

Expressive Arts Therapy Group for Immigrant Youth in Israel: A Parallel Process of Group and Societal Integration

Un Grupo de Arte Terapia Expresiva para Jóvenes Inmigrantes en Israel: Un Proceso Paralelo de Integración Grupal y Social



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"I hear an echo from inside. It tells of never-ending heartbreaks."

(Brady, 1995)

Abstract

The aim of the current paper is to describe participants' experiences and examine the effects of group therapy on self-esteem, self-expression and social skills among a group of immigrant children in Israel. The presented group illustrates the effectiveness of Art Therapy modality within that population, which is caught in a complex situation of both developmental and socio-cultural transition. Expressive Arts help the group members to address these difficulties; music, accompanied by play and arts, promotes mutual identification and empathy, and leads to group cohesion as a Creative Container.

Key words

Art Group Therapy; Preadolescents; Immigrants; Self-Expression; Changing Roles.

* The article is based on the writer's experience as a group conductor, working in a public program for this population; as well as on her reflections on counter-transference and the deep influence of Dr. Elizabeth Rohr's lectures and papers about migration on her as a human being and as a group therapist.

"Escucho un eco desde adentro. Habla de desamores interminables".

(Brady, 1995)

Resumen

El objetivo del presente trabajo es describir las experiencias de los participantes y examinar los efectos de la terapia grupal sobre la autoestima, la autoexpresión y las habilidades sociales entre un grupo de niños inmigrantes en Israel. El grupo presentado ilustra la efectividad de la modalidad de terapia de arte con esa población, que se ve atrapada en una situación compleja de transición tanto de desarrollo como sociocultural. Las artes expresivas ayudan a los miembros del grupo a abordar estas dificultades; La música, acompañada de juegos y arte, promueve la identificación mutua y la empatía, y conduce a la cohesión grupal como Contenedor Creativo.

Palabras clave

Terapia grupal de arte; Preadolescentes; Inmigrantes; Autoexpresión; Cambio de roles.

* El artículo se basa en la experiencia de la escritora como directora de grupo, trabajando en un programa público para esta población; así como en sus reflexiones sobre la contratransferencia y la profunda influencia de las conferencias y documentos de la Dra. Elizabeth Rohr sobre la migración en ella, como ser humano y como grupo.

Introduction

The purpose of the present study is to explore the effect of art and play group therapy on child immigrants in Israel, who exhibit relationship difficulties. This short group therapy, like many group therapies which I conduct, forms part of a Major Municipal Program which attempts to deal with distinct socio-economic difficulties faced by refugees and immigrants, old and new, and help them improve their lives in the country by connecting better with others, studying and developing their personal abilities.

I am an immigrant, as were my parents and grandparents. My ancestors were among the deportees from Spain, and my forebears passed through Lebanon, Iraq, England, and Brazil to Israel, sharing time with Rio and Washington. All members of my family searched for an opportunity to improve their living conditions when leaving their familiar surroundings.

On occasions, they suffered from incidents of hostility, prejudice and a sense of longing for what once *was or could be*. I personally found that what was really helpful in coping with the challenges of immigration was developing a deep sense of intimacy with a wide range of groups from different cultures; in turn, this helped me replace the feeling of *longing* with one of *belonging*. Expressive arts have been my passion, my safe container and my basic tool for working and enjoying life. For the past 18 years I've been conducting expressive arts groups for children and adults in different countries.

Preadolescents develop their sense of identity as they broaden social parameters and explore who they are in the context of peer groups. It is important to work on this aspect of individuality during this developmental phase and the group therapy setting can help preadolescents explore different roles in an accepting, creative and connecting atmosphere. The use of expressive arts facilitates self-expression and the development of inner resources to cope with future difficulties (Sweeney & Homeyer, 1999). For those children, growing up in immigrant families, special difficulties include: connecting to a different culture, dealing with prejudice, social rejection and longing – as seen in the multicultural environment presently found in most countries (Berger, 1996). At school time those difficulties are present, on a day by day basis, and without helping interventions creates hollow effects, which affects families and communities in a negative way. The presented case study demonstrates how arts and play can help children in building procreative better connections, in a context of cultural diversity: not suppressing differences rather communicating through them in a positive way.

Literature Review

Due to the massive waves of immigration of the late 1990s, as well as of the past decade, life in many parts of the world takes place within *multicultural communities*. According to the World Migration Report (2000), over 150 million people have left their homeland over this period to escape aggression, racism, violence, natural disasters or human actions, or in search of work and education, independence and dignity.

