

# The North American Drama Therapy Association Western Region Presents: Actualization: Embracing Fulfillments in Drama Therapy Los Angeles Symposium

**Location:** Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness, Inc., 2222 Laverna Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90041

**Date:** Saturday-Sunday, August 24th-25th

**Continuing Education Units:** Registration and attendance are required to obtain CEs and will be recorded. Please note the type of CEs offered with each workshop (RDT, RDT CHED, NBCC). North American Drama Therapy Association (NADTA) has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 6819.



## Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to learn about trends and current approaches in drama therapy theory and practice
- Participants will be able to expand the diversity of drama therapy approaches in their practice
- Participants will be able to gain knowledge and confidence to widen the diversity of populations that they can practice drama therapy with
- Participants will be able to incorporate a social justice lens in their drama therapy approach
- Participants will be able to strengthen their understanding of their current skills and areas in need of further growth

## Saturday, August 24th (Day 1)

Session Times	Workshop	Presenter(s)	Room	CE Credits
8-9 AM	<b>Registration and Networking</b>  Attendees can check in to the symposium, claim their symposium materials, have their questions answered, socialize with their fellow attendees, and get complimentary breakfast items.		Auditorium	
9-10:15 AM	<b>Opening Ceremony Improv Jam</b>  This opening ceremony will provide a community welcome and introduction to the Bay Area symposium. Community building opening rituals will be offered to cultivate connectivity and comradery amongst all symposium attendees. Improv games will be offered to the group to generate spontaneity and freedom and find a sense of “play” in the drama therapy work. Attendees will work collaboratively to identify exploratory goals and themes for the symposium. Information will be provided on navigating the workshop locations and the flow of the symposium.		Auditorium (All Conference Event)	

