

Playing Oneself As If Another: Acting and Directing Strategies as Practical Approaches in Person-centred Health Care



PhD studies in Performance in Theatre and Music Drama, at the Academy of Music and Drama & Gothenburg Centre for Person-centred Care University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Rehearsal labs and focus discussion (19/ 10 – 2017) was a public presentation and publication as of the PhD study *Playing oneself as if another - Acting and directing strategies as practical approaches in person-centred health care*. This study is collaborative project co-financed by Gothenburg Centre for Person-centred Care (www.gpcc.gu.se) and Academy of Music and Drama (www.hsm.gu.se), University of Gothenburg. See below a description of the PhD project and main questions. The *Rehearsal lab and focus discussion* taking place on the 19/ 10 – 2017 in Gothenburg represented a public presentation and publication of step 3 in the main study described below.

Exploring co-creative partnerships within theatre and person-centred health and care practices

Interplay in a practical theatrical context builds on the actors ability to make her-/himself receptive to her/his fellow actors onstage. The actor needs to understand how s/he is affected by the onstage action, as well as how s/he is affecting the onstage action, when acting within the framework of the scripted role and/or the dramatic situation. This ability, or skill, which is trained during the actor's education, can also be used by a director as an asset in her/his preparatory work with analysing and interpreting a play-script. (Brattström 2015)

The PhD study develops a method for interpreting and analysing interaction between patients and professionals in clinical healthcare encounters. Audio recordings, taken during observation of a series of clinical health care encounters, are transcribed as theatrical scenes and serve as bases for analysis within the framework of the study. Central to the study and

process of analysis are the concepts of the ‘Magic if’ and the ‘Given Circumstances’ which are part of the system of acting techniques developed by Russian actor and theatre director Konstantin Stanislavski (1863-1938). The Stanislavski Method of Physical Action is elaborated in the context of person-centred health and care practice as a means to shed light on the phenomena of partnership, and partnership- creation.

Main study; questions, empirical data/material and analyses

In the main study audio recordings taken during observation of clinical health care encounters are transcribed. These transcripts are then taken through several steps of analysis and exploration that include:

(1) Interpretation of the transcripts as if they were scenes in a play, based on a director’s way of analysing and preparing a play script for a theatrical production.

(3) Transcribed health care encounters are explored and analysed in “rehearsal laboratories”. Four professional actors read and explore the transcribed encounters in a similar way as when in the “rehearsal room” working with scenes in a play. Through interplay between readings and discussions, in a co-creative process similar to a theatrical rehearsal, the actors and director explore the “role characters” possible motives, and use of interactional strategies (physical, verbal and mental actions). The aim is to explore possible preconditions to a partnership relation between the patient and the professional care provider in the transcribed encounters.

(2) Investigation into the concept of partnership and partnership-creation between patients and care providers. Persons with experience as patients and/or healthcare professionals meet in a workshop where the camera is used as a tool to generate images and discussions on partnership. To use the camera and the methods of filmmaking is applied as a way to bring forward another quality of data than if using interviews. Material generated by participants during the workshop as well as group discussions are documented for further analysis within the project.

Specific questions explored within the main study:

1. How do the patient and caregiver co-create the role of the patient when both are considered an active expert and partner in a healthcare encounter?
 - i. By what means (physical, verbal and mental actions) is the patient trying to position her/himself as an equal partner and expert in the healthcare process?
 - ii. By what means is the professional caregiver supporting the patient to position her/himself as an equal partner and expert in the healthcare process?

2. In what ways are the parties searching to overcome the obstacles or difficulties that arise in the situation and hamper the creation of a partnership-relation?
3. How is a "play-based approach" manifested, based on an exploration of the partnership process, in the interaction between patient and healthcare provider in the care meeting and in the person-centred conversation?