Rohr (2018) writes that over the years, immigrants and refugees have posed a challenge to society as well as to the field of group therapy, which is required to be sensitive to their situation. Berger (1996) cites numerous researchers who have reported on the effectiveness of Group Therapy in emotional work around the issue of immigration, despite various difficulties related to treatment, adjustment and group settings.

Israel applies the Law of Return, which grants all Jews and people of Jewish descent the right to citizenship. The Jewish population in Israel emigrated from many countries of origin. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, about 73% are Israeli-born while 18% are immigrants from North America and Europe and almost 9% are from Africa and Asia. Israel welcomed approximately 40,000 new immigrants during 2018.

Over the past 10 years, many migrant workers have moved to Israel from Africa, Asia and South America. While there are no precise figures, it is estimated that there are currently up to 203,000 migrants in the country, many of whom are illegal residents.

Group work has been recognized for its usefulness in working with immigrants (Berger, 1996; Furnham & Bochner, 1986) despite distinctive difficulties found in adapting it to the needs of particular groups of immigrants (for example: Halberstadt & Mandel, 1988). Group work is useful in treating preadolescents because of their general tendency to associate in groups (Landreth, 2002). However, there are not many papers on group therapy for preadolescent immigrants or first-generation populations. Expressive arts and play group therapy are powerful methods for helping preadolescent immigrants because they offer them opportunities to address their characteristic difficulties. Helplessness in pursuing self-initiative, shame, loneliness, exclusion and frustration are common among both preadolescents and immigrants, but are felt even more strongly by preadolescent immigrants (Landreth, Homeyer, Glover & Sweeney, 1996).

The expressive arts group therapy setting, enriched by art tools such as colors, costumes, and musical instruments, creates a *transitional space* (Winnicott, 1983) where children can choose among many options, “distinguish languages”, create a way to express themselves and connect to each other. During group playtime and art creation, the therapist facilitates and mirrors the child-therapist and child-to-child interactions, with the art within it (Liebman, 2004). In this way, children experience a safe, creative and stimulating environment, allowing them to develop self-regulation and self-initiative during interactions with other children. Gerry McNeilly (2006) emphasizes the great value of arts embodying hard experiences among group members (McNelly, 2006) - *acting in* in place of *acting out*. In addition, as Liebman mentioned (2004) group therapy enables people to develop a mature balance between giving and receiving, between dependence and self-sustaining connection to others. Preadolescents try and practice positive interactions, co-participation with other youngsters, self-awareness, and direct learning from the

group connections (Landreth, 2002; Sweeney, Baggerly & Ray, 2014).

As Diane Waller resumed, group therapy relates to the pre-adolescents needs and the art techniques facilitates the group processes; both modalities complement each other, being therapeutic and enjoyable at the same time (Waller, 1993). Hence, especially for immigrant/refugee children, this setting provides meaningful opportunities for experiencing and experimenting with group connections in the new society. The effectiveness of this combination will be explored in the presented case study.

Case study

The group to be discussed is an art and play group for children of different nationalities, which was carried out at a school in the center of Israel. This part of the city is populated by old and new immigrants, refugees and illegal work migrants, and consequently, is characterized by different cultures and religions. As might be expected, there are countless economic and social problems in this area.

This was a time-limited group, 24 meetings held over the course of one year, like most children's groups in this program. The participants were chosen by the school counselor on the basis of their social difficulties.

During this case study I will emphasize how music and play become a *Transcultural Language*, which helps children overcome difficulties in communication and creates fertile ground, a NEW LAND, a safe container, where they can undergo personal development with the group's help.

Six children of different ethnic origin participated in the group:

Dan: Moroccan (first generation in Israel)

Leo: Moroccan (first generation in Israel)

(These two children were cousins, and displayed a symbiotic relationship: always together, defending each other like "Siamese leaders").

Yan: Eritrean (first generation in Israel); his father had left the country. "The Silent": quiet, with sad face, very introspective.

Boris: Russian (first generation in Israel); with a large body structure; "the Strong guy."

Omer: mixed (Romanian + Iraqi, second generation in Israel); clever, curious, "the Geek".

Jonny: Israeli; physically small in size, *badly divorced* parents. He has brothers from a variety of families. In groups, he was easily influenced, constantly being "Dragged" by the dominants.

During the first meeting the children entered their *regular roles* - the stereotypical roles that were causing their social difficulties and impairing their ability to integrate into society and groups.

