

## 6. THE ROAD BACK

### Analysis

*And so dance, and dance and dance, she did. Over highest hills and through the valleys, in the rain and in the snow and in the sunlight, she danced. She danced in the darkest night and through sunrise and she was still dancing in twilight as well. But it was not good dancing. It was terrible dancing, and there was no rest for her.*

*She danced into a churchyard and there a spirit of dread would not allow her to enter. The spirit pronounced these words over her, "You shall dance in your red shoes until you become like a wraith, like a ghost, till your skin hangs from your bones, till there is nothing left of you but entrails dancing. You shall dance door to door through all the villages and you shall strike each door three times and when people peer out they will see you and fear your fate for themselves. Dance red shoes, you shall dance."*

*The girl begged for mercy, but before she could plead further, her red shoes carried her away.*

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

## 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter recounted my own journey as I danced between theory and practice in implementing my plans. This chapter will recount the journey, not the *double journey*, of the participants as I am able to reconstruct it using the theoretical principles of the process and the research materials generated. Such materials are discussed in section 6.2.

This description of the process will use the different stages of the double journey outlined in Chapter 3 (p.90) to organise the information. The numbering of the original diagram has been adjusted in *Diagram 6.1* to indicate the subheadings of the analysis that follows in section 6.3.

**Diagram 6.1**

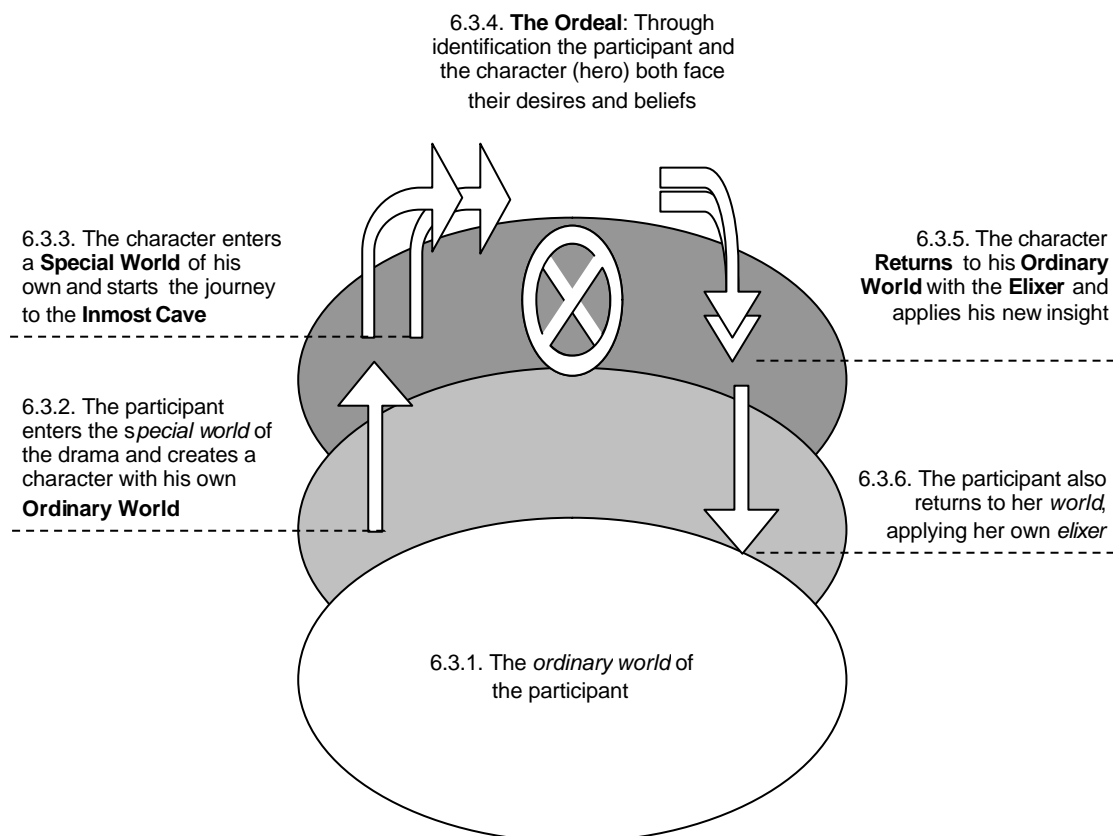


Table 6.1

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Theoretical elements</i>	<i>Sessions</i>
The ordinary world of the participant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Externalising the interests and needs of the group in relation to their everyday lives (Boal, 1979, 1992, 1995; Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996).</li> <li>Matching the aims of the workshop to those needs and calling the group to adventure/enticing them to take part (Boal 1979, 1992, 1995; Educational Drama, p.106-147).</li> </ul>	Sessions 1, 2, 5 and 8.
The participant enters the Special World of the drama and creates an Ordinary World for a character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guiding the group to enter the 'Big Lie'/<i>temenos</i> by defining the subject, environment and event of an Ordinary world and its underlying problems /themes for potential characters (Educational Drama, p.106-147; Izzo, 1997, 1998; Vogler, 1998).</li> <li>Creating the basic structure for playable characters by defining their primary activities /value objects, primary needs/loci of values and passion/underlying core value (Izzo, 1997, 1998; Vogler, 1998), while maintaining spontaneity (Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996).</li> <li>Giving the characters history and motivation for actions by creating the 'back stories' of passion and weaknesses (Educational Drama, p.106-147; Izzo, 1997, 1998; Vogler, 1998).</li> </ul>	Sessions 3, 4, 5 and 6.
The character enters a Special World of his own and starts the journey to the Inmost Cave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing the character within the context of a story by letting him answer the call to solve the problems of his world, meet friends and enemies and face tests and trials, through dramatic play and improvisation (Educational Drama, p.122-127; Izzo, 1997, 1998; Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996; Vogler, 1998).</li> <li>Starting the journey to the Inmost Cave by improvising scenes where tension is injected using various techniques to build belief and engage the participants (Educational Drama, p.128-138; Vogler, 1998).</li> </ul>	Sessions 5, 6, 7 and 8.
Through identification the participant and character (hero) face their deepest desires in The Ordeal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guiding participants to complete identification with the role using fourth level characterisation and building belief as well as using ways to 'drop to the universal' where possible (Educational Drama, especially Way, 1967; and Heathcote, 1971, 1980, 1984).</li> <li>Introducing a climax where the character/participant has the opportunity to change/grow (Boal, 1979, 1992, 1995; Educational Drama, p.106-147; Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996).</li> </ul>	Sessions 8 and 9.
The character Returns to his Ordinary World with an Elixir and applies his new insight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guiding the participant to rehearse for her 'revolution' within the safety of the drama (Boal, 1979, 1992, 1995; Protection within the role, p.66; Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996; Vogler, 1998).</li> <li>Reflecting on the experience to anticipate possible obstacles/consequences of trying to apply new insight (Boal, 1979, 1992, 1995; Educational Drama, p.106-147; Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996).</li> </ul>	Session 10.
The participant returns to her own world with a personal Elixir.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relating the experience to everyday life through reflection (Boal, 1979, 1992, 1995; Educational Drama, p.106-147; Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996).</li> <li>Consolidating what was learned using techniques such as symbolisation and ritual (Boal, 1979, 1992, 1995; Educational Drama, especially Bolton, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1986; and Neelands, 1990, 1992; Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996).</li> </ul>	Session 10.

In the account, each stage of the journey will be analysed in terms of the theoretical elements that inform that stage (see *Table 6.1*, p.195). The discussion will highlight to what degree the elements were or were not realised. Important to note, however, is that the stages of the journey flowed into one another and while they are clearly recognisable in some sessions, they overlap quite readily in others. This is because the process was guided by the needs and ideas of the group, together with my own attempt to retain the overall goal and focus if I perceived that the process was going in a different direction, or that some important elements were being lost.

To retain a sense of the overall structure in the description that follows, a 'session ruler' is provided at the beginning of each stage discussion, highlighting those sessions where strong elements of the particular stage was present.

## **6.2 Research method and materials**

Participatory action research (PAR) (p.14, 152) takes into consideration the thoughts and responses of all participants, not only of that of the facilitator. This is because, on the one hand, the teacher-director needs to take the views and feelings of the participants into account for his/her planning and to assess their growth in response to the plan. On the other hand, however, PAR is a transformative process in itself and their observations and reflections also help the learner-actors themselves to gain understanding of their own growth processes.

Therefore, while the impression may have been given above that my own planning of the stages coincided with the stages of growth of each participant; this clearly could not have been the case. Each participant's journey follows a trajectory of its own and their individual needs and the needs of the group greatly influenced my execution of the plan. Because I had anticipated this, I had planned various ways of assessing the participants' needs along the way so that I could be mindful of their responses to the material. I had planned ways for them to reflect both from inside and from outside of the drama. In this way research materials have been generated to help me recount and analyse the double journey of the participants.

From within the drama, participants have observed and reflected on the events of the drama as the characters they have created. These reflections take two forms, written journal entries, and verbal reflections in discussions caught on video.

From outside the drama, participants have reflected on the process and their learning as themselves. These reflections also take the form of written journal entries,

or discussions caught on video, but include video interviews with participants and general questionnaires.

Apart from these observations, some research materials have been generated as a result of the role-playing process itself. These include character sheets and ‘Customs Clearance Forms’.

Table 6.2

<i>Description</i>	<i>Location within the process</i>
<b>1. Participants’ Journals</b>	
Reflections out of role on characters and their creation.	Sessions 3 and 6
In role reflections in the form of diary/log entries.	Sessions 5, 7, 8 and 9
Notes on specific tasks e.g. planning the argument for peace negotiations.	No specific sessions, it depended entirely on the specific learner’s need to plan and record ideas in writing or not.
Diagrams of discussions.	Again these depended on the participant if s/he wanted to record diagrams drawn on the board as part of discussions.
<b>2. Video material</b>	
Videos of sessions.	Sessions 7, 8, 9 and 10
Video used as part of the role-play set up as an in-role reflection device.	Session 8
Video shown as material for reflection.	Session 2 and 10
<b>3. Questionnaires (Appendix 2)</b>	
Questions on the participant’s Ordinary world and his/her views on it.	Session 8
Questions on the participants’ experience of the process as a whole.	Session 10
<b>4. Other material (Appendix 1)</b>	
Work sheet on <i>Unbreakable</i> .	Session 2
Character sheets and general game rules.	Sessions 3 and 4
Reflections of groups on the value of their special object.	Session 8
Customs Clearance Form for entering Maverick 463.	Session 8
<b>5. Outsiders’ perspective (Appendix 4)</b>	
Interviews with the two directors.	2 years after completion of the project

Finally, I had conducted two interviews with the directors of the Youth Theatre Company in order to get some outsider’s perspective on the process. Neither of the two directors had insight into the process itself, but they were able to give their perceptions, firstly, on the problems of absenteeism I encountered and secondly, on the long term outcomes and effects of the process after its completion when they took over the leadership again. As a bonus, both directors had family members who took part in the process so they had an ongoing perception of what was happening even though they did not attend any sessions. These interviews were useful in offering a triangulation point for the outcomes of the research, i.e. it provides a perspective outside of those of participants and facilitator to validate or contradict research findings.<sup>1</sup> *Table 6.2* is a schematic presentation of the kinds of materials gathered, how many of them there were and at what stage of the process they were created.

### **6.3 Analytical Account**

Where the chronological account of the previous chapter focuses on my own story of growth, this account focuses on the growth of the participants. So where that account was a monologue about my dance between theory and practice, this one shows a dialogue between my planning and the responses of participants. Where necessary, therefore, I will refer back to those plans to highlight some important aspects of this dialogue.

