

Dramatherapy Stories

Queen of Sheba

Mrs A was a lady in her seventies, a true cockney who had lived in New Zealand fifty years. She was bright, cheeky, funny and loved her work as a nurse.

She always sat quietly and rarely took part. Staff tried really hard to involve her but felt that her deafness was isolating her. They worked at communicating with her but she was still reluctant to interact in any way.

When the dramatherapy sessions started she took a back seat. She would smile but not join in unless directly approached. It was decided to write everything down so that people had all the information in front of them. This would enable those with hearing loss to be clear on what was happening and act as a memory prompt if needed.

As the sessions progressed, she became much more involved. She would greet or smile at the dramatherapist. When the chance came to play a role she took it. She was thrilled when she decided on the Queen of Sheba and demanded a crown to wear. Once on, her whole bearing changed. She became regal in posture and speech. She decided to go on her "Royal Train". The man sitting next to her had tried to talk to her without much success. Now she said he had to be her servant. She told him to go and get her a ticket. When asked for some money she said "Don't be daft. I don't carry money. I'm the fucking Queen of Sheba".

She took over the narrative and went on the train - the driver was told he could leave when she gave him permission - and graciously waved to all as the group made steam train noises to get the trip underway.

Haka

Mr B is Pacifica and had worked in the Public Service for many years. He had considerable difficulty walking, leaning heavily on a stick, someone supporting him. Despite memory issues, he had many interesting ideas and stories of work life. A leader in his community, he was cared for by his family.

He took part but only in a very quiet way. He always seemed interested and if he did take part had a wonderful creative streak and sense of fun.

He began to take more of a lead role. Things came to an amazing climax. At the end of a story he had created around him being a doctor saving the life of a mother and baby in a storm he announced he wanted to celebrate what we were all doing. He rose to his feet and without his stick or any other help performed a haka learned in his island childhood. The power and the emotion in the delivery moved everyone.

Dramatherapy is an internationally recognised diagnostic and treatment model. Qualified dramatherapists are employed to work with a wide variety of people and issues. Ranging from people with a DSM IV diagnosis, to those suffering personal issues (including self esteem issues) By analysing a person's behaviour in Dramatherapy, the therapist can diagnose the issues which face the client, and put a treatment plan in place to address these.

Drawing upon all theatrical genres, Dramatherapy is a wide and varied medium.

In Dramatherapy, clients experience different feelings and emotions by acting out situations.

They can experiment with feelings i.e. make them more or less intense. Forms of acting are:

improvisation; working with scripts, myths and fable; role-play; making up stories and situations; or using real life stories. For more info go to www.dramatherapy.co.nz