At the beginning of the second meeting, the school secretary suddenly entered our room and told me that I had to move to another room: to the computer room, which I had not yet seen. The two dominant children, Dan and Leo, ran forward first, entered the room and locked the door. In order to get to the designated room, we had to go through another room, a music room, and through a small, dusty, dark hallway, full of musical instruments (warehouse). There, I found myself in close proximity with four children, waiting for the other two to open the door. Boris, the "strongest", knocked hard on the door and Jonny encouraged him verbally. Omer, the "geek" and the curious, began exploring the place and rummaging through the objects, causing me to worry *that something would break*. Yan, "the sensitive and the oppressed", stood beside me, frozen, tears in his eyes. At that moment, I found myself lost in *a foreign country*, responsible for a group, alone, without my regular ART tools.

We finally entered and saw that our new room was beautiful and newly renovated, full of computers, but without the necessary conditions for the experiences I habitually used in play therapy: art and ball games.

At that meeting and in the two that followed, the children communicated in fixed positions/roles in the same format. There was a strong coalition between the Moroccan cousins. In these families, a "Hamula" (clan) type of attachment is common, with family enmeshment and concern for protecting the family honor - often expressed in outward aggression. Boris, of Russian origin, brought the stereotype of physical strength and *mafia* management to the group; he entered into an alliance with the cousins and repeatedly reminded the group who was "the strongest" - and thus became "the ruler". Yan, the son of foreigners from Eritrea who had trouble speaking Hebrew and indeed speaking at all, was constantly harassed by the trio and was in danger of becoming the scapegoat. At every opportunity the trio mentioned that Yan "did not know how to speak, came from the jungle and cheated at games". Yan kept silent and tearful. Jonny followed the "power rule": laughed at their jokes, voted for the games the strong trio offered - even when he did not understand what was going on. Omer, the hyperactive boy, kept reaching out "among the countries" in the group, detached, searching for *treasures* in the room.

I admit it, I was worried about the strangeness I felt in the room, which affected my ability to introduce the art and playing experiences I knew could help on these occasions—and which I could not use because of the new “fancy” setting imposed on me by “the Government”. The children wanted to use computers, and I had to prohibit it, afraid that something would break. I was so concerned about the school administration during the first three sessions, that I could not help the group develop a *third language* in the room, through which the children could better communicate, and dismantle their stereotypical roles. In those three sessions, which included the unexpected transition to the refurbished computer room, I insisted on preserving the structure I had planned for the meetings and the activities I had set up in advance to create group cohesion. Because of the change in the setting—“we were suddenly like immigrants in a foreign country” - the activities also became gentler; unfortunately, I found it difficult to see that they were not compatible with the social situation in the group which was full of aggression. For example, a ball circle game, in which the children were supposed to share information about themselves while throwing the ball – and thus discover things they had in common despite their differing origins – proved to be unproductive. Instead of a ball we used a soft pillow because I was afraid of damaging one of the computers. The outcome was unfortunate; because of the strength of the throws, the pillow exploded. The *trio* of dominant and aggressive children took the opportunity to accuse Yan of causing the damage and demanded that he clean the mess. I had to interfere in an “educational way” and together we cleaned up.

In another experience, I asked everyone in the group to prepare a *business card* that expressed something special about themselves to the group. Since I was afraid to use wet materials that might stain the floor, I brought only crayons and colored pencils. The art tools were too hard and broke into pieces when the children painted forcefully; as a result, the art tools became *war instruments* which the children threw at each other. The climax was terrible: Yan tried to collect the pieces in a bag he had brought with him, pleased with himself, but within seconds, the cousins accused him of *stealing* and ordered the group to attack *the enemy*, Yan, who stood in the middle, defenseless.

The other children found a hiding place behind chairs, and collected paper balls. The so-called “game” that developed from the art activity, quickly became very aggressive, and also confusing. Laughter mixed with shouting, colors and papers flying, children running, and a conductor who insisted on trying to understand and had trouble recognizing the group’s needs. The ensuing

picture of the room - with one child in the middle, who had previously laughed and enjoyed the experience, and was now being attacked by others - awoke in me the protective *lioness mother* and the *lion father* who makes order. Like a lion, I *roared* that they should stop and stand in a circle next to me. My sudden change of demeanor caused everyone to freeze; they immediately fell silent. Yan started crying. I explained that we could not continue like this, attacking each other and the place, causing this destructive process; this was not the purpose of our meetings. I repeated the primary task of our group: *to meet and communicate well, despite any differences, connecting, playing and enjoy being together*. The “mafia” (trio) began to blame the school regulations; I silenced everyone and invited them to practice mindfulness, breathing together, just before the school bell rang. I ask them to think about it before our next meeting.