#### **6.3.1 The Ordinary World of Participants**

Relevant sessions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

If the dialogue between my plan and the participants’ needs was to be successful, discovering the interests and needs of the group was essential (Boal, 1992; Landy, 1996). More importantly than merely extracting ideas from the group, was building the ideas into needs and then matching them to the aims of the process (Morgan and Saxton, 1987). Throughout the workshop series, two strategies were used to accomplish this. Firstly, I would elicit ideas and examples from the group and then use them to explain the principles of the process. For instance, during the initial

---

<sup>1</sup> These interviews were held some years after completion of the process because I only then became aware of their possible usefulness. This made it hard for directors to remember detail, but it also ensured that only the most important and prominent points were still crystallized in their memories.

questioning process in Session 1 (p.157), I asked them what their favourite movies and children's stories were. I then used these stories to illustrate how the Hero's Journey worked. Secondly, I would explain to them an important element of the process from my point of view and then ask them to test the idea by applying it to their own experience. For instance, in Session 1 during the group discussion, I suggested that people grow when they are faced with a difficult situation but instead of remaining uninvolved or going along, they act according to their convictions. I then asked them to tell each other in pairs of a situation where they felt their values were transgressed, but they did not do anything about it.

In this way the dialogue was initiated between the input from the group and the aims of the process. Yet, I still needed to gain their commitment, so I would use questions to build their interest into a need that would wet their appetite for what is to come (Morgan and Saxton, 1987: 67-106; Wagner, 1976: 67). For instance, after the discussion on movies, I asked them why these movies/stories moved them so and then used their answers to point to the possibility that understanding the Hero's Journey may help them to make stories like that. This idea appealed to them. Similarly, after the pair exercise mentioned, I asked them if they would like to know why they did not act even though they knew they should have and if they would like to be able to act differently in the future. Again the response was positive.

The dialogue between group needs and workshop aims continued explicitly and implicitly throughout the process and also became a necessary component of retaining the relationship between the fictional drama and the real life needs of the participants (Landy, 1993: 51-56). A notable example of this occurred at the start of Session 5 (p.167) when I sensed that the group was losing interest in the process and I had to hook them again. I asked them to put up their hands if they would like to be able to make independent choices. All of them raised their hands. I then asked them to raise their hands if they thought that it is also important to consult others to see if their choices are agreeable. Again they all raised their hands. Some saw the implication of the questions immediately. When they realised the difficulty involved in knowing when to apply which strategy, I suggested to them that perhaps the process would teach them about this since both strategies would be required at different times. They were once again intrigued. I did not know it then, but this relationship between individual opinion and group opinion and the implications it has for the values of individuals coming into conflict with group values, would become

the central theme of *The Ordeal* that lay ahead. For that fifth session, however, the distinction helped me on a purely organisational level to get the group to do individual work without interfering with one another too much and then to do group work using each other's ideas. As mentioned in the previous chapter (p.168), this was only partially successful and I had to change strategy to draw them deeper into the drama sooner than planned. This was one of the most important changes I had made to the plan in response to the group's needs and it will be elaborated upon later.

Ironically, later, in Session 8 (p.176), I became concerned that the group was now so immersed in the drama that the themes and values pertaining to their ordinary lives were getting lost in the detail of the story. That is when I let them fill out a questionnaire asking them about the messages they thought the world should hear (Appendix 2: i-iii). I hoped that articulating these messages for something seemingly separate from the drama, would make those ideas rise from the unconscious long enough to influence the drama without allowing the participants to deliberately try to incorporate them. This was a strategic move to create distance for potential reflection by changing the frame of the drama from fiction to real life situation (O'Toole, 1992).

To recap, these themes were originally identified at the end of Session 2 (p.159) and showed two sides of the same coin: be yourself amidst pressure to conform and be tolerant of difference. The anonymous answers to the questionnaire confirmed these to be the group's highest values. Of the statements in answer to the questions: 13 articulated the value 'be yourself', and 8 the 'tolerate difference' value. I have quoted these statements in *Table 6.3* (p.201) (for other value statements, see Appendix 2).

It was clear to me that the group was articulating one basic desire: "I want to be myself, please accept my difference". I was hoping to use this later in the process because it did not seem to me as though they understood that this value was a two way street: if you have to accept me, I have to accept you. *The Ordeal* later painfully accentuated this contradiction between what the individual wants and what they were willing to give to the group.

I still do not know if it was due to the questionnaires or because of the principle that stories automatically externalise beliefs (Boal, 1979, 1995; Landy, 1993, 1994, 1996), but the process that day did exhibit the themes clearly. It was probably a combination of both. As Bolton (1986) explains, in process drama the participants are simultaneously making it happen, while it is also happening to them.

This is the paradox that enables reflection and critical thinking. Indeed, I was able to use the answers to the questions as a reflection tool in the final session.

Table 6.3

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Value statement</i>
Be yourself	<p>“Love who you are: You can make a difference, if you try.”</p> <p>“Be yourself, do what you enjoy &amp; what you good at.”</p> <p>“Make the most of whatever you have &amp; don’t be intimidated by other people.”</p> <p>“Don’t let the things that others say and do get you down.”</p> <p>“Have a dream &amp; fight for it !!”</p> <p>“Be yourself !”</p> <p>“Don’t be afraid to be yourself.”</p> <p>“Believe in yourself, in the power you have to control your life day by day!”</p> <p>“Sometimes I lose touch with who I am constantly want to please others.”</p> <p>“Be true to yourself. Don’t give in to the fantasies or desires of anyone else. Set goals &amp; achieve them. Be diverse/ be you.”</p> <p>“Think outside the box, be innovative, go 4 your goals &amp; dreams”</p> <p>“Be yourself, you are beautiful!”</p> <p>“Love yourself &amp; make peace with your biggest enemy, that’s one bad thing you would have stopped.”</p>
Tolerate difference	<p>“Do not Judge: It is better to be hated for who you are than loved for who you are not.”</p> <p>“I am who I am, live with it. I can be a liar and a thief, it is who I am”.</p> <p>“To listen, I have a lot to say &amp; I am not just another kid.”</p> <p>“Help me when I ask for help, hear me when I speak, feel me when I touch you and understand me.”</p> <p>“Be open minded to change.”</p> <p>“Do your best at all times and treat others the way you would have them treat you.”</p> <p>“Just because you’re adults does not mean you are more important. The youth need your help we don’t need your criticism. Trust us, and believe in us.”</p> <p>“Look less at the bad things about people and enjoy them for who they are. Why we always negative?”</p>

Apart from those aspects of the participants’ ordinary worlds that could be used to steer the drama and drive the dialogue of our partnership, there were also factors that interfered with it and frustrated it. These factors caused participants to be absent from the process and miss out, dragging out some of the important tasks because they had to catch up, or be integrated anew. I had asked the directors of the company (Appendix 4) to explain from their points of view what they perceived these factors to be. Here is a combined list of the factors they mentioned:

- School involvement: Sport and cultural activities that would get priority.
- Lack of parental support.

- Peer pressure - there were nicer things to do with friends than go to drama workshops.
- A network of social difficulties: poverty, transport problems and death in the family on account of AIDS leading to feelings of dislocation and depression.
- A general lack of discipline and commitment to the Theatre Company.

The problem of absenteeism was not unique to my project. It was a general problem throughout the existence of the Youth Theatre Company and was a major contributing factor to its discontinuation after 2004 (Baxter 2006, Appendix 4). I could do very little about their school commitments, but I knew that parent relationships and peer relationships would become part of the drama in the way it was influencing participant's choices and actions. It was already showing through the discussions thus far. Concerning the social difficulties, I had thought afterwards that perhaps if my project had addressed some of these issues more directly, participants would have been more motivated to attend but I was unaware of some of the very real social difficulties some of the participants were experiencing. I was also not privy to that information, nor was it ever brought to the drama because the students who had these difficulties were absent or had already dropped out of the group permanently. When I brought this up with Veronica Baxter, one of the directors, she did not think it would have made much of a difference one way or the other (Appendix 4).

For those with lack of discipline; later I thought that a contract of the type Neelands (1984: 27) proposed, could have been useful between myself and the participants. It would have explained the parameters of the project and I could have negotiated expectations of group and facilitator so that we all knew what to expect and where we stand. The same contract could have been used to facilitate reflection upon the work and on dialogue between facilitator's objectives and group's needs in a more explicit manner. I am not sure this would have worked, though, because I know that the Y2Kids all had signed a contract delineating their commitment to the company and what they could expect from the project as a whole. This contract did not seem to have much effect on the problem of absenteeism the company experienced, but it may have been worth a try.

Although the dialogue between objectives and needs continued throughout, the most important part of this stage was completed when themes were decided upon at the end of Session 2. So, while I had to keep the Ordinary World of the participants

in mind, i.e. the themes and the group's highest values, it was in the Special World or liminal space of the drama that the learning would take place (Schechner, 1988; Turner, 1968, 1982, 1990).

### 6.3.2 The Participant's Special World and the Character's Ordinary One

Relevant sessions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

The creation of an imaginary world that would serve as a dramatic context for learning has two aspects: the creation of a setting or *temenos*, and the creation of characters to populate it (Bowell and Heap, 2001; Izzo, 1997). Two practical factors greatly frustrated the smooth development of this stage of the double journey: schedule changes and absenteeism. As mentioned elsewhere, a major schedule change early in the process created firstly, a lot of contact time with the group early on but very little time for preparation and secondly, long lapses between sessions later on.

Ideally, the participants would create the characters and setting with the teacher-director merely facilitating the process. However, in order to cope with the pressure early in the process, I decided to use the Live Action Role Play as a means of providing an instant *temenos* and repertoire of possible characters with the minimum preparation. The game, 'Meeting at Maverick 436', was designed by a colleague of mine as part of a different course, and was ready to play. Because it agrees with the principles of Process Drama, asking for an attitude of playfulness, participation and engagement, the LARP provided an opportunity for me to gauge whether or not the learners were able to identify sufficiently with the material for it to be used for the rest of the process. I was also excited about the LARP because it provided a link between the kinds of games, i.e. computer role playing games, that some of the participants were familiar with, and the drama I was planning. These links are covered briefly in Chapter 4 (p.142) but more extensively elaborated upon by John Carroll and others (Carroll, 2003; Carroll and Cameron, 2005; Dunn and O'Toole, 2005). The LARP for instance, introduces the idea of multiple framing as well as allowing for the mutability

of identity.<sup>2</sup> I could also use the game to assess the group's dramatic capabilities and improvisation skills, something that I was still very unsure of.

This programme change proved successful in the end, but coupled with the lapses of time between sessions and absenteeism of group members, it did not occur without a hitch. After the playing of the game, the process nearly came to a standstill because exercises and explanations had to be repeated so often. The two aspects of *temenos* and character creation will now be described in terms of the theoretical requirements identified in *Table 6.1* (p.195).

### 6.3.2.1 *Setting*

The purpose of creating a dramatic context, or 'Big Lie', is to create distance between the everyday/ordinary world of the participant and the Special World of the drama so that she may learn about the former via her identification with a character in the latter. The parameters of the setting need to be agreed upon by all participants to ensure easy access to and from the fictional frame. As explained in Chapter 3, rules establish trust among the players, it defines the involvement of the players and what they hope to get out of the game, it defines the process that the players must play when encountering a problem and it also encourages a dialogue among the players and teacher for negotiation and reflection (Bowell and Heap, 2001; O'Toole, 1992; Schechner, 1988). These 'rules', if we still want to call them that, differ from the kind of rules that dictate behaviour in a simulation game, as opposed to dramatic play in that they do not attempt to regulate action in minute detail, rather they ensure playability and freedom for participants within the dramatic context (Creaser, 1990a; Izzo, 1998; Schechner, 1988). The 'rules' of the dramatic context, or *temenos*, are that it should have a clearly defined subject, environment, event and themes connected to characters (Izzo, 1997). These themes are consequences of the underlying problem, the solving of which will drive the action of the characters (Vogler, 1998). These were all established by playing the LARP, Session 3 (p.162).

