

## Sociometric Consciousness

When we engage in any sociometric activity a high value is placed on becoming aware of feeling states, and accessing the personal information held within the body and mind. One of the reasons we use action, and have developed ways to depict what we experience in our relationships, is to facilitate a person, or group of persons, to know the interpersonal world embodied within. When we begin to realize we have the capacity to access the state of our present truth, the choices we make have a more transparent connection to the foundation of our personal story. We are more grounded.

Every choice has elements of inquiry whether given attention or not. It sometimes appears as if we fell into choices without thinking; however, there are aspects of our inner neurobiological assembly which subtly monitor what is occurring and offers an option using a "best guess" process. Stephen Porges (2011, p. 58) coined the term neuroception: "Neuroception represents a neural process that enables humans and other mammals to engage in social behaviors by distinguishing safe from dangerous contexts. Neuroception is proposed as a plausible mechanism mediating both the expression and the disruption of positive social behaviors, emotional regulation and visceral homeostasis."

When a person engages in one of the three cyclical models (the subject of the document) we are asking the person to identify information and locate a placement on the cycle which best represents their here and now position within an identifiable group, or within the context of specific life events. The descriptive words within the cycle or in the margins have been chosen to facilitate movement toward a position. Some people can readily do this, and others find the process too complex or imprecise. For this reason the double (companion) may help expand awareness of what is happening through attuned communication. The double helps bring to the surface inner thoughts and feelings and provide a bridge to consciousness.

Sociometric consciousness is a process of awakening to the complexity of interpersonal choice-making and finding useful footholds to anchor what you learn as you focus more and more attention to absorbing the truth of your choices from all sides: from your emotional and rational self and from being tuned in to the emotional and rational sides of others. The mind is being trained to notice, to record, to integrate, to follow hunches and best guesses, to take the time it needs to act on what is being revealed.

Daniel Goleman (1995, p. 118) reviews the rudiments of interpersonal intelligence: (1) organizing groups and coordinating the efforts of a network of people; (2) negotiating solutions, being diplomatic and acting as mediator; (3) personal connections where you recognize and respond to the

concerns and needs of others; and (4) social analysis, where you detect and have insights about people's feelings, motives and concerns. In the years since Goleman's success brought universal attention to the realm of personal relating skills, we find the following concepts appearing with greater frequency in the professional literature: focused attention, mindfulness, meta-cognition, attunement, self awareness, etc. Sociometric consciousness relies on all these forms of reflection.

In April, 2012 brain researcher Christof Koch (2012, p. 24) announced a \$300 million, four-year study at the Allen Institute for Brain Science in Seattle to understand how information is encoded, transformed and represented in the mouse brain and the human cerebral neocortex and its satellites. He states: "What is needed is a fundamental account of how activity in any system can give rise to consciousness." Koch refers to Giulio Tonino a psychiatrist and sleep researcher from the University of Wisconsin, Madison who has published an integrated information theory (IIT) with the claim that consciousness is integrated information. Tonino's theory, according to Koch (2012, p.25) : "... introduces a precise measure, called phi, which captures the extent of consciousness. Expressed in bits, phi quantifies the extent to which any system of interacting parts is both differentiated and integrated when that system enters a particular state."

It is exciting to know that the cyclical models offered in this monograph are on track as a methodology for exploring both integration and differentiation in the social world. In 2000 I formed the word socioeotic which implies the field of how we know things of a social nature. This word covers more the qualitative internal aspects of sociometry than the emphasis on metrics which the term sociometry implies. The building of sociometric consciousness and refining our moment to moment knowing matches one of the four spokes of Daniel A. Siegel's four streams of awareness. Siegel (2010, p. 136-138) states: "In my own experience I have also found that another stream of awareness seems to exist, perhaps better considered a kind of subterranean spring that emerges from beneath the flow of these other three streams (sensation, observation, concept). This fourth stream is that of a nonconceptual knowing, a deep, inner sense of the truth, a coherent impression of the world as it is. Knowing is the term I've used for this fourth stream, and it has a quality to it that we can point to with words, but it is before and perhaps beyond words. This is the nonworded way we come to know the truth. Some of the most profound moments of meeting I've had with my own patients have emerged as we share this resonance of knowing that is, literally, without words."

Psychodramatists has struggled to more coherently define J. L. Moreno terms tele, transference and empathy. (Moreno, J. (1952, 1960); Dreikers, R. (1955); Blake, R. (1955); Leutz, G. (1971); Kellerman, F. (1979); Boria, G. (1983); Hale, A. (1985); Barbour, A. (1994); Blatner, A. (1994d). Moreno identifies that what prompts the choice process for interactors may stem from these three motivators. I cannot conclude this appendix on sociometric consciousness without a mention of these terms, especially since Daniel Siegel's eloquent description of the profound moments of

meeting someone which has this deep resonance of knowing. I believe he is describing the experience of tele and empathy. Simply put tele and empathy are interpersonal processes of engagement where the emotional states connected to a choice for another person result from a clearly integrated state. Transference is powered by a person's drive to engage in order to reach completion of events which have not been adequately integrated. In this scenario the person chosen is an auxiliary ego they have been chosen to take a role rather than fully engage as the person they are in their entirety.

Donna Little and I (2002, p. 53) have offered students of psychodrama a vehicle for sociometric processing of roles undertaken in psychodramas, or during events involving group-wide encounters. The purpose of the "Auxiliary Ego Role Choice" pen and paper exercise is to bring to consciousness the perceptions people have for why they were chosen or not chosen for roles in an activity and to have those perceptions heard and corrected if needed. This process helps clarify the nature of tele, empathy and transference in the moment and allows group members to make the adjustments they need to make, in order to open the field of role choice to include roles specific people need to have access to in order to more fully integrate their life experiences.

## References

Please access the Psychodrama bibliography on the internet for all references to tele and transference: <http://tomtreadwell.com/02ref/index.htm>

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Note: This paper is Appendix IV of the monograph by Ann E. Hale, Three Cyclical Models which Enhance Consciousness of Interpersonal Connection. It will be available this summer (2012) by contacting her at [annehale@cox.net](mailto:annehale@cox.net).

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