Afterwards, I felt bad about myself; I knew deep inside, that the way to live in peace with diversity should not be through terror.

Yan did not come to the fourth meeting, and there was a tense atmosphere in the group. I felt guilty that I *had killed innocents* on the way to defend and save the *group’s identity*. I was afraid that the “mafia” had turned Yan into a scapegoat, and that the other children had been dragged in as well. Earlier in the meeting, the participants played “Killer and Detectives”- a game in which one of the participants becomes a hidden “killer” (by blinking discretely to other members) while the group has to try to discover and expose him. This activity requires different skills: observing others eyes, understanding body language, and speed; group cooperation is a key success factor in order to enjoy the game. But all that did not happen at that time; rather, the opposite. A sharp conflict over culture and power issues had developed between the cousins and Boris, the strong boy. Boris and the *enmeshed* cousins fought hard, prejudice and stereotypical sentences about their origins were said; Russians were described as ‘a Mafia community’ and Moroccans as ‘original thieves’. Once again, I was required to make an effort to restrain the group and prevent a physical struggle; and again, we finished the session with soothing breathing. I felt that the children were stuck in the process.

Yan came back on the fifth meeting, when the situation in the group was difficult. He said that the teacher had forced him to attend and it was not something he wanted. The children became angry, called him *a traitor* and an *informant* and told him not to come back. An aggressive conversation developed with accusations being flung by everyone. Jonny moved

from one position to another, insecure and vague. Yan spoke a little without making eye contact with the group, and in a quiet but hard voice. Boris announced that he wanted Leo to leave because he had cursed his, Boris's, father. From that moment on, a loud quarrel began, accompanied by verbal aggression, as Dan came forward to protect his cousin: *No one will get rid of LEO! Over my dead body!* He stood up and shouted. I tried to calm them down; reminding the children of the rules we had created in the first meeting, about expressing ourselves with respect, and emphasizing the need to try to talk about our conflicts. Meanwhile, Omer stepped aside, and despite the fact that I had forbidden the children to touch the computers, put on a *QUEEN (the music group)* song, turning up the volume to high:

**WE ALL WE WILL ROCK IT
YOU HAVE MUD ON YOUR FACE
YOU ARE A BIG DISGRACE
YOUR EYES GONNA MAKE SOME PEACE SOME DAY**

This turned out to be a song for their age group in a competition year earlier. The children ran to the monitor, asked to see the clip and sang together. Afterwards, Dan wanted to play *'We are the champions'*. I was afraid of the new tools; but I looked at the children, huddled together, smiling while listening to the songs, as if the notes were a *magic powder* that had turned them into a "group." Lonely children united around a **dream**, around **hope**: *"one day their eyes, now on the screen, would also bring peace to the world; like the song, they had mud on their faces ... but ... one day ... the good shining from their eyes would also bring about good..."* From that moment, I moved away from the "school guard" position, and away from the familiar and planned activities, and agreed that the children play songs in turn. At that meeting, the children started to cooperate and collaborate around the music choices, when taking their turn; they choose popular songs, which they were certain all would accept. As expected, this linking process was tinged with knocks and falls, as well as with unspoken caution in putting forward songs that were famous and would achieve consensus; for example, well-known Israeli video-clips on love and even about mothers. The first stage of group bonding had finally begun, albeit following a painful birth.

It was the beginning of a group process and an important stage; in the process of work on their immigration problems, they needed to feel safe in the *group's land*. In the next session, Omer chose a song by Michael Jackson recorded in slums in Brazil (the children knew I am Brazilian). The song begins with a boy shouting: "Michael, nobody really cares about us!"

Boris, matching the beat, began to make sounds with his tongue; he blushed, but the children encouraged him. Yan dared and tried body taps, and it turns out that he was really good at it. The children were enthusiastic. Dan improvised a darbuka; Leo, without any musical feeling, tried to do Samba steps, laughing at himself, while Jonny imitated him. Omer was the maestro, the DJ, in front of the computer, operating the clip. He was surprised by the success of his initiative; he began to dare more and his personal confidence grew.

