

FEPTO Network Groups

University Cooperation Group



The University Cooperation FEPTO Network Group was founded and started from the idea that psychodrama practice and training should be linked with academic studies at universities. From 2010 to 2019 a yearly International Spring Academy (ISA) was successfully organized with a broad participation from university students and psychodrama trainees from many countries. Unfortunately, the 11th meeting 2020 was cancelled due to the restrictions of the corona pandemic. We hope, that we will be able to continue in 2021.

Introduction:

In FEPTO the focus of psychodrama is predominantly on psychotherapy training in private training institutes. However, in daily practice and in university studies like psychology, social pedagogy, philosophy, sociology, cultural studies etc. psychodrama can serve a broader professional field. Obviously, there is still a gap between practice of psychodrama and the way relevant questions of individuals, groups and society are raised and addressed at universities. The rich psychodrama theory and practice sometimes look strange to people who are used to academic culture. Therefore, The University Cooperation FEPTO Network Group looks for ways to gather psychodrama trainees and university students from different professional fields like counselling, supervision and training, social work, adult education, schools etc. in order to work and to learn from each other.

Furthermore, the International Spring Academy ISA is also an attempt to draw on students and trainees different cultural backgrounds and to focus on aspects of cross-cultural learning. Psychodrama with its rich repertoire of expressing, communicating and reflecting relevant issues of individuals, groups, and society can be a promising and rewarding approach for this aim.

Aims, procedures and settings:

The goals of this Spring Academy are intercultural exchange, research in action and training in psychodrama. Students of different countries study in action their personal change regarding their relationship with foreign people by working with psychodramatic methods in large and small groups settings.

The groups which are mixed regarding nationality and experience in psychodrama stay in the same group over the whole time. The supervisors (trainers) are moving from one group to the next and take care of the group cohesion and the choice of the group director and the processing.

Students from different academic fields of university studies can experience the richness of psychodrama. They learn how to use psychodramatic and sociometric tools to deal with culturally diverse groups. And last but not least they are able to improve their self-awareness and skills in cross-cultural encounters.

On the other hand, psychodrama can take advantage from diverse professional and cultural backgrounds of students. However, psychodramatists need to develop and learn how to adapt its language of action methods to be able to serve as a bridge between different professional and academic cultures. Advanced

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psychodrama trainees can learn and practice how

- to adapt the 'language' of psychodrama to a broader scope of personal, social or cultural relevant issues
- to direct sociodramatic, group- or protagonist-centred play in small groups
- to deal with the complexity of a multicultural and often a multilingual dynamic in a group.



International Spring Academy,
Novigrad/ Croatia

History:

The idea of an **University Cooperation FEPTO Network Group** was born 2009 in Ghent at the 17th annual meeting of FEPTO. In the open space of a "topic market" we announced our interest in 'university cooperation'. Several people joined this group and worked on ways and strategies to build and enhance contacts between private training institutes and universities. Theory and practice should be brought together to enrich both sides.

The experiences of psychodrama in Austria where the whole psychodrama psychotherapy training is carried out either in cooperation of a private institute with a university or as a university training programme itself taught us the advantages of this development. Official acceptance of the method on the one hand and the theoretical standard of training on the other hand increased a lot during those years. We wanted to inspire colleagues for this process at the Ghent meeting.

With Eva Fahlström as facilitator of our brain storming we decided after intensive group work that a first step could be a cooperation of those people who already work with psychodrama at universities.

Three people met after the group work. Johannes Krall from the University of Klagenfurt, Maurizio Gasseau from the University of Aosta and Jutta Fürst from the University of Innsbruck planned a first International Summer Academy in 2010. Unfortunately, the project seemed to fail because of organizational reasons. But during the 18th Annual Meeting of FEPTO in Kovačica Jasna Veljković and Vladimir Milošević jumped in, organized the meeting place in Kovačica and brought in their trainees and their expertise as trainers. In this moment the cooperation between universities and private institutes came into life.

After the first meeting in Kovačica in Serbia we moved in the subsequent years to Novigrad (Istria) and later on to Sveti Martin in Croatia. Vedran Korušić who is a psychodrama trainer from centar-psihodrama in Croatia helped to find beautiful places to work. Both places share a history of multi ethnic population and suit well to the goals of our meetings.

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We are glad that it is obviously a growing project. Since the first meeting Vlada Milošević was a stable column of our team. In the following years new trainers and trainees joined ISA. Hedva Novich from Israel, Horatiu Nil Albin from Romania, Leandra Perrotta, Maurizio Gasseau from Italy, Kirsti Sivola and Sisko Karinen from Finland, Valerie Monti Holland from the UK, and Vedran Korušić from Croatia.

New collaborations with private institutes and universities were established through the years. The University of Klagenfurt (Austria), the University of Innsbruck (Austria), the College for Academic Studies (Israel), the Università della Valle d'Aosta (Italy) worked together with the Institute for Psychodrama in Belgrade (Serbia), the Centre for psychodrama in Zagreb (Croatia), Helsinki Psychodrama Institute (Finland). Students and trainees from Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Austria, the UK, Hungary, Finland, Israel and Italy of different training level participated. The feedbacks of the participants showed how the trainees became inspired by the experiences they had during the meeting.

Next steps and reaching out for new partners:

It is still a challenge for us as trainers and supervisors to meet the expectations and adapt the method to the demands of the different levels of psychodrama experience. Some of the students who have nearly none experiences in psychodrama and group work are interested to learn more about cultural differences by using the method. Some want to work on difficult personal issues and some want to prove their competence as directors. The less experienced group has to cope with all the upcoming feelings, to struggle with a foreign language and with the integration of touching experiences. They would need a slow, safe and more rational oriented entrance to the world of psychodrama.

Unlike other meetings and conferences there is always a group of trainees of a psychodrama institute or group of students from a university coming accompanied by their trainer or university lecturer/ professor. During the meeting the trainers care for the own group and provide a kind of "homeland" for them. We learned that especially young people need to reflect the process in their own language after the group sessions.

This vivid learning process and the enthusiasm of the students animate us to meet again next year. Let us know if you want to participate with your trainees or students.

Looking forward to meeting you in one of our next ISA International Spring Academies.

Johannes Krall

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Jutta Fürst

Vladimir Milošević

Hedva Novich

Vedran Korušić

Valerie Monti Holland