The training and certification process in psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy is postgraduate learning and can take three (3) or more years to complete for practitioner certification. While some students seek certification other students seek advanced skill training for shorter periods of time for professional development, advanced skills, and personal growth.

Adult Learning Model

The training and certification process in psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy begins with a co-created relationship between the person in training and certified trainers. The Board operates on the principles of adult education learning experiences wherein the adult learner takes steps to inform him/herself of the requirements for certification and chooses trainers to meet those needs. Additionally, an adult learner is able to self-monitor progress, or lack of progress towards meeting those requirements and initiates meetings and takes all necessary actions to fulfill the goal of certification.

Because of the nature of adult learning, the practitioner trainees must demonstrate personal maturity and responsibility for their own needs to be met. In psychodrama, dual roles are a part of the training process because the TEP interacts with the trainee in the roles of: protagonist and auxiliary ego, as well as, teacher, advisor, supervisor, and evaluator. Dual roles are not prohibited under the Code of Ethics, but both the trainer and the trainee have the responsibility to guard against harm and to provide continual opportunities for processing any difficulties that arise.

Many who seek certification are educated and experienced in their fields and are seeking advanced education and skills in psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy. The adult learning model and the mentor/consultant relationship are used to maximize the co-creation between the participants and to avoid a hierarchical learning model.

Written Examination (Content)

Written examinations are similar to university doctoral comprehensive examinations. All questions are essay questions. Our website has a study guide and past CP exams to download that can help you prepare for the written examination.

The written examination consists of seven (7) areas of competency: 1) History, 2) Philosophy, 3) Methodology, 4) Sociometry, 5) Ethics, 6) Research/Evaluation and 7) Related Fields. CP candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge in the application of each of the areas to their clinical or educational practice.
**On-Site Examination**

The on-site examination may not be scheduled until after the candidate has completed the written examination. Candidates for CP are encouraged to schedule their on-site observations in their own groups. The on-site observation for a CP examines the candidate’s ability to direct a psychodrama session. While practitioner candidates are not always expected to conduct a classical psychodrama session, it is expected that all sessions will include a warm-up, action structure and closure. Additional information including guidelines for requesting and scheduling the on-site as well as the on-site evaluation forms are also available on our web site.

**SELECTING A TRAINER FOR PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION**

Only those individuals who are certified as trainers, educators, practitioners (TEPs) can serve as Primary Trainers for individuals seeking certification in psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy. The Board recommends that, if possible, trainees participate in training events from several trainers before choosing a primary trainer. The Board also recommends that trainees choose a primary trainer early in the training because at least half of the required 780 hours of training must be from the applicant's primary trainer.

Although only individuals certified as TEPs can serve as primary trainers, applicants for certification may credit up to 160 hours of their training from individuals who are certified as CPs and are formally admitted as PATs and certified trainer/educator/practitioners (TEPs) by Board of Examiners from other countries that have established formal reciprocity agreements with the American Board of Examiners.

In general, these guidelines have been specifically written to describe the Board's expectations of the trainer in relationship with a trainee who is not yet certified as a practitioner of psychodrama. While these guidelines have been written for the trainer, it is advised that trainees also familiarize themselves with the Board's expectations for trainers.

**TRAINER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

Many people begin the certification process by taking workshops with a variety of trainers, and then deciding to make a longer term commitment to learning psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy. It is the primary trainer who must guide them through this process. A certified primary trainer guides trainees through the certification process from beginning to end. The trainer informs the trainee of the requirements necessary for certification and informs the trainee that information about the certification application and examination process may be found on the website - www.psychodramacertification.org. The relationships between trainer and trainee generally fall within one of four categories:

- Primary Trainer
- Supervisor
- Secondary Trainer
- Adjunctive Trainer
Primary Trainer

Each applicant for certification must have a Primary Trainer. The Primary Trainer is a TEP who is responsible for closely working with the trainee to create, implement and evaluate each trainee's plan for acquiring knowledge, skills and abilities in psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy. In order for a trainee to be admitted to the certification process, that trainee must have a Primary Trainer who has provided a minimum of 390 hours of training to the trainee and is willing to endorse the trainee for certification.