The *subject* of the game 'Meeting at Maverick 436' is space age exploration and colonisation in the year 2365. The *environment* is a "remote and slightly

---

<sup>2</sup> It would be possible and insightful to make a much more extensive analysis of the relationship between educational drama and role playing games as well as between the structures of such games versus the structure of dramatic play, but this falls outside of the scope of this paper. Such a study was conducted by the colleague who designed the Meeting at Maverick LARP in the first place (Janse van Vuuren, 2005).

neglected space station” (Appendix 1: iv-vii) close to the border between Earth space and Dekamon (an alien race) space. A map was used that incorporated the accessible areas of the Hexagon complex and was kept for the remainder of the process to demarcate the space station (Appendix 1: iii). The *event* was the meeting where peace between Earth and the aliens of the Dekamon Empire would be negotiated. Clearly, the underlying problem was the conflict between the two forces:

The Earth Exploration and Colonisation Company (EECC) have been expanding human occupied space for almost 200 years without any opposition. Recently the EECC have met the Dekamon Empire, an alien race also colonising space. Negotiations and actions between these two groups have reached a stalemate. (Appendix 1: iv-vii)

Because of the confusion over who owned the particular region of space, pirates have been free to roam, hijack space craft and smuggle goods.

This setting opened possibilities for any number of themes to be played out. During play it became clear, however, that the same themes identified by learners the week before, were at the forefront of their game. I attempted to discuss these themes in Session 3 after the game was over, but, as I remarked in my reflection (p.161):

They were so wired after the game and so intrigued by it that they were unable to come out of it and reflect on its possible usefulness for the process of creating a Hero’s Journey.

The attempt was repeated at the beginning of Session 4 to focus character choices.

Following are my own observations about the themes that were present, themes that had different nuances for each character, as Izzo promotes, but that can be generalised as follows:

- tolerance of difference between aliens and humans, and between officials and civilians,
- power struggles, relating to the pecking order or chain of command in the different groups,
- individual empowerment and personal confidence to reach one’s goals in spite of adversity,
- group allegiance and loyalty.

Again the conflict between the good of the community and the personal aspirations of the individual was clear, although I did not see it then.

### 6.3.2.2 *Characters*

Apart from proving successful in affirming and elaborating upon the values discussed at the end of Session 2, the game also showed that the group was able to engage with the material and identify with the characters. What was lacking was the depth of character the learners needed in order to identify with it on a level that would ensure learning. In addition, many learners were unable to improvise freely within the game, feeling inadequate and lacking confidence, precisely the kind of problem Izzo's model is designed to address. Instead of playing the characters by letting their actions be motivated by their purpose, learners preferred to focus on the simulated powers they were given as part of the LARP (Appendix 1: iii-vii). During the game itself, we had to call time out on a few occasions because participants over emphasised the rules, focussing on how to kill someone when they were really dead, how long to remain unconscious when stunned etc. It was clear that I would have to discard these rules completely and work at engaging the participants in the problems and themes of the drama itself to ensure that learning takes place. As Bolton (1986) explains, the biggest difference between a game and this kind of drama is the work that is needed to become sufficiently immersed in the drama so that learning can occur. I would also have to work at using the dramatic art form and the elements of drama to help participants express the feelings of power and the need for control rather than allowing them to express it superficially through the game (Bolton, 1986; Heathcote, 1984; Morgan & Saxton, 1987). Put differently, I needed to fight the participants' tendency to remain on a cognitive level resisting engaging their bodies and their senses in the dramatic context – a possible consequence of the rationalism that is strengthened by computer games and simulations which they are used to and which is invoked by the LARP game structure (Dunn and O'Toole, 2005). I had to remove the characters' 'powers' and the rules of combat from the equation and focus on the character's passions, needs and primary activities. Further depth could be achieved by creating a 'back story' that gave the character some history and motivation for attitudes and actions.

Before this was done, however, I was faced with another problem: according to Landy and principles of Educational Drama, the characters played by participants had to be chosen spontaneously by participants themselves so that identification with the role is guaranteed. Since participants were handed predetermined characters for

the LARP (Appendix 1: iv-vii), I had to devise a way of letting them choose the characters they wanted from the repertoire of 25 possible characters and to make room for individual adaptation. The character auction was my way of dealing with this problem (p.166). All participants had the opportunity to put their character up to be auctioned or to boast about their excellent purchase, if they decided to keep the one they were given the week before. I used *mantle of the expert* by enrolling the group as creatures from another realm in search of suitable hosts to inhabit. They would be experts on choosing the right character for the right player. I also asked them to use their expertise to choose characters for absent friends.

I categorise this activity as ‘mantle of the expert’ on the basis of some principles of this strategy highlighted by Bolton and Heathcote (1995). The main principle is the idea that this role is a distanced one i.e. “it works obliquely—learning about one thing by looking through something else” (Bolton and Heathcote, 1995: 27). In doing so it should firstly, give learners the feeling that they have the knowledge and confidence to make good choices and secondly, draw attention to the principles and values that guide the choices as opposed to the detailed content of the different options themselves. In our case I wanted to draw attention to the values and behavioural patterns of participants that match those of characters. It worked, but not as well as I hoped because most participants simply retained the characters they had and found it hard to explain why. They were also afraid to choose characters for their friends that the friends would not like, unable to motivate any choice above another. Bolton and Heathcote (1995) explain that the teacher needs to work very hard at framing the activity so that participants are confident and know exactly what to do and how to do it. I may have neglected this broader aspect of the activity distracted by the procedures of the auction, the sequence and the payments. Theoretically it would have been more desirable if the participants could have devised their own characters for the setting through a more unstructured dramatic play activity, but I thought we did not have enough time. In retrospect it may have been more effective and even less time consuming than trying to adapt the characters for the participants.

The next session was devoted to defining the characters in terms of the hierarchy of values: passion and primary needs (Izzo: 1997: 73-100, 59-62). I did not ask them to sit down and analytically work it out. Instead, I used various imagination exercises to help them arrive at the passion and primary needs spontaneously as part of individual improvisations. I contextualised these improvisations by placing the

characters on their planets/places of origin, before they heard of the peace negotiations at Maverick and before they were called to be present at the meeting. So-doing I helped them create an Ordinary World for their characters, where their characters could develop personal desires and needs, ones that could potentially be fulfilled by the call to attend the meeting for peace. Maverick 436 would then become the character's Special World where growth could occur. The participants reflected in-role about their greatest desires and needs in their journals. For some examples, see *Table 6.4* (p.210).

Additionally, I asked the learners to tell each other the story of how this particular passion came into being and what personal weakness they know of that stands in the way of their achieving fulfilment of their passion. They were also asked to share some redeeming virtuous qualities of their characters. This was to be part of their 'back story' as Izzo suggests (p.71). Because these weaknesses were shared in pairs and in private, I do not have written records of them and could not include them in *Table 6.4* (p.210).

Some learners understood the difference between underlying core value and apparent needs that feed this value (p.78). Many, however, confused value objects (e.g. a drink) with a passion and did not understand yet that something else was hidden underneath. I started session 6 with an analysis of the layers of the hierarchy of values by referring, not to passions and needs, but to value objects and underlying values (p.94-98) using examples from popular films and television programmes. The exercise proved futile. The process was hijacked by learners who had been absent for more than one of the previous sessions and: a) did not understand the context of the game because they missed the LARP, or b) did not like their character because it was chosen by friends in their absence, or c) did not understand the whole idea of actions being motivated by underlying values because they missed the previous session. It became an exercise in brain gymnastics and I realised that the only way for them to work out their characters and understand the difference between visible actions and value objects versus underlying values and passions, would be to live through it in drama. Those who had missed sessions would catch up because they will be under pressure to perform and improvise. It would also bring me back to the principle of creating simplified characters by focussing on attitudes and actions that flow from these attitudes, rather than trying to plan characters in minute detail before hand, a temptation O'Neill (1995) warns against. My choice to stop the exercise was

confirmed by one participant who said that she did not know what her character wanted and that she would like to grow with her character to discover it. This reminded me strongly of the importance of using simpler characters that would allow negotiation and mutability of character so that characters can take on aspects and characteristics of their players as the drama unfolds (O'Toole, 1992).

I gave them permission to change their names, genders and any other detail that would make their character their own and gave them a task for improvising a scene. In my reflections at the end of Session 6 (p.171) I could not understand why participants found it so hard to make a decision about a character and stick with it. Interestingly enough, the reason that emerged from their journals was simpler than I had thought. Most changes were made because learners did not feel that their characters were 'mysterious' enough, had enough 'hidden secrets' to make them interesting in their (the participants') eyes. They wanted to be underhanded and devious. One remarked, for example that her character was "really stupid, which made my role boring. No intrigues. No challenge in characterisation, just did what was told" (Participant D, 2003). This too could have been the result of characters that were too detailed as part of the LARP simulation. Once again simpler characters could have provided more promise for the development of intrigue.

By the end of Session 6 all characters were clear and matched to their owners, but there was a long road ahead in terms of identification and effective learning. *Table 6.4* (p.210) provides a summary of the characters, the groups they belonged to and their passions. The information was either paraphrased, or quoted directly from the participant's journals. Once the characters were stripped of their over detailed LARP restrictions we were left with the skeletal beginnings of characters that would be developed over the next 4 sessions within the context of the story. The reader should therefore be advised that the characters may seem somewhat mono-dimensional and exaggerated. As Explained in Chapter 3 (p.72) the simplification of character by focussing on attitude and archetypal roles is important for creating characters that are flexible and can be moulded by their players to take on aspects of their (the player's) character (O'Neill, 1995; O'Toole, 1992). Development would not only mean that characters would become more layered, developing more depth and motivation but also that they would become more and more 'married' to their players, as the latter infuse the character with their own beliefs and experiences. It should also be remembered that the table does not give the complete picture since

'back stories', weaknesses and virtues are excluded. To keep the identities of the participants anonymous I have labelled the participants alphabetically.

Table 6.4

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Character</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Passion</i>
<b>Station personnel</b>			
A	Lena Saint	Station commander: "focussed, strong character, wants order and does not tolerate idiots or pirates"	"Deepest want: to be accepted, to grow to find happiness and love"
B (Dropped out)	Bailey	Chief of security: an incompetent alcoholic	Friends
C	Lieutenant Hickley	Security guard: "Arrogant, efficient, dedicated, snob, power hungry"	"I want power and Bailey's job"
D	Sergeant Hutch	Security guard: "too honest and too stupid for my own good. Friendly as possible, but rather lonely"	"Deepest want: to be popular, have lots of friends and be respected"
<b>Representatives of the Earth Exploration and Colonisation Company</b>			
E (Dropped out)	Carlton	Chief negotiator: "trustworthy, fair and patient"	"I want peace among us and not to let people walk over me"
F	Wimble	Secretary of the EECC: "nervous, uneasy, careful"	"I want power: a job of higher position, wealth"
G	Gumble	Bodyguard of chief negotiator: "fair and loyal"	"I want to find my brother."
H	Murphy	Pilot: "introverted, but when he has something to say, he speaks out"	"Power hungry: I want to own the whole EECC empire"
I	Doctor Quinn	The ship's physician: "determined, but don't think before speaking"	"I want a cure"
J	Lilith	Nurse: "quiet, brave and attentive, gets slightly intimidated"	"Freedom for myself to choose and to speak, and security: she is always looking for reasons to know that who she is and what she's doing is okay"
<b>Representatives of the Dekamon Empire</b>			
K	Showtime Werra	Chief ambassador: "arrogant, angry, hateful and rash. A natural leader, but an evil one"	"Oh, I want to eliminate every human in existence"
L	Ford Prefect	Aid to the amb assador: "sadistic, heartless, uncanny, outspoken, uses flowery speech"	"I want power. Philosophy: Reputation through fear"

M	Toptee	Engineer: “loyal to the Dekamon, but not to peace. Obsessed with cleanliness”	Money
N	Na	Body guard: “have split personality. One’s an animal, one is clever”	“Power, control, wants ambassador gone”
O	Sing Set	Chief ambassador’s concubine: “vain, beautiful and impatient”	“To take the Ambassador’s job, because he doesn’t like me”
P	Minazo	Human slave, servant to the concubine: “Submissive, resentful, ambitious”	Freedom
<b>Free agents (pirates and traders)</b>			
Q	Amber	Pirate Captain: “Helpful to other pirates, will do anything for money, quiet”	Will do anything to help other pirates and to get money
R	Lee Longfinger	Thief: greedy and “attracted to jewels. Selfish.”	“My entire life journey is based on obtaining power and wealth. I want to be recognised as a hero, a legend a mastermind”
S	Handy	“Stays with pirates, friendly, clever”	“Wants to be accepted”
T	Seth	Pirate: sneaky, sly, “happy go lucky, but dangerous.” Murderer that brags and boasts about it.	“I only want friends and freedom from the reputation of being a murderer”
U	Kate	Free trader turned pirate: smuggler, dubious. (description is sketchy because participant was often absent)	“Acceptance and work fulfilment”

### 6.3.3 The Character’s Special World: Maverick 436

Relevant sessions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

This phase of the double journey has two stages: the character’s Crossing into the Special World, in this case the realm of remote space station Maverick 436, where he meets friends and enemies and is put through preliminary trials, and his Approach to the Inmost Cave, in this case the peace negotiations itself. On the one hand these two phases of the process can be clearly mapped using the stages of the Hero’s Journey, on the other, without careful planning and guidance on the part of the teacher-director, the experience will be superficial for the participants. In fact, the teacher-director has the precarious task of building belief and engaging the participants (Wagner, 1976: 67-75) to such a degree that, by the time they reach The Ordeal, participant and

character would be merged into one so that learning can take place. The description that follows will briefly outline the stages of the Hero's Journey and how it was played out in the process with the Y2Kids. More attention will be given, though, to the strategies and techniques used by myself as facilitator to make sure that the journey was 'lived through'.