<p>10:30 AM-12 PM</p>	<p><b>Changing Perspectives: Leveraging Improvisation and Spontaneity when Faced with Reluctance</b></p> <p>Spontaneity and improvisation, two pillars of drama therapy, will be explored and engaged in a variety of contexts. While much of our training as drama therapists happens alongside like-minded and similarly theater-y folks, a clinical setting promises a very different milieu. Reluctant adolescents, older adults with physical limitations, and those experiencing body dysmorphia and disconnection require creative arts /experiential therapists to dig deep, stay present, and think fast on our feet. This session invites participants to consider what happens when planning and expectations fly out the window.</p> <p>Participants will engage with the Viewpoints as a warm-up activity, role-play exercises to demonstrate key concepts, and will have an opportunity to process and provide insights. The essential question, “Who and what is in the room right now?” will act as a touchstone throughout the session. Open to people of all abilities; no previous actor training required.</p>	<p>Alexis Poledouris, MFA, RDT</p>	<p>Dining Room</p>	<p>1.5 Hours- RDT, NBCC</p>
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<p>10:30 AM-12 PM</p>	<p><b>More Than the Sick Role- Dance/Movement Therapy Approach</b></p> <p>Candy will share some of her experiences working with Cancer patients in Hong Kong through the lens of Dance/Movement Therapy. Participants will also experience an activity that was led for the clients regarding ‘leaving a legacy’ and discuss how the emphasis on movement and bodywork is important in Drama Therapy.</p>	<p>Hang Yin “Candy “ Lo, MA, BC-DMT, RDT/BCT, CCLS, CT, NCC</p>	<p>Auditorium</p>	<p>1.5 Hours- RDT, NBCC</p>
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12 PM-1 PM	<b>Lunch</b>			
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1-4 PM	<p><b>Beyond Shame: A Dramatic Movement to Radical Empowerment</b></p> <p>Shame has been well-studied as a significant inhibitor of growth. Shame often becomes internalized into one's core concept, taking hold of our self-narratives, at times convincing us that we are unworthy of change and joy and deserve to be punished for our past actions. Using the Radical Empowerment model, Ryan Lisman, a Shame-Informed Treatment Specialist, will provide participants with dramatic tools for externalizing deep-rooted feelings and narratives of shame and cultivating radical mindset shifts from past faults to current feelings of redemption, forgiveness, and empowerment. Participants will be provided with an array of interventions designed to meet their clients at various stages of their journey through shame, with frequent shame experiences and narratives being explored as examples. Specific focus will be provided on approaches to working with shame derived from being ostracized, othered, and discriminated against for clients of marginalized identities. Participants will leave with inspiration and confidence to incorporate radical empowerment principles into their clinical work.</p>	Ryan Lisman, MA, RDT, LPCC, PsyD Candidate	Auditorium	3 CE Hours-RDT, NBCC
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<p>1-4 PM</p>	<p><b>Family, Art, and Storytelling at Home</b></p> <p>Crossing borders can be confronting and generate toxic stress related to immigration, poverty, discrimination, lack of services, past trauma, or language difficulties. Sometimes borders become barriers inside of the family relationships when there is no time to create a safe space for acceptance. In the context of the Covid, this factor could have generated family violence. The World Health Organization (WHO) proposes to "prevent violence by fostering safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents and caregivers."</p> <p>Parc-Extension Youth Organisation (PEYO) has offered for over thirty years an intervention program based on the use of art and storytelling in schools located in culturally diverse neighborhoods. This program had positive impacts on the reduction of anxiety. In response to the risk of violence, PEYO adapted the Art and Storytelling program to the home environment to reduce family anxiety in the context of intervention research. While respecting family values and dynamics, a series of eight workshops based on play, stories, and creative expression activities encouraged the exploration of desires challenges, life knowledge, and the various spheres in the daily life of immigrants. In a space focused on acceptance and play, family members reinforced their relationships, developed resilience, and built hope. The presentation of the Art and Storytelling intervention will be an experiential adventure of playing a tale. A short video of a workshop with an immigrant family will also be presented and the significant learnings of a 3-year research will be discussed.</p>	<p>Anabelle Segovia, MA</p>		<p>3 CE Hours- RDT CHED, NBCC</p>
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4-5 PM	<p><b>Western Region Meeting</b></p> <p>All attendees are invited to engage in this community dialogue and information session on the current state of the NADTA western region and what's on the horizon for the community. Attendees are encouraged to prepare questions and recommendations to share in the open dialogue portion of the meeting.</p>	Ryan Lisman, MA, RDT, LPCC, PsyD Candidate	Auditorium (All Conference Event)	
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5-6 PM	<b>Dinner</b>			
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6-8 PM	<b>Happily Ever After- One Woman's Journey To Find A True Love</b>  Award-winning actor Diana Elizabeth Jordan skillfully blends storytelling and standup dramedy as we follow her hilarious, heartbreaking and hopeful journey to find her "prince charming" and live happily ever after, just like the princesses she used to read about when she was a little girl. A journey Diana found challenging at times after all she didn't have a fairy godmother or talking mirror to give her advice. Diana also feared her disability (cerebral palsy which mildly affects her speech and gait) made her less lovable until the day she discovered a true love was closer than she thought. The performance will be followed by a Q&A where Diana will share her creation process, her self-revelatory discoveries, and the therapeutic benefits of creating a solo show. Diana will provide recommendations and guidance to the process of using drama therapy to create and perform self-revelatory performances. She will help participants cultivate self-confidence and courage in sharing their wonderful stories.	Diana Elizabeth Jordan, MFA	Auditorium	2 CE Hours- RDT CHED
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6-8:30 PM	<b>Nocturne- Healing Grief and Guilt Through Devised Therapeutic Theatre</b>  This workshop will use the text of <i>Nocturne</i> by Adam Rapp, which is a one-person show about a 32-year-old man living in isolation, guilt, and grief after accidentally killing his younger sister with a car malfunction when he was 17. Ryan Lisman produced and performed this play in 2023, and he will perform the first scene of <i>Nocturne</i> . All attendees will then work collaboratively to devise a therapeutic theatre piece in response, identifying ways to communicate themes of healing, redemption, and forgiveness through drama. This workshop intends to provide a foundation for using transformative theatrical performance methods with clients, identify strategies for healthy and equitable collaboration through the creative process, and explore how to synthesize the theatrical work into applied clinical growth.	Ryan Lisman, MA, LPCC, RDT, PsyD Candidate		2.5 CE Hours- RDT, NBCC
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## Sunday, August 25th (Day 2)

8-9 AM	<b>Registration</b>  Attendees can check in to the symposium, claim their symposium materials, have their questions answered, socialize with their fellow attendees, and get complimentary breakfast items.		Auditorium	
9 AM-12 PM	<b>Fighting the Waves of Hermeneutical Injustice</b>  What exactly is hermeneutical injustice? And how do we fight it? This workshop begins with a presentation about what it takes to be given entry into the academic realm of shared meaning, especially for those who belong to marginalized communities and specifically in moments of managing crisis. Key concepts at play will be rooted in Vietnamese cultural healing traditions, feminist philosophy, liberation psychology, and disability justice. This theme of radical knowledge construction will then find its way into embodiment and some rebellious fun. Participants will have a chance to strategize different ways of fighting hermeneutical injustice. Be forewarned, during the experiential portion, there is a high risk of being confronted with very cheesy theater games or perhaps even a Developmental Transformations (DvT) group.	Jaq Victor, MA, LMFT, RDT	Auditorium	3 CE Hours- RDT CHED, NBCC

