

**Perevezentseva's "PSYrole" Method: A Psychological Treatment
Using "Planned Photographic Role-Images" for Increasing
Self-Understanding and Psychological Growth**

Background Theoretical Context:

"Life is theatre and people are actors there", said Shakespeare. Humans reflect many aspects of people from life's theatre. Sometimes life itself causes people to take on roles for which they are not ready yet, while other times they will give all to try themselves in a particular role.

While "role" is usually meant as an image created by an actor, people may also have many roles. Actors, as realizers of many roles, may play good or bad, making those who watch feel perhaps happy or disappointed. So it is in real life, also. Some roles we like; other roles we don't like.

As humans live in society with one another, it is possible to study the norms of their behavior through studying of their roles. "Role-playing" is a main activity of children in their pre-school years; it is a game, and much enjoyed. The central moment of such a game, is a role that the child tries on himself. He acts as an adult, in the role he tries for himself and identifies himself with. Just playing a role, connects it to the real world of the adult.

The most important "character moment" of a role, is that it is impossible to assume, without practical playing activity -- the role of knight, doctor, driver, or others, cannot be realized in the child's mind only, without real practical playing activity.

In adult life people are always playing roles too. And to play the role of a successful person, we need attributes of our positive image (expensive car, country-home, nice apartment, and so forth).

In interpersonal relations, a person is often playing one dominant role, one individual image most habituated for their environment ("I am a happy person", "I am a loser", "I am an optimist", etc.)

Changing of habitual image is very difficult, both for the person and for those people in his environment. For actors, their "theatrical character" in drama -- the type of roles they can play, will be changed as suitable for the data of the drama. For example, there are theatrical characters of the hero, the lover, the heavy lead, the reasoner, the fool, and so forth -- the more versatile the actor, the better variety of acting they can produce.

The more roles a person can play, the better adapted he is for life. In many ways, the process of personality development can be seen as an ongoing dynamic of "roles assimilation".

New role assimilation may have high value for people's ability to change. In psychotherapy, there is a relevant method of behavior-correction: "image-therapy". It is proposed to the person that they enter into a new image, to play a role, as in a performance.

In this, the responsibility function is carried out not by the person, but by his role -- which provides new models of behavior. The person should then act in a different way, depending upon his new role.

In spite of the "conditional" nature of such methods, its success was high, because the person had opportunity to release frustrated needs, if not in real life, at least in the process of this game. The socio-drama approach is widely known for greatly helping the interpretation of human actions. In considering life as drama, where each participant is playing specific roles, this playing gives not only psychotherapeutic, but also developmental, benefit.

New Effective Methodology:

"PSYrole" includes the complex blending of methods from image-therapy, phototherapy, and socio-drama approaches. Image-creation helps the person discover, and then create, personal images of success, which by help of clear and memorable images, will bring information to people around that person. Phototherapy is connected with the use of photos to help solve different psychological problems and to enhance a person's development and harmonization.

Description of Method:

The "*PSYrole*" method, created by Psychologist Olga Perevezentseva, is a complex of psychological methods that are using "planned images" for the goal of self-knowledge. The goal is actualization and playing of latent roles, enrichment of dramatic experience, and integration of images. For using this method, certain materials are needed: clothing selected for its ability to produce the desired image, masks, art materials to assist creation of the clothing, makeup, audio records, and related audio-visual techniques.

Description of Process:

1. Consultation with psychologist for definition of participant's goals. Development of a particular selected image, the role which the participant wants to create.

2. Using the materials to create the clothing needed for that image (including make-up, art-materials, music selection, and other attributes which may help the participant transform into the desired image.

3. Getting used to the role. Work with mirror - self-acceptance, playing of mini-performance, interaction with attributes. Within this individual work, the psychologist assists participant in choosing of image on basis of personal requests and personal characteristics of participant.

The new image should be captured by a photo camera. If possible, it is desirable to have the photo session happen in a photo studio, because the photo studio can be used as scene, as place for self-expression.

Playing of the role involves reflection of itself in different situations of real life. On this stage can also be involved different specialists from related professions; for example - specialists for acting techniques, musicians for playback of selected music, and so forth. Through their additional assistance, the participant can express himself deeper and more completely

4. Once the photos have been printed, a review of the photos and related discussion about them, is carried out between the psychologist and the participant.

Next, a photo album is created and discussed.

Conclusion:

This method can be used to work with people of different ages and levels of intellectual development. It may be used both with groups and individually.

One of the most efficient applications of this method is in working with children. Such a process of self-expression through imagery is connected directly with the strengthening of psychological health, and may also be considered as a significant psycho-prophylactic factor.

According to the *PSYrole* method, image is controlling the internal part of the person. Conflicts can thus be seen as misrepresentation of information. Inner-personal conflicts and other problems can break the image structure like a blot on a picture sketch.

The essence of this method is in creation and memorization of such roles (images) that will allow the person to improve self-understanding. For each person, this image will be unique. The psychologist helps to define the aims of images' creation, to open each image as much as possible, and to define connections between roles.

Thus, one of *PSYrole's* results may be helping the person actually define their own images and highlighting the most desirable or beneficial roles. It will allow that person to achieve maximum closeness with his life goals and single out what are desirable and not desirable roles to assist their moving forward and realizing their fuller life.

PSYrole method is especially effective for problems of self-appraisal, negative self-relationship, and increasing development of self-confidence, and assertiveness.