

Discovering the self through drama and movement: the sesame approach

Pearson, J., & Al. (2006). *Discovering the self through drama and movement: the Sesame approach*. London: Jessica Kingley

Reviewed by Jakub Vávra

As the title suggests the book is focused on dramatherapy and movement through the point of view of Sesame approach. This specific approach is dedicated to London institute founded by Marian Lindkvist who was the founder of the Sesame approach. This is dedicated to her even though she is not the author or co-author of this book. Clearly the main reason of this book is to introduce the specific approach and the roots based on Laban Mastery of Movement, Slade's Child drama and Jung's Analytical psychology. This mixture of the approaches builds the base for specific drama-therapy approach which is approved by clinical research and long-term practice.

The specific format of the book, which does not have the main author but "only" an editor, explores approaches from psychotherapy, drama, myths, fairytales and much more. The book has been edited by Jenny Pearson and almost each chapter was written by a different author. The whole book is dedicated to Marian Lindkvist, called familiarly Billy. This specific approach to write a book is examined and explored at the beginning of the book by Anthony Stevens in *Foreword*. Stevens talks about the power of the story and the myths and Freud's talking treatment transformed into the drama and body experience.

The chapters are selected and sorted as kind of a story which tells how the Sesame approach was developed. The book is divided into two main parts. The first part is named *Mainly Theory* and places the basis for the second part *Mainly Practice*. Let's look at the parts a little bit closer.

The first main part called "*Part 1: Mainly Theory*" has 14 chapters written by various authors. The chapters are discovering the theme of body, embodiment, and activation of body for dramatherapeutic work. The sections and chapters are dedicated to symbols, Jung and discovering the inner stories connected to our lives. A special chapter, which we want to mention, is Chapter 6 *Drama as Therapy Some Basic principles*. In this chapter authors briefly explain principles of dramatherapy as

a therapeutic discipline and specifics of the Sesame Approach in relation to drama therapy. The chapter also explains how to use an improvisation, how to lead a group and a role of a mask in drama therapy. Chapter 7 describes movement in conception of Marian Lindkvist. Here we can see the connections with following chapters focused on Laban's theory of movement and "body language". Following chapters are dedicated to Peter Slade's Child drama, rituals and at the end of this first part there are Circus skills in relation to drama and drama therapy.

The second main part called "*Part 2: Mainly Practice*" has 16 chapters also written by a number of authors. This part is dedicated to the use of dramatherapy in different treatments. We can mention the psychiatric hospitals, mental health centers, forensic psychiatry and many others. This part is so complex and different in every chapter that reviewing is quite a challenging step. The most valuable aspect for the reader is a different point of view and direct experiences as well as a dedication for practice. By the language of drama this part concludes a treasure in form of concrete steps, description of building group steps and challenging clients and situations.

The language of the book uses advanced English, however, with some patience everybody can read this book. Even though the book *Discovering the Self through Drama and Movement* is written by many authors, the editor of the book J. Pearson did a great job in unification of the language of every chapter with the emphasis of authors' originality. What I personally miss as a reader and drama therapist is stronger accent or dedication on the research or some recommendation to what is missing and what should be done.

Overall, I have to say that this book inspired me in many ways. For me as a reviewer and dramatherapist the book brought me clearer view how the Sesame approach works and what are the pillars of this specific approach. Dedication to movement, dancing and clown part in the approach showed me new perspectives about working with groups of clients. I can warmly recommend this book which seems to be a fresh impetus to Czech dramatherapists.