### 6.3.3.1 *The Stages of the Hero's Journey*

After the Ordinary World of the character had been established in Session, 5, the participants were told that they have received a call from their superiors about a peace meeting at a remote station. They have been chosen to host the meeting (station personal), represent their world (EECC and Dekamon), or disrupt the meeting to ensure that they still control trade (pirates). They then met the other members of their team, introduced themselves and explained their expertise. Afterwards, each participant wrote a journal entry to express his/her reactions to The Call. While Refusal of the Call was not really an option, they were encouraged to write down their fears and reservations, as well as the possible opportunities the adventure may create for the attainment of their passion. Here are some examples:

I am very anxious to go, I might finally get to see my brother and set him free and also contribute to a peace making process. (Participant G as Gumble, 2003)

I feel strangely and ironically that I am the only one who truly understands the nature and need for the situation to be resolved. This is dangerous. It may lead to my ultimate failure. I wonder if it could lead to my death? ...A question in my fruitless mind have been asked: What do I want? Is my mission for Amber in the best interest of the future of civilisation? What scares me the most is that I may know the answer... (Participant J as Lilith, 2003)

The latter part of Session 6 and Session 7 was used to meet friends and enemies within the different groups, and to play through a preliminary trial before the arrival of all parties at the station. This was done using improvisation, where each group had to decide on a crisis they will face and show each character's reaction to the problem.

Three of the groups showed a crisis that highlighted the divisions and problems within the groups. The station personnel had authority problems causing the somewhat simple minded Hutch to end up guarding the bridge where he fell asleep and set off a switch that caused the docking bays to close on approaching ships (Video, Session 7).

In the ship of the Dekamons, there was evidence of a spy being on board, but the spy was able to divert the attention from himself by explaining the ‘bug’ away as being a mere glitch in their translation equipment. Since he was the engineer, they had to take his word for it (Video, Session 7).

Among the pirates congregating on the station to pool their loot, it was discovered that someone had taken the ‘flux generator’ for himself, instead of adding it to the pool. No one knew who it was. This piece of navigating equipment was the most valuable piece of loot in terms of resale value. A disagreement broke out, but the perpetrator was not discovered (Video, Session 7).

The last group had an external crisis, one that had the opposite effect from that within the other groups. The pilot was found to be deathly ill with a mental disease ‘mind-rot’. Unless he was healed the entire crew would be infected and the whole mission for peace would be jeopardised. Since the players of Doctor Quinn and the Chief Negotiator were absent that day, the group had to be saved by the nurse and the second in command, the secretary. Both these characters were underhand and in a conspiracy against their group. Lilith was not really a qualified nurse, she was only there to support the secretary, Wimble, in getting the pirates to sabotage the negotiations (Appendix 1: v). In this case they were still following the original character suggestions of the LARP, but this was about to change as the characters were developing in response to their context. Placed in the centre of the crisis, they decided to come out with the truth about their schemes and to commit to help their group succeed in their mission. The improvisation ended with everyone grasping each other’s hand and committing to see it through to the end (Video, Session 7). At the end of the session another journal entry was made reflecting on the events and on the implications it had for the coming meeting.

I feel astonished that I know so much about my crew. We had a meeting that opened up people, due to the tension of our ambassador being sick and our doctor. Secrets were told that I myself was not equipped to hear, but that they all decided to save earth in the end was a comfort. God give us strength... (Participant G as Gumble, 2003, Session 7)

Well, all plans diminished.  
Confessed all evil plans.  
Don’t know exactly how I feel!  
Need to sit and think...  
**WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO DO RIGHT NOW?**  
(Participant F as Wimble, 2003, Session 7)

This entire exercise served another important function highlighted by these entries. This was the group concern that was created by the fact that each group had to solve an internal problem. Howell and Heap (2001) suggest that group concern is the beginning of creating belief and interest in the drama. The stories here did however leave enough room for each individual to have their own interpretation and attitude towards the events. This was important to me because, although I chose groups for each individual to belong to in order to create group concern in the drama, my intention was never to interrogate the group values themselves. I was always more interested in how the individual understood and made sense of her own value systems, rather than how these were connected to her cultural or social grouping. I realize that this leaves a very important part of identity formation out of the picture. My intention was only to address cultural values if they came up in discussion and even when this happened, my focus was not on the cultural values, but on the individual's own handling and understanding of these values for herself. This issue will arise again later in the discussion especially in the next chapter as I begin to interrogate my own values.

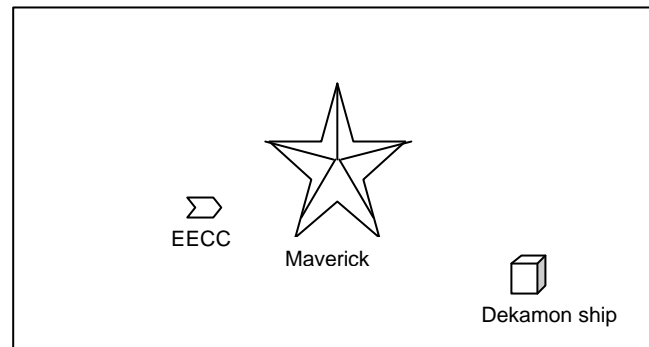
Session 8 (p.176) was devoted to the Approach to the Inmost Cave: the arrival of the ships at the space station, and the social welcoming event where parties will meet each other and leaders would say a few words. At this occasion characters would be able to meet characters from other groups and consolidate relationships with people that they are supposed to have prior connections with. For instance, the pirates still thought that Wimble was paying them to sabotage the meeting. At the end, the now customary journal entry was made to reflect upon attitudes and feelings about other groups.

### 6.3.3.2 *Belief and Engagement*

Throughout the above-described events, I used various Educational Drama techniques to build belief and deepen the engagement of participants with their characters. Because of the lapses of time between sessions and absenteeism suggested earlier, building belief became essential to make sure the group entered fully into the Big Lie. *Questioning* (Morgan and Saxton, 1987: 67-106, 102) was one of the strategies that was used continually and often in combination with other techniques. For instance, towards the end of Session 7, after the improvisations, I led a group discussion to determine what the ships of the arriving parties looked like, what the station itself

looked like and what the relationship in space was between the approaching ships and the station. I used a blackboard to suggest the screen in the station command centre that showed a satellite view of the station and approaching craft (*Diagram 6.2*).

DIAGRAM 6.2



*Movement, space and the grouping of bodies* were also used (Wagner, 1976: 68-69, 102). For instance, at the arrival of the ships in Session 8, I insisted that delegates take their places as they would inside their ships and simulate the landing by using their bodies and voices to signify the movement and docking of their crafts. This was extremely effective as it showed the difference between humans and aliens and gave each group the opportunity to distinguish themselves. As mentioned in the chronological account earlier, the humans from the EECC seated themselves as in an aeroplane, swayed their bodies to one side as the craft turned and landed with a screeching halt and a jerk. The aliens stood upright in a clump, did not move at all, made a soft humming sound and landed with a delicate thud.

While the ships were arriving, the station personnel had to prepare the physical space where the welcoming event would be held. They were to organise food and drink tables, a place where the speeches would be made from and seating for the guests. Organising the space themselves contributed to the personnel's own belief in the drama, but also helped them to reinforce the arriving parties' belief as they welcomed them, ushered them to their seats and invited them to partake in the feast of "human food", 'alien food' and 'live food'" kept under the tables in cages (Video, session 8).

*Concrete objects* were introduced to focus the drama (Wagner, 1976: 69-75, 102). So, for instance each participant received a cloak or jacket to show to which group they belonged and their status: the station personnel wore military type jackets

with different ranks to show their chain of command, the EECC delegates wore golden cloaks varying in length and style depending on their roles, the Dekamons all wore long black cloaks with hoods over their faces, (the one who played the human slave brought his own alien mask for his face to hide his true identity) and the free agents/pirates wore red or blue waist coats and jackets all differing in style. These costumes were put on every time just before the role-play would start as part of the enrolling ritual to help participants enter into the drama.

Apart from getting the participants to believe in the dramatic context, once they are inside it, the teacher-director also has to deepen their engagement. As mentioned in Chapter 4 (p.122-127, p.131-134), this can be done both from outside the drama as external facilitator, or from within the drama as teacher-in-role. Some examples of both follow.

One of the ways to deepen the engagement of participants used by Heathcote, is to *stop the drama to reflect* (Wagner 1976: 78, 104). A good example occurred in Session 7, where Boal's exercise "Stop, think" and the "Hanover variation" was played (1992: 211). After each improvisation was shown, it was started again. The joker, in this case myself, pointed to a particular character saying "stop, think". The character responded by vocalising his/her internal monologue. The variation of this was that any member from the audience could also stop the drama and then ask specific questions to certain characters. The character answered in role. We added another dimension to this, by stopping the drama in the same way, but then asking the participant to reflect on the actions of his/her character critically. (p.174) I allowed this because I wanted both players and audience members to be critical about the believability of their characters' actions. An example of this occurred during the EECC scene when the secretary admitted his underhandedness and confessed his true motivations to the group. N1 stopped the drama and asked: "Shouldn't you be more arrogant and stuff because you want power?" B1 answered: "No, my character is nervous now" (Video, Session 7). The group was satisfied, and used the same type of question to interrogate other characters. This was encouraging because as I remarked in my reflection, "it shows that they are learning to see the relationship between belief and action" (p.176).

From inside the drama, I provided a somewhat unconventional way of allowing characters to stop and think. At the welcoming event, I installed a video camera in one corner with a chair facing it. A sign on the camera read:

*Tell me anything, my dear  
I am an impartial ear*

Does someone irritate you?  
Is something bothering you?  
Are you perhaps joyful about something?  
Are you satisfied with something?  
Or dissatisfied?  
Who do you trust or distrust?