During the first 100-200 hours of training, trainees are encouraged to experience a variety of trainers. It is suggested that trainees choose a Primary Trainer by the time 250 hours of training are completed. People choose Primary Trainers for a variety for reasons, ranging from national training reputation, training specialty, personality style, geographical access, and personal preference. This is a long-term (3 years or more) relationship, which includes a variety of roles over time, and thus, needs to be seriously undertaken by both parties.

Ideally, the Primary Trainer observes the trainee in a number of practice and training settings, including, but not limited to:

- On-going training groups
- Residential training
- Specialized skill application sessions

It is also expected that the Primary Trainer will witness the trainee in the roles of director, protagonist, processor, psychodrama demonstration leader, and a range of auxiliary roles, including double and antagonist.

Within the Primary Trainer role, the trainer serves several functions, including advisor, teacher, examination coach, and evaluator. It is also possible that the Primary Trainer may serve as the supervisor for the clinical practicum experience. The Primary Trainer also guides the trainee to choose a Secondary Trainer and to develop a Supervised Year of Practice.

Advisor

It is important that trainers take the advisory responsibility early. It is essential that each trainer regularly and routinely inform their work-shop participants of the standards and requirements for certification. When a trainee has completed more than 80 hours of professional training, it is the trainer's responsibility to clarify the requirements for training and the process of certification to each trainee.

The Primary Trainer offers information, and direction and jointly devises an individualized plan for meeting the requirements for certification. The trainer explains the differences between training, supervision, and practice of psychodrama, and how each component is a necessary part of the training model in psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy. It is also the responsibility of the Primary Trainer to explain the differences between personal growth workshops and psychodrama training.
Teacher

The trainer's main responsibility as a teacher is to provide competent instruction, demonstration, and applied practice of the philosophy, history, theory, and methods of psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy. The trainer is responsible for providing training from the introductory to advanced levels of skill application. Additionally, the Primary Trainer must prepare the trainee to take the written and on-site examination.

When a Primary Trainer chooses not to conduct workshops on given areas of required knowledge and practice (e.g. sociometry, ethics, research, etc.) or lacks expertise in these areas, the Primary Trainer must ensure the trainee's participation in the required training from adjunct trainers.

Examination Coach

The Board expects that the Primary Trainer will prepare the trainee for the examination process throughout the training process. However, in the final stages, the Primary Trainer will assist the trainee in the preparation and submission of application materials, as well as providing opportunities for study sessions, and/or mock examination simulations. If the trainee fails either examination, the Primary Trainer has the responsibility to identify and co-create a corrective plan of action to supplement areas of noted deficiencies.

Evaluator

The Primary Trainer is responsible for regularly and routinely evaluating the trainee's performance towards the goal of certification. The trainer must provide concrete evaluation of the trainee's progress, or lack of progress in completing the individualized plan for training. The Primary Trainer must provide written documentation of areas of weakness and suggestions for improvement, when progress is unsatisfactory or slower than anticipated.

Supervised Year of Practice

Each applicant must complete a supervised year of practice applying the theory and methods of psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy. The trainee must conduct 80 psychodrama sessions, while receiving 40 hours of supervision. The Primary Trainer has the responsibility to help the student design this practicum to meet professional needs and interests. The Primary Trainer may, but is not required, to take the role of supervisor for the trainee's practicum experience. When the Primary Trainer does not take this role, she/he must approve and endorse another TEP to provide a minimum of 20 hours of the required supervision. Additionally, the Primary Trainer can approve and endorse a non-TEP for the other 20 hours of supervision.
Practicum Experience

The practicum experience begins when the trainee contracts to direct a psychodrama group independently from direct contact with a trainer. While the Board specifies the time period for the practicum (1 to 4 years), there is ample opportunity for creativity and spontaneity in working within these broad requirements. The practice plan is developed with the Primary Trainer and reflects the interests and skills of the trainee. For example, some trainees conduct time limited 12 week groups on anger management, while others lead on-going psychodrama groups, or do some of the required groups in healthcare agencies or schools.

