to respond to join him there. Each would be given a chance and then we would move on. I did not think it would work, but I did not have a better idea at that point. Play resumed.*

*It started off well, but soon there were too many responses and too many feelings going everywhere again. People reverted to putting up their hands rather than entering the space because it went quicker. I started to say "stop", as peace officer, after one person had made their point and then I asked others, who had their hands up to respond. This worked fine, but still the story was going nowhere.*

*Finally, someone suggested that the court case should end and be postponed because it was detracting from the real issue at hand: peace. This was accepted as the best course of action by the majority, however many still had things to say. Of course the time was up and I had to call the meeting to an end. I asked everyone to reflect in their journals before taking off their costumes and de-roling. We never did the closing de-roling properly because we had gone way over time and people needed to leave.*

*Afterwards many stayed and talked. Some very interesting things were said about the relationship between people and their characters. I will have to look at the video to remember exactly what these were<sup>5</sup>.*

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<sup>5</sup> I quote and discuss some of the remarks in the next chapter.

*I am not at all disappointed in how it went. I think there is much to learn from it:*

- *When emotions run high, the big picture is lost: the exact point I decided to make, namely that one may profess certain beliefs, but once emotions are involved, one's true colours show. This is an important issue for next week's reflection.*
- *I am not skilled enough in what Heathcote calls "fighting for form" (1984: 117) to really frame the drama. I truly did not know what to do at times.*
- *Students will benefit from a workshop on improvisation as a preparation for the role-play.*
- *The chaos is wonderful for getting learners to think about solving problems of communication e.g. When emotions run high, people also do not listen to one another: many points of story info came out, but were not picked up. I need to consolidate such learning in the reflection next week.*
- *I need to learn how to negotiate the two frames of writing/devising the story and acting out the story. These are very different. It is also extremely difficult for the learners to change from doing one, to doing the other. They are unable to talk about how the story should go, using the Hero's Journey as a guide, and then acting in the story. I know Heathcote does this, but I do not know how. The participants are so emotionally involved that they are unable to make decisions about the big picture. I think I will have to work this out in practice.*
- *Even in the midst of the chaos, some characters made concerted efforts to grow. These got lost in the confusion because too many people had ideas of their own that needed voicing. I need to draw attention to these. In the future, I should use these to steer the story and create the form that is needed. I therefore need to learn to not just let them go, but stop the drama, draw other's attention to them and then use them. This also will have to be worked out in practice.*

*Ideas for next week:*

- *It might be useful to let them watch some of the video footage from this week to help them see how emotional and immersed they were and how they became completely side tracked from the main issue: peace. It can also be used to draw attention to the moments of character growth that occurred so that participants can see them and learn in what ways they are different from what other characters did. This may give them insight into their own lives and life in general.*
- *Because there was no proper reflection and closure today, I think I should think up some kind of closing ritual. Perhaps a final journal entry, or perhaps something with the costumes...? It may be useful to start next week with an analysis of our story in relation to the Hero's Journey, then to ask them how they think the story should finish given the stages of the journey and then ask them to write a final episode.*

#### 5.4.10 SESSION 10 – November 10, 2003

##### **Reflection on planning:**

*I do not know how to structure the final reflection. I have had many ideas over the last couple of weeks, most of which are listed below. I do not know what to do because there is so much that can be learnt from the process, especially from last week's episode and I don't know what to focus on. It is not good enough to say: "look at the main learning objective", because there are many different angles from which to approach the reflection and I can not figure out which is the best one. I think I will take these ideas to Hazel (my supervisor) and just ask her opinion.*

- *Ask students to share some of their last journal entries. This could lead to a very heated discussion about what happened last week. But it may just lead us all back into chaos.*
- *Ask the question: "In what ways are you like your character and in what ways not?" This is based on Landy and other's idea that "If I can know my actual and fictional role models, then I can have a good idea what I value and who I am." (Landy, 1994:115). This is not the best place to start because they will need a lead in so it may be used later in the programme. Another problem is also that this is an individual question and there are also questions about perceived reality in general and things about personal growth/maturity in general like: what it means to grow? Hence a third approach:*
- *Show the video of the chaos of last week and ask questions about the values that characters are displaying. Refer to specific people.*
- *Then ask them to explain the relationship between those values and those that the character professed: e.g. peace/equality. There are many other characters like that who say one thing and then do another: the pirates who say they are there to ensure free trade, but really they want to sabotage the meeting and then they defend their deviousness. The Dekamons who say they want peace, but really they want planets. The station command who say they are neutral and yet they give preference to Earth people.*
- *Bring it to 'real' life: Do you think the same is true of real life people? Do you think that you enjoyed being devious so much because for a change you were allowed to be it blatantly and did not have to make excuses for it?*
- *Ask permission to look at their values as a class: Let's look at you yourselves and see what we can find out about your own values. Will you let me probe into your values a little? Are you a little curious to see if this is true about you too? I will not become personal, is that agreed? But you are allowed to make any personal remarks about yourself if you want to.*
- *First look at the themes that started the journey: You said that you want the world to know about tolerance, peace and freedom. Many of your characters said the same thing. Yet, when it came to the crunch, your characters most wanted power, security and acceptance.*