<p>9-10:30 AM</p>	<p><b>Playing Through Transitions: Using Role Theory to Explore the Space Between Who I Am and Who I Want To Be</b></p> <p>Through pair and group experiential work, we will create, explore, and share stories of existing in the spaces in between “Who I Am” and “Who I Want To Be.” Participants will use Landy’s Role Theory and Method to process and engage with moments of transition from their personal or professional lives. Co-led by drama therapist Danielle Levanas and marriage and family therapist Morgan Dixon, we will use narrative, embodied, and creative forms to explore the concept of what self-actualization looks like, and then consider what fears might come up along the journey toward being fulfilled.</p>	<p>Danielle Levanas, MA, LCAT, RDT/BCT Morgan Dixon, MA, LMFT</p>	<p>Dining Room</p>	<p>1.5 CE Hours- RDT, NBCC</p>
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<p>10:30 AM-12 PM</p>	<p><b>Narradrama with Incarcerated Students</b></p> <p>This workshop explores the use of a Narradrama approach in a prison classroom to foster creative expression and resilience, aligned with principles of abolitionism and transformative justice. Participants will be introduced to the existing literature provided by NADTA and the process of creating a recent play adapted from Anna Deavere Smith’s “Let Me Down Easy” in a Health Communication course. Narradrama techniques to honor values and relationships, and to help individuals reauthor their identities, enhance resilience, and explore power dynamics will be discussed. Through presentations and experiential exercises, participants will understand the importance of creative expression and critical theory in moving away from trauma-inducing environments towards restorative justice and healing.</p>	<p>Kamran Afary, PhD, RDT/BCT Christopher Calkins, BA, MA Candidate</p>	<p>Dining Room</p>	<p>1.5 CE Hours- RDT CHED, NBCC</p>
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12-1 PM	Lunch			
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1-4 PM	<p><b>Drama Therapy as Embodied Intervention for Internalized Oppression &amp; Queerphobia in LGBTQ+ Community</b></p> <p>Grace Walcott will show her film, River of Life LGBTQ+, and invite members of the audience to join her in engaging in some of the embodied techniques shown in the film. River of Life LGBTQ+ documents a drama therapy workshop with 13 diverse participants, unpacking queerphobia and celebrating LGBTQ+ evolution. These drama therapy techniques are useful for any group that is experiencing systemic oppression. Clinicians will learn ways to create a safe container that allows for vulnerability, the chance to alleviate pain, and creatively express rage outwards instead of internalizing it. A Q&amp;A will also be offered. All identities welcome.</p>	Grace Walcott, MA, P-RDT, AMFT	Auditorium	3 CE Hours-RDT, CHED, NBCC
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1-4 PM	<p><b>Renewal and Regeneration: Drama Therapy and Interactive Journaling for Individual and Community Resilience and Growth</b></p> <p>Drama therapy and active (guided) journaling are powerful tools for developing skills to manage stress, foster renewal, and promote regeneration. This workshop will address basic physiological, and safety needs as well as the importance of developing a practice of resilience building. Through reflection and creative imagination, participants will explore ways to nurture individual growth, enhance self-esteem, and support others in the community and beyond. The aim is to create a</p>	Cynthia Holloway Kelvin, PsyD, RDT/BCT, CPT	Dining Room	3 CE Hours-RDT, NBCC
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	<p>new type of actualization—one that supports our own wellbeing and aspirations along with those in our communities, helping us reach our collective potential. As well as active journaling</p> <p>Participants will engage in movement, role-playing, and other drama-based exercises.</p>			
<p>4:15-5:30 PM</p>	<p><b>Charting your Drama Therapy Course</b></p> <p>In this all-conference community experience, frequently occurring challenges in navigating the complex waters of the Drama Therapy profession will be processed and explored with dramatic action. Scenarios will be presented by participants and those witnessing will be able to provide recommendations through embodied role-playing, sharing “what they wish they had done in the past” and “what they would like to do in the future”. This workshop hopes to provide a creative and innovative educational tool to help prepare drama therapists at all levels for traversing the rigors, roadblocks, and joys of being a Drama Therapist.</p>	<p>Symposium Planning Committee</p>	<p>Auditorium (All Conference Event)</p>	<p>1.25 Hours-RDT, NBCC</p>
<p>5:30-6 PM</p>	<p><b>Closing Ceremony</b></p> <p>Celebrate the conclusion of the Los Angeles symposium with reflective dramatic exercises. Attendees will be invited to share themes and ideas they gained from the symposium and how they plan to incorporate them into their practice. The ceremony will end with a closing ritual to provide serenity and closure to the symposium experience.</p>		<p>Auditorium (All Conference Event)</p>	

6:15-7:30 PM	<b>Post-Symposium Processing Dinner</b>  An optional offering for those who want to gather for a meal and engage in a group processing of their symposium experience and provide recommendations for future western region events.		TBD	
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