



Info

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3. VERSLAG VANUIT ALICANTE (M.MELOTTÉ)

Vanuit mijn werkopdracht als lector creativiteit, expressie, animatie en bewegingspedagoog aan de KHLim Hasselt, mocht ik op 5-6-7 maart 04, deelnemen aan het 8^{ste} congres: FESET (Association Européenne des Centres de Formation au travail Socio-Educatif) « Prevention of violence and socio-educational care work » aan de universiteit van Alicante, Spanje.

Zaterdagvoormiddag 6 maart gaf ik een workshop (4u)
ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE OF DEVELOPMENTAL MOVEMENT!
Developmental movement for children
as a way to prevent violent behaviour

Based on V. Sherborne's method and the philosophy
of human movement of R. Laban

Een introductie, aan 16 mensen (uit Spanje, België, Nederland, Frankrijk, Ierland, Denemarken, Noorwegen,) werd een boeiende sensitief- responsieve uitwisseling! Via praktijkervaringen, een korte power point presentatie en enkele videofragmentjes, werden de mensen aangesproken en enthousiast over de Veronica Sherborne bewegingspedagogiek en de bewegingsanalyse van Laban. Ze genoten van het contact bij de speelse oefeningen en bevestigden de stelling dat deze wijze van bewust worden van het lichaam, de ruimte en de anderen, preventief kan werken om geweld en agressief gedrag te voorkomen. Méér onderzoek op dit terrein zou wenselijk zijn! Naar aanleiding van het geslaagde congres werd me gevraagd een artikel (zie volgende blz.) te schrijven voor het 6^{de} European journal of social Education Lausanne.

Ons enthousiasme over het welslagen van het congres kreeg een flinke deuk toen 4 dagen later de terreuraanslagen te Madrid ons met afschuw vervulden. Toch is de schreeuw naar 'preventie bij geweld in de opvoeding' voor mij nog sterker geworden. Ik ben vast overtuigd dat de bewegingspedagogiek, die op een sensitieve responsieve wijze wordt aangebracht, een grote bijdrage levert naar een vredelievender samenleving.

Developmental movement for children as a way to prevent violent behaviour

Based on V. Sherborne's method and the philosophy
of human movement of R. Laban

Monique Melotte

Introduction

Developmental movement is fundamental to the development of the personality of all children, but particularly to children with special needs who have difficulties in relating to their own bodies and to other people. 'Development (of the personality)' means progressing towards freedom, independence and competence in relationships within the boundaries of our own talents and abilities. Developmental movement stimulates all aspects of personality that form the basis of learning and growth in every domain of development, such as security, self-confidence, self-assurance, ability, well-being and pleasurable experience of one's own capability. Consequently, our aim is to achieve an equal dialogue of movement between partners who take turns in guiding the exercises. This basic feeling of solidarity will lead to more respectful behaviour in general.

Purpose of developmental movement according to Sherborne

Sherborne discussed the importance of therapeutical movement for the treatment of persons who suffer from emotional and psychological problems. According to her findings therapeutical movement could contribute to the development of a feeling of self-respect and an ability to communicate and to relate to others. Movement gave the patients a chance to experience their body as a creative and expressive instrument. This helped them to become more settled and comfortable with themselves. As to communication she argued that dance and movement were excellent ways to communicate non-verbally and to become aware of others. Central to her theory was the development of mutual confidence. Sherborne said that the attitude of the therapist constituted the foremost guarantee in order to succeed in therapeutical movement. In other words, the therapist should possess the necessary emotional maturity to boost the patients' confidence in a humane and sympathetic way.

Laban's movement-analysis

This is the basis from which Sherborne draws up her exercise material.

Teachers need to be aware of *what parts of the body* are moving in *which directions in space* they are moving, and, most important, *how* the body is moving.

The basis of Sherborne's developmental movement and exercises

Sherborne's developmental movement is centred around children's two basic needs:

- develop self-awareness and spatial awareness: children need to feel comfortable in their own body, which can be stimulated through the use floor exercises. An improved body-awareness leads to a better control of movement, weight, balance and energy, which in turn leads to more confidence.
- develop awareness of others: children need to be able to form relationships.

Sherborne distinguishes three types of relationship play

In *caring or 'with' relationships* it is paramount that the carer gives the child a feeling of security and confidence.

In *'against relationships'* the child learns to control its physical strength. The child must be encouraged to be firm and determined.

Finally, in *'shared relationships'* cooperation is important. Here the child is encouraged to sensitively relate to others.

Parents and carers instinctively use many of these activities when they play and interact with children. This instinctive approach is reflected in our teaching method of sensitive-responsive interaction which stimulates children's trust, self-confidence and resilience.

Justification from practice: three tenets of Sherborne's developmental movement

1. Holistic vision: The child is treated as one person and not seen as torn apart by problems. Developmental movement emphasises a total approach.
2. Affective atmosphere: It is necessary to create an atmosphere of safety, security and positive encouragement in order to achieve a stage of independent exploring and learning as well as the experience of respect, acceptance and even the joy of one's own abilities.
3. Fundamental attitude or interaction of the carer: The carer is not demanding or restrictive but has to let him/herself guide sensitively and responsively by the capabilities and non-verbal expressions of the child. This sensitive and responsive attitude of the carer has to respond to the initiatives, reactions and emotional expression of the child. The carer hereby creates an atmosphere in which the child experiences security, acceptance, appreciation and success.