- *Then link them to the values that came out in the drama referring to the relationship between life and drama: Remember what one of you said in the video that “people are becoming too personal” and then someone said that, that was the point? Do you agree that your own feelings took over when you were in character last week? If life is like drama, and drama like life, and you are like your characters, it could be true for you that, when pressure is on your true values come out? So, in fact, the highest value is not peace and tolerance, with love, security and power secondary, but the other way around: people want peace, freedom and tolerance so that they can have money, power, security and love.*
- *Point out the problem: Think back to the video, what was the most frustrating thing about last week’s ‘game’? Everyone wanted to talk at the same time. Think about real life now: what does everyone want? Power, love and security. However, you cannot have ultimate power and not subject other people. You cannot want to be a star so that people would love you because that means they don’t love someone else. Not everyone can have the power, not everyone can have the world’s affection. What can one do about that? Grow up? In growing up and realising that what you want for yourself, you have to allow others to want too.*
- *Relate it to the Hero’s Journey and to their character’s journey in particular: The Hero’s Journey is the story of people growing up, sacrificing their personal needs for the good of the community. Putting the stolen goods issue aside to refocus on peace. This is exactly what you all decided to do last week. You all know how to grow up. It is just very difficult to see how to grow in the midst of so much emotion is it not?*
- *Again take it back to life: What does that say about life? Is maturity not also to remember the highest good in the midst of emotional conflicts? What do you need in order to be able to remember the higher good in the midst of passionate conflict?*
- *Use examples: Compare Mandela, Ghandi & Christ to Napoleon, Hitler & George W. Bush.*
- *Close by asking them to make it personal in writing: Write down the following:*
  - *What in your life arouses the same kind of emotions in you that was aroused in your character when he was so angry, disappointed and scared?*
  - *In your own world, what do you need to give up for the good of the community?*
  - *Is this in any way related to the thing that your character has to give up?*
  - *Are you ready to give it up yet?*
  - *What do you think needs to happen for you to become ready?*

*I just solved my own problem didn’t I? I started writing the third option and it seemed to unravel the whole thing. It covered the relationship between person and character and it also remembered the chaos of the previous week without falling back into it. Such is the power of journal reflection. I will have to make myself some cards with*

*every part of the process on it so that I do not get side tracked from the central issue in the heat of the discussion. That's what I call practising what you preach.*

*I think this has been the central problem of my own learning in this process: remembering the main teaching objective in the midst of trying to run the classes. It is probably any teacher's main obstacle and yet, with drama I find it so much more difficult. If I did not have the Hero's Journey as structure and if I did not come back to reflect after every class, I would have been very lost. My journey has been in and out of the worlds of teacher and learner. Having immersed myself in the latter, my Ordeal was trying to remember my teaching objective while in the midst of chaos and finding ways of organising that chaos so that learning can take place. I don't think I was very successful in the moment, but certainly I will be successful if I can help them learn something from that chaotic experience.*

*After I reread the answers to the questionnaires of two weeks ago, I realised I had to rephrase the final questions above. They sound too judgmental. The kids already suffer with all the things they have to do and give up. It is more important that they find out they are empowered to change their worlds and the worlds of other people. Rephrased, the questions sound like this?*

- *What in your life arouses the same kind of emotions in you that were aroused in your character when he was so angry, disappointed and scared?*
- *What is the higher goal that your character can remember in the future when he/she feels this way?*
- *What is the higher value that you personally need to remember to get past your personal overwhelming feelings?*
- *Are you ready to give it a try next time you are in a situation that asks of you to make a difficult choice?*

*Well, here's trying to make a lesson plan out of all that.*

### **Objectives**

- *Relating the experience to the main aim of the process: clarifying values and interrogating them critically,*
- *Closure of the story.*