*Get it off your chest here,  
I am an impartial ear...*

Participants could stop what they were doing at any time during the drama and tell their feelings to the “impartial ear”. This was a convention learners are familiar with because of reality television series where any participant may exit the events and speak individually to the camera crew. The camera also functioned as a *probe* to see to what extent characters were engaged and ready to enter the next level of the drama: The Ordeal. Here are two examples of what two characters confessed to the camera exhibiting their level of engagement:

You don't understand my pain...I know I am human and I should like these people 'cause they're human too. But sometimes the Dekamon do give me a sense of (pause) civilisation. More so than the humans. But some of their customs I can not deal with, I must leave...I'm planning to escape. *Low whisper*. Help me. (Participant P as Minazo, Video Session 8)

This is supposed to be a 'peace negotiation', but it is sadly lacking. These humans, I could crush them beneath my boot! They are all going to die (He gives an evil laugh). (Participant K as Showtime Werra, Video Session 8)

*Ritual* was another very effective way employed to deepen the engagement of participants (Wagner 1976: 82-86, 104). From outside the drama as facilitator, I used the group enrolment ritual with costumes and the name game, as well as the in-role reflections in journals as a closing ritual. From inside the drama I used the role of the 'Interstellar Peace Officer' (ISPO) to perform the duties of one who is to ensure that the negotiations followed interstellar regulations. As an android, I would be impartial and emotionally detached. The most important role of the ISPO was to hand out Customs Clearance Forms and to check these forms at the door where the welcoming event and eventually the negotiations itself, would take place (Appendix 1: x). The station personnel and free agents were instructed to fill out the forms before ships arrived, and the arriving parties were greeted by the ISPO and handed the papers. As the players entered the room where the welcoming event was held, they were

interrogated by the ISPO individually. They were asked to declare their purpose for being there (especially the free agents) and to hand in any valuables. The form was then ‘bar coded’ by the ISPO and the person could enter. The Station personnel were allowed in first so that they could welcome their guests. The ritual served several purposes:

- It helped participants to reflect on their characters’ desires by asking them to clarify their purposes and duties at the meeting.
- It gave the teacher-in-role the opportunity to *press* them into deeper engagement by challenging their motives (Wagner, 1976: 90, 104). For more detail, refer back to my reflections (p.176).
- It *slowed the pace* of the drama (Wagner 1976: 79-82, 104) allowing each individual to be welcomed by the station personnel and shown to their seats and to meet people gradually. Those outside waiting could also become acquainted.

Finally, I also used *symbolism* to deepen the drama and to consolidate the group values of each party (Wagner, 1976: 90-96, 106). In Session 8, before the dramatic play started, I introduced a valuable object into each group. They had to brainstorm in groups about the meaning of these objects to their group. I chose the objects based on the improvisations of the previous session. The pirates got the ‘flux generator’, which to them symbolised money and power. The EECC got a bottle of pills marked ‘anti rotting agent’, symbolising health and hope to succeed in their mission. The station personnel received an ‘antenna shield’ that symbolised the power to communicate and give orders, and the Dekamons received a box containing the ‘jewels’ of the concubine, which to them symbolised longevity and collective strength. Three of these objects were confiscated by the ISPO at customs clearance and would become the centre of attention in *The Ordeal*. Indeed these objects and what they stand for provided participants with the group investment along with personal shades of interpretation that could motivate their attitudes and actions within the drama (Bowell and Heap, 2001).

#### **6.3.4 The Ordeal: Identification of Participant with Character**

Relevant sessions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

This stage of the double journey represents the culmination of everything that has happened thus far. The process of engagement of participants with their characters

has to be completed so that The Ordeal can cause them to externalise their own beliefs and values via their characters. Additionally, the events of the story have to reach a crisis point so that there will be an opportunity for characters to grow, but not without the danger of facing dire consequences. Both character development and context (events of the story) have to build to a climax. I will attempt to describe and analyse them separately as far as I am able.

#### 6.3.4.1 *Character Development*

The purpose of The Ordeal is to bring the hero to a point where he meets the fiercest of his enemies, his greatest fears and desires come to life and are brought to light. Here he must die and be reborn - die to the negative possibilities of his own psyche and reborn to its positive potential. Through identification with the hero, the same thing happens to the participant by virtue of the taxonomy of engagement and the dramatic paradox that underpins the double journey. The character/ player should be able to see himself/herself in action and be able to reflect on it and learn from it. In the previous chapter Way's levels of characterisation were discussed and compared to Morgan and Saxton's list of characterisation strategies that can be used to build up to that level (p.122-125). This highest level, it was said, is characterised by the participants' ability to understand the link between the motivations, values, beliefs and actions of a character. A teacher-director could use different characterisation strategies to build up to this level (Morgan and Saxton, 1987: 30-37).

In the process with the Y2Kids, the LARP of Session 3 was meant to be the first step, *dramatic play*, where a setting was created and participants were able to play in it spontaneously, using only their own ideas and relatively undeveloped dramatic abilities. This spontaneity was, however, restricted because of the detailed rules and restrictions that resulted from the simulationist paradigm of the LARP. Nevertheless, no educational purposes were introduced and the facilitators had no other agenda apart from engaging the participants in play. Even one year after the experience it was this free play session that some remembered as the highlight of the process (see next Chapter). Session 4 used *mantle of the expert* casting the participants into the role of creatures who are experts on choosing the right character/'host' for the right person. From Session 5 onward the focus was on role-play, where attitudes toward their own worlds, their own kind, people of other

groupings and events, were developed and communicated through action in improvisations.

Little attention was given to characterisation, in the sense that Morgan and Saxton use it, where participants work on external characteristics, mannerisms and the like to physicalise their characters. During Sessions 5 and 6, Izzo's model for character creation was used to think about occupational activities/actions that could externalise and communicate the characters' passions, but not enough exercises were done to discover and rehearse these, because of the time constraint. While this may well be a shortcoming of the process to be addressed in future applications of it, it was clear from the participant's playing that the physical activities and external actions, or *gestus* (Brecht, 1957: 245), of characters were able to flow naturally from the predetermined skeletal frameworks. O'Toole (1992: 72) remarks that such natural development of action and characterisation is actually preferable, because it allows participants to embody their characters with more honesty compared to them assuming learnt behaviours. An example of this natural development of characterisation from role-play was the different accents chosen by pirates to show that they came from places across the galaxy. They also reverted to stamping their feet rather than clapping their hands when they wanted to applaud something. Another character, the Dekamon ambassador's body guard, Na, had a hunchback, and grunted at those that came too close to the ambassador, never showing his face. He also went and 'spoke' to the 'impartial ear', grunting meaningfully into the camera, without articulating any understandable words.

In fact, it was such evidence of their total engagement that assured me that they were ready to be pushed to the next level. The challenge was to engineer the peace negotiations in such a way that the characters would be pushed to their limits. For growth to be possible there would have to be both danger and opportunity, as Boal suggests (Baxter, 2003). Here it becomes difficult, if not impossible to separate the character growth from the events of the story. The constraints of the story were to create the dramatic tension necessary to push them to the final stage of character development so that the distinction between character and participant becomes blurred and they reach a point where they can reflect upon their own attitudes and actions in relation to those of the characters.

#### 6.3.4.2 *Story Development*

Ideas for events that could occur around the peace negotiations came from the participants and the story they were developing themselves. In Session 8, the pirates had successfully stolen all the special objects handed in to the ISPO at the door without anyone noticing. As facilitator I was informed of this after the session and asked to use it the next week. This gave me an ideal opportunity to complicate the peace negotiations in Session 9 providing the dramatic tension that would drive the story to a climax. While the peace negotiation itself would focus on values that relate to the good of the community and the health of the group as a whole, the theft of the objects would shift the focus to individual loss and personal values. For the humans it meant the loss of health and hope, with all the personal repercussions for each character. For the Dekamons it meant the loss of their collective strength and knowledge, creating disarray with each individual now having to rely on himself for survival. For the pirates it meant that, although they had the items, they would be accused and this could mean an ultimate loss of control and power if they were proven guilty. Also, because they had an internal conflict they could start blaming one another in the search for personal freedom. For the station personnel, although they still had their antenna shield, the theft occurred under their supervision, in their station and the threat of total loss of order and communication would be very real.

The difficulty of the peace negotiations coupled with the theft of valuables would create a gap between the characters and the attainment of their purpose large enough to motivate all characters to act. As O'Toole explains "the source of tension is the gap between people and the fulfilment of their internal purposes, a gap created **by** deliberately imposing constraints in order to create an emotional disturbance (the tension itself) in the participants". (1992: 132) It is this emotional disturbance in the participant who is responding in identification with her character in the final stages of characterization that provides the tension. Dramatic tension of all three types identified by O'Toole was created supplying enough tension to drive the action to breaking point. Firstly, the conflict that was already mounting between parties because of the peace negotiations alone would become heightened as personal investment increased because of the theft of valuables. Secondly, a dilemma would occur between the bigger ideal of peace and order and the personal loss of all that the value objects stood for – between what is good for the greater community and what is

perceived to be good for each individual. Finally, misunderstanding is the pivot of the pirate's plan who would want to make sure that the humans and the aliens blame one another for the theft. Yet, it would be a fourth kind of tension that would bring the story to breaking point.

The strategy proved successful. At the beginning of Session 9 all groups came together separately first to discuss their different strategies. Then, as they entered the room, everyone again had to produce their clearance forms for the ISPO, repeating the ritual. The plan nearly derailed when one of the station personnel, the simple minded Hutch, discovered the stolen goods in possession of a pirate. He was 'knocked unconscious' and the goods were retrieved. He quickly came to, but with some memory loss.

The meeting started with the station commander, Lena Saint, as Chair. Although these discussions in themselves were fascinating and meaningful, they were not building to a climax and they soon became a mere repetition of points. The ISPO was taking part as an observer only, when he (I) perceived that the energy was dropping I raised the alarm calling in a robotic voice: "Security lock down, security lock down. A theft has occurred..." No one was allowed to leave the room. I froze the action and, using Image Theatre techniques to dynamise the frozen characters (Boal, 1992: 3), elicited from them their immediate reactions. First, I asked them to point to who they thought the guilty party was. Here the idea that the character's arch enemy embodies their greatest desire and fear was clear. Every character pointed to a different suspect, clearly indicating that each had a different fear or desire. There was no general consensus as to who should be blamed. Generally, the Dekamons pointed to the humans, but not all did, and some pointed to specific humans as opposed to the group in general. The same can be said for the humans. This was because, on one hand, there were some friendships and kinships between humans and Dekamons and, on the other hand, some had greater enemies amongst the pirates or the station personnel. The station personnel and the pirates who were not in on the scheme were completely divided, pointing to personal enemies based on back stories and perceptions as they had developed in the drama. Those pirates who engineered the theft pointed away from themselves, trying to blame the characters they perceived as their enemies. I then asked the group to show in one movement what course of action they thought they should take. This proved that there was mostly indecision and confusion. Using these techniques was a way of stopping the drama to reflect

(Wagner, 1976: 78). In retrospect I think I should have given them even more opportunity to identify and express these feelings, but I did not think of it then. I just reminded them that this was the moment they had been waiting for to allow their characters to grow and overcome their weaknesses, provided it was well motivated in terms of their character's passion and needs. I unfroze the scene and the play continued, but it was almost impossible to control the action. Everyone wanted to talk and act at once.

The indecision and confusion was not only that of characters but also of participants. At this point theorists advise that it is the responsibility of the teacher-director to provide the means of expression participants need to shape the confusing emotions. They are experiencing the drama to be real and when this occurs, the foundations are laid for participants to find meaning because the actions and their consequences for characters are felt. Bolton cautions teachers not to be afraid of the very real and very volatile emotions that may erupt as consequence of this full identification of participants with characters. Such fears may cause teacher-directors to enforce constraints that ask participants to neatly package their emotions into preconceived dramatic expressions of confusion, fear, anger etc. This would cause the focus to move away from felt, experienced emotions of what he terms the *verbal* kind, to emotions that are put on, or that are *adjectival* (1986). Rather teacher-directors should welcome the emotion and supply the needed dramatic form to help participants feel and express it even more clearly. To my credit, I did not attempt to box the emotion or shy away from it but I did not supply adequate dramatic form for their expression either. The form I supplied was of an organisational kind.

I suggested that a court style hearing should be held to find the guilty party. They agreed, no one except the guilty ones knew the truth. Officer Hutch, with his memory loss, was the first witness. He took the stand and made an attempt at character growth by telling his story as best he could without hiding behind his stupidity as an excuse not to take responsibility. His testimony was not accepted, because he was an unreliable witness on account of his low I.Q. The secretary of the EECC, Wimble, was the next to attempt growth. He admitted his prior engagement with the pirates to the entire group, confessing that he never retracted the agreement with them to sabotage the meeting. Since it was now successfully sabotaged, they clearly must be guilty. This was met by blatant denials from the pirates and accusations were flying. The third character that attempted growth was the Aide to the

ambassador of the Dekamons. He stepped forward proclaiming that, if innocent people were going to be accused without proper proof, then he may as well also be blamed, since there was just as little proof against him. From there everything became chaotic because of the emotional level of the discussion and the consequent frustration of not being able to voice an opinion or of not being able to play a part in the story. This created a feeling that the story was going nowhere.