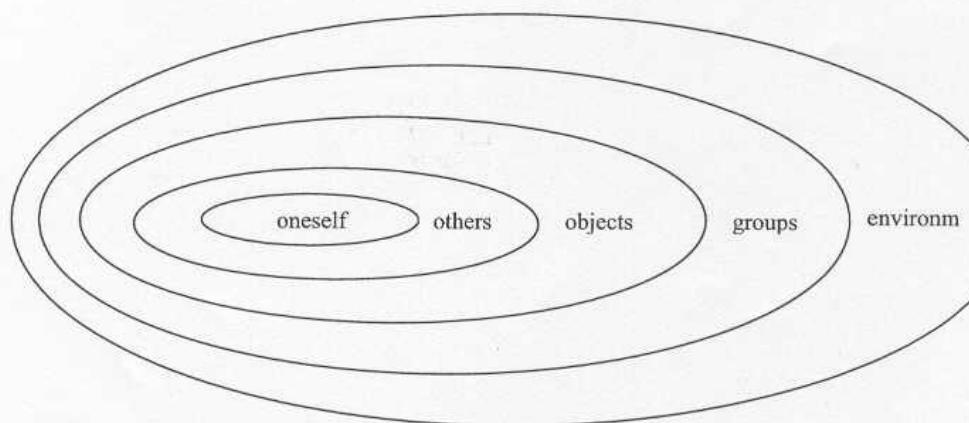
Confidence, trust and solidarity

Children or youngsters who display aggressive behaviour usually have a background of problematic education. While their living environment (family, relatives, leisure activities...) is often really shattered, the persons from this close environment are nevertheless important.

In 'Solidarity as an answer to de-lin-quence' Depuyt writes that people are conditioned by their relationship with the wider group of persons in their existence.

Depuyt outlines five dimensions of environment in a five-circles-model in order to illustrate the relation with the environment.

People develop relations with each other, others, objects, the environment, groups, society, and this in connection with the totality of nature, the complete existence.



In the exercises of the movement sessions the following aims are intended:

- To develop a fundamental attitude of solidarity that could result in a more respectful form of behaviour.
- To develop an awareness of belonging to a wider group and even to an enormous happening called life.

This basic feeling, this experience changes the attitude of a person in relation with his/her daily environment ('re-ligion' ... create new links, connections). Someone you feel close or answerable to will not harm you. In an environment in which you feel at home you will not commit vandalism. An object that is dear to you will not be damaged by you.

Through experience-orientated learning a fundamental attitude and a basic attitude of respect has to be developed. Guests are given a lot of recognition and attention instead of disapproval and reprimanding. This creates an atmosphere that is based on forging mutual positive relations. By looking at each other and making contact, conflicts disappear much quicker.

(see Depuydt, A.: *The development of a fundamental attitude of 'solidarity' as a measure and prevention of rude behaviour and petty criminality*. Symposium at Lummen, January 1996.)

Becoming aware of personal space

Limiting or demarcating space also receives special attention. Nijs speaks of "one's greater Body" and how, while being aware of it, one must learn to deal with borders and encounters.

This emphasises the importance of 'respect for personal space' and even the importance of 'respect for a certain restriction'. This may be understood as a way of 'sensitive coaching', in other words to offer security and create space for the time necessary.

A dialogue of movement and teamwork is created in the search for relations with others as one works away from one's personal space towards the partner, the group, the exterior, the greater entity. This performance of movement stimulates self-confidence, it builds trust.

Conclusion

Judging from the feedback one may conclude that developmental movement encourages people to increase their awareness of their own body and the space of others. This performance is very inviting and at the same time it offers the possibility to relate and communicate with others. An atmosphere of safety and security has to be created and one should find pleasure in bringing about respect and accepting one's own capabilities. Intense involvement and participation make it a very attractive experience... Developmental movement stimulates the 'somatic and emotional intelligence', it sharpens one's intuition and exercises the observation of the body language.

I can honestly say that Sherborne's developmental movement not only greatly influenced my own style as a therapist but also my whole behaviour in life. It truly causes one to become much more sensitive and responsive. One even spontaneously goes in search of a balance in guiding and letting go, in offering control and creating space, and one learns how to respectfully relate to others' personality.

During Mrs Patfoort's lecture "Education for peace and for non-violence" at the Feset congress in Alicante (Friday 5th March 04), I noticed that there exists a clear link between the model of Equivalency, or the E-model, on which non-violence is based, and the teaching method of Sherborne. The constant swapping of roles in leading and supporting as illustrated in the 'Major-minor model' brings about the equality of the 'Equivalency-model'. Both partners gain from the experience as they have much to give each other.

As far as fundamental attitude, interaction or method of guidance are concerned there exists a wide range of possible practices. One should realise that young carers, who play lovingly and concernedly, are really valuable assets. The way in which they leave a distance or come closer, or manifest a soft or hard approach does demand a certain level of maturity. One has to be able to let be without losing involvement. A good deal of sympathy, a sharp intuition and a big heart go a long way to assess how much time, patience and understanding are needed to fully let a person be him/herself and support that person on his/her way to independence and ability to form relations. Especially the use of a sensitive interaction is very important when stimulating confidence, self-confidence and resilience in children. This also implies that a skilful application of the sensitive-responsive interaction is a *sine qua non* to use the developmental movement according to Sherborne.

keywords: – safety – variation – positive feelings – shared experience – person centred – flexibility – creativity – trust and confidence – observation – eye contact – communication – success!

Selective reading list

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