Focus	Activity (Play for them)	Strategy (Play for me)
A section of last week's negotiations on video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group discussion based on the values that are being exhibited by different people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recap of events, but with a critical distance in mind.</li> </ul>
Values that are spoken and values that are lived by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussing the way characters say one thing and then do another.</li> <li>Relating it to real life people: the participants themselves: why did you all choose characters with secrets?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relating the discussion to original expressed need: why do people do things they know they should not and vice versa?</li> </ul>
The group's own professed values versus those that were exhibited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group discussion: in the heat of the debate, whose feelings were most prominent, your own or your character's? Are these feelings connected to your values? What are they?</li> <li>Compare these to the original expressed values. Read some of the values written on the questionnaires.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the identification of participants with their characters to get to the values that they exhibited themselves and connecting these to expressed values at the beginning of the process and in questionnaires later on.</li> </ul>
The problem and possible solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion continues: What is the problem caused by conflicting values? How does one choose amidst emotional upheaval? What are the guiding principles? How does one follow them when you don't feel like it?</li> <li>Using examples like Mandela, Ghandi, Hitler and George W. Bush.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding a definition for personal growth: to be able to recognise and then choose the greater good in spite of emotional conflict.</li> </ul>
The story of Maverick 436	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracing the Hero's Journey through the story and completing it by each participant relating how the story ended for his/her character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bringing closure to the story using the tool of the Hero's Journey.</li> </ul>
Personal application through reflection	<p><u>Journal reflection:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What in your life arouses the same kind of emotions in you that were aroused in your character when he was so angry, disappointed and scared?</li> <li>What is the higher goal that your character can remember in the future when he/she feels this way?</li> <li>What is the higher value that you personally need to remember to get past your personal overwhelming feelings?</li> <li>Are you ready to give it a try next time you are in a situation that asks of you to make a difficult choice?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relating the material to each individual personally.</li> <li>Getting something in writing so that I can find out if these are questions young people like these are able to answer, or if it is still too abstract.</li> </ul>

## **Reflection**

*I could not have asked for a smoother finish. It went 100% according to plan and better. I thought they would struggle with the idea of two levels of values, but they got it very easily: the proof was right there in front of them i.e. their characters with their double lives and the video recording of the last episode.*

*I applied the principle to the situation of a teenager in a situation where her boyfriend, her friends and her own hormones, were wanting her to succumb to sex, yet she knows it is not smart. How does she solve the conflict? They came up with fascinating solutions, most of which relate directly to the idea of remembering the higher value. One said when she thinks she will end up in a compromising situation, she makes sure she does not end up alone with her boyfriend but remains with other people. Another said, if you think you might 'lose it', change your plans. Another said you must think of where you want to be in 5 or 10 years time and ask yourself if what you are about to do will help or hinder you.*

*I then asked them about their own strategies more clearly, surely they do not all relate to the particular example. What other strategies do they employ when their emotions run riot? This step was an important one because it was time they related the learning to their own life stories. One said that he has learned to communicate to people when he is in a bad mood and asked them not to take his reactions too seriously please or to try and not bug him if possible. Another said she just reads a book. One boy said this would not help him because emotions cause too much energy to build up, so he prefers to go do some kind of physical activity like running. One other said it takes maturity to do the right thing. I was so excited about this remark and used it to get to the subject of growth and introducing the Hero's Journey as the story of becoming mature.*

*We traced the journey that our characters took and then I asked them to complete their characters' stories. I started the process by explaining that the pirates did in fact steal the special objects, and were put in jail. A peaceful resolution could not be found and war was declared. What happened to your character? The most amazing stories came out. It was clear that they understood the idea of growth from their answers. For more detail, I will make a write up of their specific words from the video later. We then answered the questions I had for their personal reflection in their journals and finished off.*

*From reading these entries I discovered that their answers for their characters were indeed clearer than their answers for themselves. They were still unsure of how to apply the lesson learned by their character to their own lives until I pointed some possibilities out to them. I think if we had time for two more sessions with a Resurrection episode where the Elixir of their choice could be tested and then a reflection on their own lives, this problem can be addressed.*

I was hard on myself as I reflected on the process, but as I started analysing it formally according to the theoretical principles I had researched, I discovered that I was not so far off base. In fact, much of what I did in the heat of the moment proved very useful as it shed new light on the meaning of some theoretical ideas. The next chapter is an account of a theoretical analysis and evaluation of the process.