Boris, gradually, moved from the position of the *bully leader* to a positive role, the *organizer*. Dan began to make more room for his musical talent, drumming and tapping; Leo began to imitate famous artists. Later on, with the help of the music and the clips, the two began a process of separation and differentiation. Jonny began looking for his authentic voice in the group; later, he started to draw *comics* with great talent.

From that moment, we all moved away from the familiar roles that had led to conflict and difficulties. As the container became stronger, the group also moved from the "universality mode" - which was necessary to create group security - to deeper layers of connections.

From this point onward, the children could work on their similarities and their differences as individuals, on what helped and what was destructive when 'creating roots' in a new group. The children connected through common themes such as longing, rights, rejection, poverty and immigration, but with different perspectives and emotions.

I moved away from the conservative and rigid position I had initially taken, apparently because of my own anxiety about feeling like a stranger in the "Land of Computers". I practiced flexibility, opened up and trusted to the *creativity* of the group; hence, I was able to utilize the resources offered by the *new land* we had reached. The experience with new tools, video-clips and computers enabled a new language to be developed in the room, a language with better communicative qualities for the children.

Music and play created a container with a sense of belonging, leading to group cohesion. The group became a "land" in which its members felt safe and relevant. The various skills of the participants were expressed, and a process of personal empowerment developed. At the end of the group process, at the final session, the children prepared a surprise for me and performed a dance to a Michael Jackson song, which had required them to meet, plan and train

together in their free time, without a facilitator's help.

Discussion

It is important to start this discussion section by an open processing of the author's counter-transference as a conductor and its impact on the group process. This is important because human beings are the fruit of distinct relationships from their past history and are impacted by their feelings, choices and behavior (Laplanche & Pontalis 1983) and also professionals bring that background into the work they do either consciously or unconsciously (Hopper, 2006; Nitsun, 2001). As an immigrant with my own personal family history of migration, I have many associations with these groups. In this group, initially, I felt trapped between two "countries": I did not know where I was going and there was no place to which I could return. I froze, it was my defense. I felt unsafe and lost, and sadness gripped me; later on, I understood that this was connected to my father's journey, escaping from Iraq to Israel. My ability to see what was going on around me was dulled and that influenced the first group meetings, which were *a bit chaotic*. My father could not get back to his country of origin and I will never forget his melancholy when sharing his stories. I think that just by conducting these groups I can better understand his feelings – a mixture of longing, frustration and release.

It was very hard for me to see and relate to the aggressiveness shown towards Yan and the pairing and triangular dominant connections in the group - which made inclusion and cohesiveness difficult. I felt irritated and angry, but I was unable to interfere until the participants crossed the *safety boundary* - as I felt insecure in the new place.

Foulkes described the conductor's position, contemporaneously inside and outside of the group as one of a 'participant observer' (Foulkes, 1991). Rohr (2014) commented that this position 'on the edge' is, furthermore, a position 'in between', as it does not allow purity or objectivity. It is by nature a critical perspective, impregnated with tension, fears, doubts, or irritations. I totally agree with her proposal that *irritations* even provide a great incentive for the therapist's self-reflection, understanding and comprehension within groups: here are my thoughts on it.

My "over-identification" with the "government" (school rules) led to difficulty in connecting to my personal skills and created obstacles to my normal tendency to use the resources available in the local environment when conducting groups outside my practice. I think my Brazilian origins, growing up under a dictatorial political regime, can explain this phenomenon. In the beginning,

I was too afraid of damaging the computers in my new and imposed setting and of being accused by the school of *destruction*; the moment that I opened up and incorporated the computers in the room as an Expressive Art tool for video-art and music, the group process also opened up.

As Rohr wrote (2018) refugees and migrants need considerable courage and strength, to survive these liminal and incohesive states of existence and, notwithstanding the obstacles, reach a safe place; but they also need a *Master of Ceremonies*. As Rohr argues (2018), nowadays this could be a social worker or a psychotherapist, somebody who can be a 'significant other', acting as a witness or a guide, offering support, knowledge and experience. Weinberg (2016) called it a '*secure presence in insecure times*.' I believe my role change helped the group see me as this "other".

When looking at the group process, we should remember that there is a fear that refugees and migrants could introduce incohesion into our society and that this might influence the dynamics inside our communities (Rohr, 2014). Hopper (2014) calls 'Incohesion: Aggregation and Massification', the fourth basic assumption. He also (2009) explains that any state of incohesion is bound to produce serious anxieties of annihilation. This, according to Hopper, is always accompanied by long periods of silence and non-communication, as well as avoidance of eye-contact. We see this in Yan's dynamic in the group at the conflictual beginning.