Each session consists of directing the warm-up, action and sharing utilizing the full range of psychodramatic techniques and skills. Focus is on education, treatment, or change by the participants of the group facilitated through psychodrama practice.

The trainee, working under supervision, develops a practice plan that includes:

- Dates of services and length of group
- Assessment and treatment planning for individuals
- Goals and objectives for each group
- On-going evaluation of the efficacy of interventions and outcome
- Use of client report and sociometric connections encouraged for evaluation

Supervision

The supervisor assists, guides, and evaluates the trainee in the integration of theoretical and training psychodrama experiences to the trainee's chosen area of practical skill and interest. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to review the requirements for supervision and to co-develop a plan with the trainee which will fully meet these requirements: 80 psychodrama sessions: 40 hours of supervision.

The hours of supervision may be conducted face to face, by phone or video communications, or on-site supervision where the TEP observes the trainee directly during the session. Supervision may be individual or group settings. Supervision is distinguished from training hours because the focus of the supervision is how to improve treatment or education provided to the client and group. The supervisor and supervisee work together on:

- The interaction of clinical issues with action methods
- Issues of diagnosis, assessments, treatment planning, group goals
- Countertransference issues that affect treatment
- Skill development in certain areas and with different techniques
- Moments of difficulty with action interventions
- Role development as a director and auxiliary ego
- Evaluation of interventions and effectiveness

It is recommended that trainees receive a variety of supervision from at least two TEPs skilled in the areas of interest during this supervised practicum. Twenty hours of supervision must be given by the Primary Trainer, or by another TEP that is approved and endorsed. The additional 20 hours can be given by an approved supervisor who has a master's degree in an educational or clinical field and who meets state regulations for practice in the desired area of competency. Supervision and training hours are documented by both the trainer and the trainee for the purposes of accurate record keeping.
Secondary Trainer

Each applicant for certification must also have a secondary trainer. The Secondary Trainer must also be certified as a TEP. The Board recommends that trainees select their Secondary Trainers early in the training process so that the Secondary Trainer can offer specialized areas of training and consultation over the course of the trainee's training, education, and supervision. The Primary and Secondary Trainer collaborate with each other about the trainee's development to co-create the best training experience possible.

Ultimately, the Secondary Trainer has the responsibility of evaluating the trainee's development as a psychodramatist and endorsing that individual for certification. The Secondary Trainer must observe the trainee's work on more than one separate occasion and provide consultation regarding that work over time.

Adjunctive Trainers

All TEPs who conduct psychodrama training workshops for credit towards certification are in the role of Adjunctive Trainer. The psychodrama community is rich in a variety of resources in styles and areas of training. The Primary Trainer is responsible for encouraging their trainees to take advantage of what is offered in the national and international communities.

It is the responsibility of the Adjunctive Trainer to advertise and deliver training workshops, and to clearly identify and define differences between personal growth and psychodrama training workshops.

SUMMARY OF TRAINER'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION

Primary Trainer for Practitioners

- Guides overall certification training process with trainees.
- Develops individualized training plan for the adult learner
- Provides minimum of 390 hours of psychodrama training
- Helps select Secondary and Adjunctive Trainers and collaborates with them to maximize learning for the trainee
- Helps develop an approved Supervised year for practice
- Maintains accurate records of training and supervision hours
- Provides regular evaluations and written feedback
- Provides examination support to achieve competency
- Endorses candidate for the certification examinations

Secondary Trainer

- Observes trainee direct a psychodrama session on more than one occasion
- Provides competent training in specialized areas of skill, technique, theory, and methods
- Collaborates with Primary Trainer
- Endorses candidate for the certification examinations

Adjunctive Trainer

- Distinguishes between training and personal growth workshops
- Provides competent training in specialized areas of skill, technique, theory, and methods