As a group we tried to solve the problem both from inside and from outside the drama with varying success (for more detail refer back to reflection Session 9 p.180-186). It did not even help much to stop the drama to reflect, or to classify their ideas to eliminate implications (Wagner, 1976: 86-88, 104-105). Critical distance was eluding us and emotions dictated the proceedings (Emunah, 1994: 9). For the most part, I simply removed myself from the chaos and observed how they tried to solve their problems or make themselves heard. I watched how they reacted to the tension of the moment, while desperately searching for a way to help them, at the same time thinking to myself, that they should really find their own solutions.

Ideally, participants should be able to move smoothly and naturally between the real context and the fictional one assisting one another to maintain the drama, but this became impossible as the two contexts collided with force. The fourth kind of tension that O'Toole (1992) refers to, threatened to either capsize the drama or bring real opportunity for learning. This is the tension of *Metaxis*, of the interaction, overlapping, or in our case collision of the two contexts of perceived reality and fiction. This tension is created when the need for power and control becomes the centre of the action. As facilitator I had two functions, first I needed to engineer the process so that participants would reach a point where precisely such collision would occur since this is the fertile soil for the negotiation of meaning. Secondly, I had to do everything in my power to help participants find the meaning that was potentially there. I will look at these two functions separately to analyse my success and failure.

Evidence of my success in creating this fertile opportunity for finding meaning can be seen in the complete identification of participants with their characters. They themselves commented on this phenomenon. When we were still in the heat of the argument trying to find a way of solving the chaos, Participant G remarked:

This is going beyond acting and we are all adding our own personal feelings into this, 'cause... when we are talking we get so offended...and it's getting even more personal than it should. (Video, Session 9)

Participant P answered cleverly:

That's the whole point of Petro's research, just go with it. (Video, Session 9)

Afterwards, while most people were already taking a break and the camera was still rolling, Participant G finished her point:

It is as if, by being in character, they are able to act how they really want to be acting all the time. Like: 'Now I am in character I can act as mean as I want to because I am wearing a mask'. (Video, Session 9)

Some wrote in their journals:

Everybody got so angry, it's unbelievable how deep everybody gets into the story. (Participant Q, 2003).

The intensity of this drama is escalating to a point that I now feel a deep anger towards some characters and people. By playing out these characters, some of them take it too far ... (Participant J, 2003).

On the basis of this complete identification, both characters and participants came face to face with their deepest personal desires as they experienced the loss of the valuable objects and projected the loss onto a perceived nemesis. I could see that their actions were motivated by their own beliefs, but they still had to see it and to evaluate their actions critically. The quotes above however also point to the participants' frustration in their attempt to find the meaning within the drama, while at the same time retaining a sense of power and control. Power relations within the group's real life context were surfacing in the drama.

According to O'Toole (1992: 216), the word 'meaning' means "satisfying the need for identity and community". Their attempts at finding either were highly frustrated. O'Toole also explains that:

If indeed art is primarily concerned with 'identity and community - the need to be and the need to belong', then it must be concerned with power and control - the personal power to create and assert identity, and the control over the communal situation that enables people to belong. (1992: 149)

The frustration participants expressed was the result of their inability to either, assert and create personal identity, or to control the communal situation so as to make them feel they belonged. These frustrations lie at the heart of the themes we had been working with until now and the drama had been set up to address them directly. I now had the responsibility to make sure participants found the meaning they were looking for and that they did it in such a way that helped them also to see the relationship between these needs they have and their actions.

Reflecting on the way in which I ultimately removed myself from the chaos altogether, I realised that, on the one hand, this was precisely the appropriate thing to do. As Vogler suggests (1998: 154), the hero's mentor must 'die' in order for the hero to come to maturity by acting on his own insights. Finally I was catching on to the idea of letting people play out their own suggestions and solutions allowing them to find their way through dramatic play. Both Creaser (1990a) and Haseman (2002), who fight for the opportunity for participants to negotiate their own meaning, also assert, however, that this can only happen if participants were provided with enough material for multiple courses of action to be taken. Both suggest that teachers need to provide as much material as they can to stimulate participants to find different ways of exploring the conflict situation. Edmiston (2002) also suggests that these multiple courses of action should include multiple ways of framing the situation from varying distance perspectives. This is especially important when dealing with contexts where participants are so closely involved with the values and beliefs of their characters that they are unable to maintain the drama and become too personally involved. While my own limiting of their options by creating a security lock down may have been successful in really driving the emotions to a climax, I could have assisted both myself and the participants inside that closed room by providing multiple frames and options for action and expression of emotion. The aim of such multiple frames would not be to provide answers or to close the drama neatly, but rather to allow it to stay open in a way that would promote further reflection. Referring to how drama can either coerce an audience into accepting traditional values or create debate and re-evaluation, O'Toole remarks:

If the drama 'provides the missing clause', it presumably just takes its place in the network of ritual reassurance and redress which maintains the *status quo*. If it leaves some aspect of the tension unresolved, breaking the 'code of politeness', it might have the potential to command further action or interaction. (1992: 170)

In spite of this shortcoming, participants still managed to find their own way, drawing on their own experience and insight. This happened when, as explained in the chronological account, Minazo, the human servant of the Dekamon concubine, suggested that the court case be postponed and the greater cause of their meeting remembered: peace. When all voted in favour of this suggestion, I was able to re-enter the discussion and draw the Session to a close. In the next session I had to help them find the meaning they were seeking so that they could see the connection

between their deepest desires, or personal values, and their behaviour. They also had to see how these values overpowered the values they themselves, and their characters, professed to believe in, values such as peace, respect and tolerance. I wanted to help them apply this understanding to their own lives, so that they could understand why people sometimes do not act on what they believe, as promised at the start of the process (p.191). The challenge was to bring about this understanding in only one session.

### 6.3.5 Return with the Elixir: Character and Participant

Relevant sessions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

The last two stages of the double journey, the Return of the character with his Elixir and the participant’s own elixir, will be treated in one section because in the final Session, I had to condense both the journey of the characters and that of the participants (four phases in all). I did not have the benefit, therefore, of these final stages of the Hero’s Journey within which to lead characters and then participants gradually from Seizing the Reward to new insight and Return with the Elixir. While this was hardly ideal, it was still possible to reflect on the experience and elicit some meaning for both characters and participants. In addition, it was only in my writing after the completion of the process, that I discovered how the ideas of the Reward and the Elixir can help participants understand the hierarchy of values.

With a week to cool down and regain our distance, both participants and I were able to regain control over the story after the great outburst. After much deliberation with myself, I decided to use the *classification of ideas* to show their implications (Wagner, 1976: 86-88, 105) as a starting point for reflection. As indicated earlier, the ‘ideas’ I was hoping to classify were those values that had been exhibited by characters the week before as well as values that had been articulated by participants in Questionnaire 1. The two categories I chose were: values that express personal desires, such as ambition, and acceptance; and values that express what is good for the community as a whole, such as tolerance and respect. It was in my preparation for the final session that I realised this was a theme that had been evident throughout the process. In addition, the personal values were the ones most exhibited in behaviour, while the values that express the good for the community mostly appeared in discussions about values. The relationship between these two kinds of

values, i.e. exhibited personal values and professed communal values, relate to the hierarchy of values that was the pivotal theoretical understanding I was trying to convey. When there is a conflict of values, one often emotionally responds to and acts upon one's own core value and forgets other values that one also professes to believe in. Another way of interpreting the same conflict is to say that, under pressure, values become a one way street as people demand respect, power and acceptance from others and are not so willing to share it. This was very evident in the role-play of the previous week when the peace negotiations and the pretence of tolerance were completely dropped when the characters faced the personal loss of their valuable objects.

#### *6.3.5.1 Exhibited Personal Values*

My strategy of showing the video of the previous session was successful in identifying the personal values underlying the characters' actions because I could relate some of these actions to characters' passions articulated in earlier sessions. For instance, some of the characters on the video kept talking without giving others a chance. This was especially true of Ford Prefect, the Aid to the ambassador, and the station security guard, Hickly, both of whom expressed their passions as: "I want power" (*Table 6.4* p.210). This belief in personal power is expressed in the questionnaires as in the comment: "Believe in yourself, in the power you have to control your life day by day!" (Appendix 2: ii)

Many other characters had expressed the same passion for power (Lee Longfinger, Murphy, Na, Showtime, Werra & Wimble) and, while some of them also took part in the action, others felt disempowered by the talkers and their physical frustration was evident on the video in the way they hung forward, stood up and paced, or banged with their hands or fingers on tables in agitation as they could not get a word in edgewise. The same frustration is found in the pleas for recognition on some of the questionnaires: "Give me space to grow!" and "Listen. I have a lot to say & I am not just another kid" (Appendix 2: ii). This is also an expression of their need for freedom to exercise control over their own affairs as expressed in the passions of characters like Minazo and Lilith (*Table 6.4*, p.210).

In contrast, some characters on the video simply 'checked out' trying to escape the conflict, or made jokes on the side. They did not want to fight with their

friends. They wanted peace, as Lena Saint, the station commander, wrote in her journal after the conflict:

I have decided to leave – late at night when no one knows. I will disappear and live by myself as a hermit. (Libby, 2003)

This matches her passion which was: “to be accepted, to grow to find happiness and love” (*Table 6.4*, p.210). On the video she sits with her head down drawing and scribbling on her journal cover. In the absence of acceptance and love, she wants to run away. The same need for acceptance is found in many comments from the questionnaires, e.g. “everyone wants to be part of an “in crowd” and no wants to stand out be different and make change (sic)”, or “There’s a lack of love & understanding that been give & shown us (sic).” (Appendix 2: iii). Many other characters articulated this need for acceptance in their passion statements above.

Participants agreed that it was not just their characters who were getting upset but they themselves in identification with the characters. They were also able to see how these values of recognition, power, freedom to act and acceptance were in conflict with the values characters professed during the negotiations, such as tolerance, respect and peaceful communication. All they wanted was to get the thief who stole their valuable objects. These objects clearly symbolised the personal values of the characters. If we had the opportunity to play out the Seizing of the Reward, the recovery of these objects would have been the focus of the role-play. The feelings evoked by such retrieval, would have been an important part of the reflection so that the personal values could have been verbally articulated. Still, by watching themselves on the video, they were able to begin to identify and verbalise these *Reward values*.

It is important to note here that none of these personal values were judged as being ‘bad’ just that they became overpowering because of their emotional intensity. The Seizing of the Reward is a positive action and indicative of two things on the part of the hero. Firstly it shows that he now realises how important and influential this value really is in controlling his behaviour. Secondly, it demonstrates his resolve to take back the control over it and not allow it to be used by his arch enemy to manipulate him and cause him to loose his ‘cool’. From the video it was clear how all of them had lost it and in our discussion, we could recognise how overpowering the

personal values were and the need for each individual to find a way of controlling their own desires.

After the Seizing of the Reward, the hero has the remaining stages of the journey to help him learn how to balance this desire with other values that are of greater communal significance. On The Road Back, he learns to sacrifice his personal desires for a higher good. This higher good is the Elixir that can heal his community.

At this point I want to remind the reader that the intention is never to simplify people's complex systems of belief to one or two statements, or to use the Hero's Journey, which can become a highly essentialist way of looking at 'self', to find ultimate answers. The intention is to use the model or recipe of the quest to provide a perspective or snapshot of a value system that can help to freeze the complex interrelating aspects of that system for a moment so that it can be discussed at all as opposed to never getting the attention it needs, because it is so hard to crystallise it and talk about it. At the same time, the distinction between *Reward values* and *Elixir values* provide a certain understanding of how this complex relationship of interrelating values work. It also gives a way into talking about the relationship of individuals to their community and the mutual impact the two have upon one another – a relationship not easily grasped no matter where you stand.