The minority, in a new and strange place, tends to become tense and enter into conflict with other minority groups. Rather than uniting and joining forces and resources, there is a clear tendency towards *scapegoating* in groups, throwing out *THE BAD* in order to save the group (Honig, 2015; Nitzun, 1996). Yan represented the bad, the Strange(r), in an already culturally-mixed society.

In this group, Omer, the 'geek', the curious and creative boy, saved the group from a member's exclusion and possible self-destruction, when he brought the new language to the group (Music). One person's shift in role within the group created role changes among the other members; they all started to dare and explore their artistic skills, even those stemming from their fantasies – tapping, dancing, etc. This process gradually led them to improve their self-esteem, self-acceptance and acceptance of others.

As Foulkes explained, the therapeutic process is developed by the group (1991) and one person's problems are the group's problems, and vice versa. Yan's difficulties and Omer's actions are part of the group as a whole.

Children's spontaneity tends to be promoted in groups and concomitantly their participation increases (Sweeney & Homeyer, 1999); the music tools in the room, combined with the safe atmosphere established by the conductor enhanced the group dynamics and freed the children to engage in new play behavior - Omer was the first to react.

The music resonated in both real and psychic ways, inside and outside, softening the group container and promoting new connections. At a later stage, it also promoted self-discovery and spontaneous gestures (Winnicott, 1983).

Omer chose a song which had historical meaning for the children as a team. The music induced memories of mutual togetherness and common history. Freud described it as induction of feelings by sympathetic primitive processes (Freud, 1921). These aspects turned the group as a whole into a positive unit, showing mutual care, acceptance and recognition.

Vicarious learning and catharsis can occur in any group setting; however, since Arts and Music are primary languages, before spoken ones (Noy, 1999), they stimulate intra-psychic mechanisms and offer more ways for self-expression. Alongside it, children observe emotional and behavioral expressions of others and learn alternative bias to self-expression; we can see these in the presented group.

It is important for an individual to connect to his/her personal inner forces and cultural skills in order to connect to others; these abilities can help in any situation and are carried with the individual everywhere he/she goes. Arts (music, dancing, drawings...) can be a positive resource for connecting through differences – as we saw when the boys tried different hobbies and forms of self-expression.

Conclusions

Group therapy can provide important opportunities for anchoring children to the world of reality: as seen, the group is a tangible microcosm of society. As described by several Children Groups Conductors (Landreth, Homeyer, Glover & Sweeney, 1996; Baggerly & Parker, 2005), Group Art and Play Therapy can be also be an effective vehicle for providing social and emotional

help to immigrant preadolescents; it enables them to address issues of identity, affiliation, loss and self-control; follow social rules; accept self-appearance, accept others and improve self-confidence.

When acclimatizing to a new place, there is often a need which is also an opportunity to shed old defenses that are no longer useful; there is also an opportunity to develop new skills and enhance other areas of personal development.

Culture is ethnocentric by nature. Culture separates people and makes them entrench themselves within the familiar group when assimilating into new ones. In order to connect, communicate, learn, and create something better in our world, we must think and talk *beyond culture*, trans-passing cultural obstacles, learning and growing in order to explore the beauty and benefits of diversity.

Once a safe place is created, there is a need for creativity and flexibility in the search for a "new language" and useful channels of communication in order to overcome conflicts between "different countries" and connect to a "new land".

Rohr (2018) cited various educational requirements mentioned by Schaich that I also believe are essential in a multi-cultural society (Schaich, 2017):

Diversity: to be aware of cultural and social diversity, there are many different ways to deal with one's existence, with love, life and its vicissitudes, in any given society.

Cross cultural and power relationships: to be aware of the effects of social exclusion and inclusion and of power relationships in dealing with migrants and refugees.

A second language: is needed to help open up new ways of perceiving and understanding the world and to connect to people who surround us.

The use of art activities, in this case music and play, (Honig, 2015) encourages safer and more satisfying interactions among the group members. As we saw in the case study, the self-creative process awakened during the therapy also continued afterwards, providing each of the participants with internal resources based on a higher sense of self-esteem and hope that they could interact in positive ways within the multi-cultural society (Honig, 2017).

This challenge requires us, therapists and educators involved in group work, to look inside us, as well as into the groups with which we affiliate, and examine whether there is sufficient multicultural sensitivity and reflection in our thinking, our work, and our environment.

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