#### 6.3.5.2 *Professed Communal Values*

From the video the conflict between the two kinds of values was clear and because we could not role-play through the last stages of the journey, we continued with our reflective conversations. It became increasingly important in these discussions that participants should be able to link what they are learning to their own life stories. Without such application, the dramatic meaning can not be assimilated. The meaning is found in the liminal space between the experience and the cognitive understanding (O'Toole, 1992). When I asked them what one would do to solve such value conflict in everyday life, there were some good solutions which I will repeat here. Some suggested walking away from the situation, or avoiding it, reading a book, or doing something physical like running, to rid oneself of the emotional energy. When one participant remarked:

Think to yourself...before hand, am I able to deal with this situation maturely? (Participant L, Video Session 10)

I agreed, saying that growth and maturity was exactly what the Hero's Journey tries to explore. That was when we talked through the entire workshop series identifying the stages of the Hero's Journey. We then filled in the last couple of stages. After deciding that the pirates were caught and the valuables returned (the Reward Seized), but that a peace agreement could not be reached, they each finished the story for their characters individually. I wanted the stories to show how the character came to choose a greater good in order to overcome conflict caused by their weaknesses. This greater good would be the character's Elixir. Some endings were quite insightful, some were tragic and others romantic:

I eventually got cured of my mind rot and learned to trust people more.  
(Participant H as Murphy, Video Session 10)

After the negotiations failed, I was a little depressed, but at the same time, for myself, I became more confident...because I took some action and raised the people up (Participant D as Hutch, Video, Session 10)

Now that I sit here in prison, I realise that killing Amber (out of revenge for the failure), was not such a great thing as I thought, because I have truly lost my only friend. (Participant T as Seth, Video, Session 10)

The ambassador realised that I am the only one who really cares about him and we got married. (Participant O as Sing Set, Video, Session 10)

After listening to all the stories again on the video, I found that they did not have such deep insight as I had written in my final reflection (p.191-192). Like Sing Set, most characters' stories ended with the achievement of their passion only with no realisation of a deeper truth. So, for instance, Showtime Werra said he won the war and conquered the universe; while Na, also wanting dominion, said that he ran from the war and became chief of a tribe on a distant planet (Video, Session 10). Most characters, therefore, were still stuck with the need to Seize the Reward and satisfy their personal desires. They needed the remaining stages of the journey to balance their desires with Elixirs.

Once again it is necessary for me to clarify the meaning of my own words. The 'deeper truth' or elixir I was looking for was not any kind of absolute truth or final universal answer that would last for all participants for the rest of their lives. Rather, I was looking for each participant's own specific application of what the process meant for them and their own behaviour in the contexts of their life stories. As O'Toole explains, it is not the universality of meaning that makes the impact of drama so significant, but its very specific application in particular contexts (1992:

232-235). I wanted every participant to find her own elixir - the particular and specific understanding that would help her deal with her own overwhelming emotions generated by her own desires and their frustration in the current context of her life story. The term 'elixir' can seem to refer to universal ideals of peace and tolerance, but it really refers to each individual's way of finding how to make those ideals fit into their life context. Once again the aim of the meaning making process is not to discover ultimate meanings, but rather to foster an attitude of 'questioning and questing' (Abbs, 2003). The elixir refers to that bit of understanding the participant needs for the here and now of her life story to bring the clarity she needs for the current conditions of her context to make sense long enough that she can continue her quest.

Having no time to help each character find their own Elixir, I could have referred back to the moment in the previous session when one suggested that they should set the court case aside and go back to peace negotiations. Since they all agreed to this course of action, they all knew how to choose a greater good over personal gain as they did so in identification with their characters. It was just the particular interpretation of what this meant for their real life contexts that was missing. Yet, in this way they had condensed the journey for themselves and had their 'rehearsal for revolution' (Boal, 1979: 121). In a sense, therefore, they skipped the last part of the journey and went straight to the Elixir, choosing the higher values over their personal loss. I now had to help them realise this and apply the insight to their own lives in order to complete the double journey.

I wanted to achieve this by using the questions I had prepared as the last step in the reflection process. The answers to the questions would give me clarity about whether or not the dialogue between their needs and my planning was successful in giving them an elixir from the drama to take back to their own lives. These questions asked them to firstly identify a situation in their everyday lives where their emotions erupted like they did in the drama. I then asked them to identify the higher value their characters needed to remember and then the one they themselves would like to remember the next time it happened.

Some answers (4 in total) showed a remarkable understanding of the relationship between: the character's Elixir and the real person's new understanding. Some examples are shown in *Table 6.5*.

Table 6.5

<i>Name</i>	<i>When the same emotions arise as in the play</i>	<i>What my character needs to remember</i>	<i>What I would like to remember</i>	<i>Will you use it next time?</i>
<b>Clear link between character and self</b>				
T	My character was totally different to real life. Compared to my character I'm not a violent person, I will never murder anyone, whereas my character was very destructive and violent. I don't brag about what I have and don't have in real life. But my character loved to do that. Although, in real life I seem to try and sort things out by hitting them right, by getting into fights. That is one similarity I have with my character.	Just to remember, that if I ever want any friends, I have to put my violent...self behind me and to just be friendly.	Same answer.	Yes definitely.
C	When I can't control my surroundings and the people around don't let me have my say.	That you can't be in control all the time. And you have to be calm...and remember my goal of who I want to be and that is to be my best and not worrying (sic) what others are doing.	Same as above.	I'll try, but you don't sometimes realise how emotional you are gonna get, so you realise in the end of it all, how far things have already gone.
<b>Understanding of the levels of values, but no clear link</b>				
R	Concerning my own personal life: I get afraid/fear failure and issues like teenage pregnancy and homosexuality arouse immense anger...it disappoints me.	Revenge: 'cause I feel that our failure was because of the other pirates, so I blame them and want them to pay.	To remain respectful and consider the consequences.	Most definitely.
S	When someone lets me down, someone who I thought I could trust, when my family is threatened, (I get scared) and when I set goals for myself and I can't achieve them.	He remembers he has to get back to his family without his disease.	I have to remember life is hard and I have to be strong to overcome the difficulty.	Yes, because sometimes I don't think things through.
<b>Little understanding of either</b>				
N	Boredom, not being able to speak.	Kill the ambassador.	Same.	Yes.
M	When my mother visits me, or acts like she cares.	I suddenly realise that I am being suffocated and need to find myself.	That, even though it doesn't feel like it, she is my mother.	I guess I'll try, but it still hurts.

The majority showed good insight, but the link between the story and this insight was unclear, although I could see they understood the idea that there were layers of values and that some values, while they were emotionally very powerful, needed to be balanced by others. This was one way they came to find the balance between conflicting roles that Landy's work aims at resolving (1993: 13).

A few (3), however, were unable to either grasp the concept of a value hierarchy, or to link the story to their lives. They could not distance themselves either from the role-play, or from their everyday life story and I realised that more work was needed.

In summary, the fact that some participants made the clear link between themselves and their characters and were therefore able to gain insight into themselves. was a sign that the process could work. Identification with the character in *The Ordeal* led them to discover an elixir for their own lives. This elixir not only referred to the higher value, or *Elixir value* they identified, but also the strategy of remembering to heed this value in the midst of emotional turmoil. This strategy was linked to a new understanding of the hierarchy of values and its effect on one's actions in the heat of conflict.

Yet, between the identification of *Reward values* – values that relate to the value objects and the personal core values of characters and participants – and *Elixir values* – higher values that need to be remembered in the heat of conflict – there was a void. For most characters and participants this void needed to be filled for them to grasp the full meaning of the drama and I was unable to provide this for them. I also wanted to show them how the two kinds of values were really two sides of the same coin, or put differently, a two way street. I did not get to show them how, for instance, the need for power and control can be balanced by the realisation that one should grant other people the same freedom to control their own affairs.

From the perspective of participant-observer, there is the temptation here to try and theorise further about the personal growth that I could see happening in individual participants as a result of the process. This temptation is heightened by the feeling that the process was lacking. However, I am reminded of the words of Carnicke (2000: 107, 62): quoted earlier: “the outcome for the audience should not be psychoanalysis but moral debate.” While Campbell and Vogler certainly draw on aspects of psychoanalysis in their theory, my intention was to use their work for creating stories that would enable critical discussion on values. For me to make

observations about the personal growth of participants would be just that: an attempt to psychoanalyse. In contrast, the working definition of self, here, is that it is a network of relationships between a person and her context or story. Moral debate ensues when a person is able to apply the insight from the drama to her own story so that dialogue can occur about the application of values – moral debate. In that sense, the ‘moral debate’ that I intended was between personal values and other systems of values that function in the person’s context such as the one underlying the South African constitution. I have accomplished this in terms of the discussion we were able to have about personal values (*Reward values*) in general and values that relate to the good of the community (*Elixir values*). However, since few participants were able to relate the story to their own lives, we were unable as yet to talk about specific values each of us harbour as core values and those underlying the constitution. For this workshop series, the debate ended with the general understanding of how values worked, how they could be in conflict and how we should learn to cope with that conflict. Even so, as shown above, this discussion was highly insightful and proved that with the appropriate adaptations the workshop process could be used to deepen the debate. Therefore, while the dialogue between the needs of this particular group and my planning came to an end for them, it still continues for the methodology in general. Section 6.4 is devoted to an overview of the described process to identify ways in which the plan can be adapted to address the difficulties for future applications.

#### **6.4 Suggested Changes**

In both the above accounts, scheduling issues and absenteeism have been identified as complicating factors in the practical execution of the proposed programme. Yet, a far more influential factor was my own learning process as facilitator. I was learning to use the theoretical knowledge accumulated to mediate between the frames of drama and perceived reality and guide participants toward personal growth. Scheduling and absenteeism merely added a challenge to this already precarious balancing act. This section of the thesis will analyse the process as a whole in order to discover where I may have overbalanced to one side or another, and make suggestions as to how this can be rectified in future applications of similar programmes. To simplify the analysis, the discussion will focus on the two main periods in the process where frustration was experienced. The first was around Sessions 4, 5 and 6 when the

process of character creation was dragging and I was battling to know when and how to engage the participants in the context. The second was during Sessions 8, 9 and 10 when participants were frustrated because the story was held up by conflict that seemed insolvable, and I was frustrated that we did not have enough time to reflect on its meaning.

There were three factors that influenced my balancing act in both these problem periods. Each of the factors relates to one of the three secondary questions mentioned in the introduction to the previous chapter (p.150). The first factor was my own struggle to identify how and when participants should be immersed in play and when they should be planning or reflecting on the playing. My own experience told me that we should solve most of the problems during play and not during the planning for the play, or reflecting on it. However, several factors caused the initial planning phase (first problem period) to drag out far too long. Many of participants' grievances about this phase came out in a final questionnaire that they completed at the very end of Session 10 (Appendix 2: vi and ix). Like me, they were all very frustrated with this part of the process. It contained too much talking and discussing and not enough doing. It was the problem of assigning and then adapting characters to suit their players, that was most time consuming and frustrating. In addition, learners were confused about what exactly I was expecting from them and they were unsure of the choice of *temenos*. It was only by heeding Participant A's suggestion that she would like to grow with her character by getting into the play, that everything started to line up. It would have been preferable if this point could have been reached two sessions earlier. It was difficult for me to do then, because I thought they should know more about characterisation on a theoretical level, before they would be able to play, but I was mistaken as I wrote in a reflection:

Again I realise that I need to trust my theoretical research: without immersion, no learning, and immersion takes time and 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... This is not their journey, but mine (p.173).

Or, as one of the participants so eloquently said, they didn't like "the theory 'cause it sucked'" (Appendix 2: vi). Ironically, it was during this stage when I was struggling most with getting the group engaged, when scheduling issues and absenteeism also

took its toll. Such frustrations can potentially be dealt with. A contract between the participants and the teacher-director will help both parties to clarify their expectations. Such a contract can also serve as a reflection tool through out the process to negotiate roles and expectations and their realisation or frustration as is needed (Neelands, 1984: 27). A more effective strategy may be to choose a group from the start that is not predisposed to problems of absenteeism as may be the case with a class in a school context where attendance is more obligatory and regulated. Alternatively, the programme can be used within the structure of something like a youth camp, where participants are organised together in one place for a weekend without other distractions. The other option would be to adapt the process to the group so that every session forms a complete episode allowing for every participant to gain something from every session, while the overall structure is retained for those who come regularly.

Still, everything was not perfect even when they *were* engaged, because then we did not have the time we needed to reflect on the drama and learn from it (second problem period). Heeding participants' plea for less analysis and more play (Appendix 2: vi and ix), such opportunities should be limited to short reflections at the end of each session and not done in blocks as in Sessions 6 and 10 of the described process. Additionally, there should be enough time left after the Ordeal for the Road back and Resurrection to be improvised as a rehearsal for the application of the Elixir. This means that the facilitator should do everything within her power, to make sure there are 12 not 10 sessions and that participants understand the importance of attending every one.

The second factor that greatly frustrated this period when characters were devised arose from the fact that participants were handed predetermined characters as part of the LARP and they were given a predetermined *temenos*, one that they had very little say in creating. As mentioned earlier, this goes against the principle of Educational Drama that the teacher-director should choose a setting based on her knowledge of the group and their needs. I chose the space age setting because it saved me time and it was convenient. I did take into account that it might well be a viable setting for the age group and that their themes of tolerance and personal resistance to oppression might find expression in it. I would also not have continued with this choice if the group was unable to engage with it. But, they were and the setting turned out to be extremely successful in the end. As one participant remarked:

I've never done anything based on the 'outer limits' if you could say! I loved it, after a while: It was extremely different & out of the ordinary! (Appendix 2: vi)

However, the problem of the predetermined characters posed a greater difficulty. This relates to the secondary question concerning the relationship between the character and the participant who is to learn from it. Boal insists that participants should be able to 'resonate' (1995: 68-69) with the protagonist's problem. According to Landy, participants should choose characters spontaneously so that their unconscious can pick those archetypal roles that need integrating (1993: 46-47). The ethos of Educational Drama suggests that the choices for characters and their attitudes should lie with participants. I tried to facilitate this after the LARP but to match the right characters with the right participants took almost two entire sessions (Sessions 4 and most of Session 6). Instead of saving time, as I intended, it wasted play time as well as lessened reflection time afterwards.

As mentioned earlier, one of the most prominent reasons for this difficulty in bridging the gap between the LARP characters and the roles the group were to play, was the amount of detail the LARP structure provided for characters for the sake of the simulation. What were needed for the educational drama process were simpler characters that were not so well conceptualised on a rational level but rather simply provided broad parameters as proposed by Izzo's characters and endorsed by educational drama practitioners (Chapter 3 section 3.1.4). O'Neill (1995) warns that the drama could be significantly sabotaged by the temptation to decide too much detail before-hand. As Howell and Heap (2001) suggest, characters need to be simplified down to attitude and actions that flow from that attitude to ensure flexibility and room for development. Bolton (1986) explains, once these attitudes are given form through the art of dramatic expression, the very same feelings are developed through the drama to become lived through experiences. In this way emotions move from being what he terms adjectival or 'put on' to being *verbal*, i.e. expressed truthfully through action.

Even though the teacher may choose a *temenos*; in future, participants should be allowed to design their own characters and then through playing them, and not by thinking about them. 'Playing them' would include fine tuning the characters' mannerisms and unique gestures, although care should be taken that the characterisation flows naturally from the role-play and is not assumed artificially.

This means more time can be spent on playing out occupational and primary activities of characters by focussing on their external actions as expressions of their attitudes. Once the characters have been played out in some improvisations, reflection could be done with greater ease and would be able to be more relevant. Such opportunities can then be used to think about the passion, needs and activities that the character is already exhibiting, rather than deciding them beforehand.

In the second problem period, it was the issue of over identification that frustrated the learning and not so much the earlier problem of under-identification. Participants and characters were now fully identified with one another. Participants played their parts with conviction and confidence. Yet, in the final climax of the story the participants found it impossible to slip between real context and fictional context with ease and clarity. The two worlds blurred into one another and made for very heated discussion and frustration. I still think it was one of the most fruitful climactic moments of drama I had ever experienced because I accomplished precisely what I set out to, namely, the complete overlapping of characters' and participants' personal value systems. As indicated in the analysis earlier in the chapter, I could have helped participants by providing a larger repertoire of options and courses of action to take with more dramatic material to work from including options that could provide more distanced perspectives. Care should be taken, though, not to force the drama into a neat package but to leave the question unanswered and open in order to promote further reflection.

The final factor frustrating mediation between the frames of the drama and of perceived reality during the two most problematic phases of the process was the inexperience of both myself and the participants. Their inexperience was in the art of improvisation, mine was in the running of this particular programme, posing difficulties of its own making. This factor addresses the last secondary question about the artistic, or dramatic, quality of the role-play. While the level of characterisation certainly allowed for deep engagement and provided the action with a truthful quality, the inexperience in improvisation hampered the performance and the process. As facilitator, I have the skills to prepare and equip them more fully.

In the first problem phase participants' inexperience manifested itself in a reluctance to take part and engage with the material. I tried to deal with it by giving them theoretical tools like thinking about their character's passion, needs and primary activities. It would have been more productive to simply let them practice

improvisation by letting them do it. The Y2Kids had much more experience in preparing and showing improvisations in small groups, than in role-playing in process drama. I could have used this to my advantage by letting them do more short group improvisations at first, like the one where they had to overcome a difficulty on their way to the negotiations. Later I could introduce the role-play when they were more confident with their characters and the setting. The role-play put individuals on the spot and very few were able to do it with confidence. With the small group work, they were able to draw ideas from one another, making the task less daunting. This is something to keep in mind for future applications of the programme.

In the later problem period during *The Ordeal*, their confidence was good and they were engaged and ready to perform, but they lacked the skills to give and take focus from one another, to build on each other's ideas, and to let the story develop. Rather each one tried to take control of the story and insist that his/her own ideas were heard. Others wanted to avoid the conflict and withdrew from the discussion. Such basic improvisation skills could have helped them in navigating the story in spite of their emotional engagement. Such skills can be taught by commenting on improvisations earlier on in the process, and talking about what works and what doesn't, before they get into the heat of the argument.

Of course, it was not just a lack of skill that caused the chaos in Session 9, when the peace negotiations erupted into a full-fledged war of words. The process was designed to bring the participants to this point. Not only were they gradually drawn deeper and deeper into the Inmost Cave using the stages of the Hero's Journey, but also the plight of a hero searching for his magic boon, is directly paralleled by the plight of young adolescents searching for their own voice amidst the turmoil of cultural influences they are bombarded with. The eruption was merely the effect of 19 heroes all fighting for room to make their own choices and grow. The process was particularly shaped for this specific age group to bring them to a point of maximum engagement and when it happened, it asked for a very particular skill from the facilitator to help them focus their energy, express their emotions dramatically and learn from the experience. Because it is a new process, I was unable to predict exactly what would happen and I was unable to plan for it. During the eruption, I tried various techniques to focus the energy, but after several failed attempts, I withdrew and just observed what happened. I then went home and planned a reflection for the final Session as best I could. In retrospect, this withdrawal was

precisely what I should have done, since my essential absence allowed them the space to find their own answers. Yet, apart from the framing options already mentioned, I could also have structured the reflection process more efficiently by breaking it down into phases just as the build up was done in phases.

The first phase would be an opportunity for everyone to vent their emotions, using dramatic media such as movement, voice and rhythm to express the feelings they have. Bolton (1986) emphasises the importance of using various dramatic forms to allow for the expression of the very real and deeply experienced emotions participants feel. The second phase would be to discuss the causes of the feelings. These causes can be categorised into factors arising from the story that relate to the character's own feelings, factors that arise from the role-play and how it is working or not working, causes that arise from a connection the feeling makes between the character and situations where the same emotion erupts in the participant's everyday life. These causes can be linked to the primary needs of both character and participant, for instance, a cause for the feeling of powerlessness can be that "I can see how things can be solved but I am not in a position to say" (Participant D, 2003). This communicates the need for an opportunity to speak, or the need for confidence to speak when the opportunity presents itself.

After the causes and needs have been discussed/identified, the next phase would be to reflect on the underlying value that is exposed by the behaviour, or by the strength of feeling. The example mentioned above could be seen as exhibiting the need for respect or acknowledgement. This could be discussed with regards to the character or to the participant, although the former would probably be more productive because of the safety and distance the drama provides. The final phase of the reflection would then be to relate this value to values that communicate the greater good for the community, those values that were originally identified such as tolerance and respect for all. Again this can be discussed in terms of the character and the story, the respect the participants have to show each other in role-play and improvisation, and then in general to the respect people have to show each other in everyday life and in the specific lives of participants in particular. It is here where the idea that a value is reciprocal can be introduced. At this point participants would be able to see that what one wants for oneself, one should also be willing to offer to others. The concepts of *Reward values* and *Elixir values* can also be used to help the

participants understand the different kinds of values, the conflict between them and how they balance one another.

Elements of all four of these phases were present in the discussion at the end of Session 9, as well as during Session 10, but it needed better structuring by the facilitator. It also needed more time. Most likely these phases could work together with those stages of the Hero's Journey that were skipped as a result of the lack of time. In the light of this suggestion, the Seizing of the Reward can be seen as the consequence of understanding the importance of gaining control over one's deepest desire as opposed to it controlling one. The Road Back can be seen as the effort to take that knowledge back to the real life experience first of the character and then of the participant. The Resurrection is then symbolic of the realisation that the personal need for e.g. respect should be sacrificed in order to gain the greater good e.g. respect for everyone else, including oneself. I expect these phases should first be played by the characters and then reflected upon by the participants, one at a time. Finally, the Elixir can then be brought home as the participant gains understanding about herself and can see what the character has taught her.

In the light of the analysis, the following adjustments to the programme can be suggested:

- The process should consist of at least 12 one and a half hour Sessions (as originally planned), but be adapted to the constraints of the group so that the effects of absenteeism can be minimised.
- A learner-teacher contract can be negotiated to serve as guide and reflection tool about expectations and roles.
- Participants can choose their own *temenos*, or be guided toward a choice by the teacher, but characters must be chosen spontaneously by participants themselves.
- More attention should be given to the development of characters through action and movement than through talking and analysing.
- Attention should be given to the creation of simple characters that allow for flexibility and negotiation as the story unfolds.
- The planning, playing and reflecting should be woven together evenly throughout the process so that learners can learn by doing and then reflect on what they have learnt, both in and out of character, in each session.
- The Ordeal should happen early enough in the series to allow for proper reflection.

- More preparation can go into gathering material and planning for multiple courses of action with varying distance perspectives from the focus event, to allow participants to experiment and find their own meaning.
- Reflection can be done in phases linked with the final act of the Hero's Journey.

There were still some neglected ideals that I had hoped to address with this practical process. The process had shown what happens when individual personal values needed to make room for communal values. What of situations where communal cultural values have to make room for individual ideals? Hornbrook, Boal, Brecht, Grady and Turner, among others, all voice the concern that drama will be used to strengthen and endorse communal cultural values at the expense of critical interrogation. In my emphasis on values like tolerance and peace, did I honour the pluralistic view of diversity or did I gloss over the individual differences between participants and their diverse perspectives as Grady warns? Does the Hero's Journey as a pattern innately gloss over such difference? Or does it make adequate allowance for cultural reinterpretation?

Another concern relating to this one points to the idea that was touched upon in Chapter 4 and relates to the way in which the Hero's Journey not only describes the transformation of an individual, but also of a group or community. What impact would the insights gained by participants have on their life stories and the stories of their communities when they return to their Ordinary Worlds? In a narrower sense, what impact would the process have on the immediate Y2Kids community that the participants formed? What is the relationship between the individualistic paradigms of the Hero's Journey as I had used it, and the highly social form of working that is process drama? While I do not think these questions can be fully explored and satisfied within the scope of this thesis, I was afforded the rare opportunity to try and find some pointers in this regard a year after the first run of the programme. I got the chance to work with a focus group of some of the participants again to try and get some more answers to my questions. I could help them find more specific and particular meaning for their individual and diverse contexts; I could try and assess how the process had impacted on them and their communities; I could also try and interrogate some of my own values that may have interfered with a pluralistic perspective of difference. In so doing, some ideals and dreams that I had buried after the first process were resurrected.