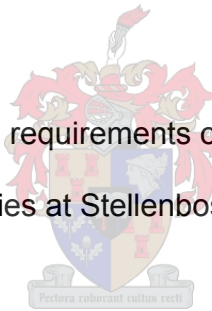


**The attainment of personal catharsis through the realisation
of the dislocation between the internal and external
expressive forms of the self**

by

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Theatre Studies at Stellenbosch University.



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Declaration

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Abstract

This study is aimed at establishing what *personal catharsis* is, specifically defining what it is and under what conditions it may occur. During the creation and execution of an autobiographical solo, I had gone through a process of attaining what has since been labelled *personal catharsis* and recognition of the *other*, which gave rise to me finding confidence and discovering my *creative voice of identity*. However, it was not known when or how these processes took place. In addition I was not certain exactly what *personal catharsis* was in the context of me and my identity. An investigate was also needed into the possibility of generalising *personal catharsis* as a process that could guide people towards gaining confidence and finding their *creative voice of identity*.

In this thesis, the process of the creation of the autobiographical solo is deconstructed. In doing so the journey of the discovery of the *other* is highlighted and the role of recognition between the *inner expressive form* and the *external expressive form*. Through the means of a source study the concepts of behaviour and the *other* in reference to identity construction and performance of everyday self are discussed. Then *personal catharsis* is explored in comparison to the traditional use of the term. Using performance-based research methodologies in conjunction with a questionnaire, a 12-week series of workshops was held to explore the generalisation of personal catharsis and the issues that arose during the study. The workshops were aimed at investigating the possibility of creating a process to attain *personal catharsis*.

It was found that *personal catharsis* is a subjective process that takes place through the recognition of the *external expressive form*. It is through this recognition that the dislocation of self can be reconnected and the *other* can become more transparent to the *internal expressive form*. This process is readily attained through the exploration of the character of self. However, although new behaviour can result from *personal*

catharsis, the individual needs to choose the *internal expressive form* as the dominant part in expressive behaviour.

Opsomming

Die doel van hierdie studie is om te bepaal en te beskryf wat presies *persoonlike katarsis* is en hoe dit as proses verloop. Tydens die skepping en uitvoering van 'n outobiografiese solo het ek die bereiking van *persoonlike katarsis* – soos ek dit sedertdien gedoop het – en herkenning van die *ander* beleef. Dit het daartoe gelei dat ek selfvertroue en die *skeppende stem van my identiteit* gevind het. Tog het ek nie besef wanneer of hoe hierdie prosesse plaasgevind het nie. Daarby was ek nie seker wat presies *persoonlike katarsis* in die konteks van my wese en identiteit was nie. Ek wou ook die moontlikheid ondersoek om *persoonlike katarsis* as proses te veralgemeen sodat dit mense daartoe kon lei om selfvertroue en die *skeppende stem van hul identiteit* te vind.

In hierdie tesis dekonstrueer ek die skepping van die outobiografiese solo as proses. Daardeur werp ek lig op die ontdekkingsreis na die *ander* en die rol wat herkenning tussen die *interne ekspressiewe vorm* en die *eksterne ekspressiewe vorm* speel. Die begrippe gedrag en die *ander* in verhouding tot die konstruksie van identiteit en die uitvoering van die alledaagse self word deur middel van 'n literatuurstudie bespreek. Daarná word *persoonlike katarsis* in vergelyking met die tradisionele gebruik van die term ondersoek. Tydens 'n 12 weke lange werkswinkel is *performance*-gebaseerde navorsingsmetodologieë tesame met 'n vraelys gebruik om die veralgemening van *persoonlike katarsis* en die kwessies wat tydens die studie na vore gekom het, te verken. Die werksinkels was daarop gemik om die moontlikheid van die skepping van 'n proses om *persoonlike katarsis* te bereik, te ondersoek.

Daar is gevind dat *persoonlike katarsis* 'n subjektiewe proses is wat deur middel van die herkenning van die *eksterne ekspressiewe vorm* plaasvind. Deur middel van hierdie herkenning kan die ontwrigting van die self herstel word en kan die *ander* deursigtiger

vir die *interne ekspressiewe vorm* word. Hierdie proses word maklik deur verkenning van die karakter van die self behaal. Alhoewel *persoonlike katarsis* nuwe gedrag tot gevolg kan hê, moet die individu egter die *interne ekspressiewe vorm* as die dominante deel in ekspressiewe gedrag kies.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

This thesis researches the performance of the everyday self as a dislocated and separate expression of the self by means of an autobiographical performance. Through the recognition of this dislocation, a state of catharsis that is specific to the individual is able to take place. The concept of self performance is discussed during the analysis of the creation of an autobiographical performance. Autobiographical performance, in conjunction with self performance, is not a concept that falls specifically under performance studies. As recognised by Richard Schechner (1973: 5) and others (Craig, 1996; Dunn, 1997; Hofstadter, 1999)¹, anthropological sciences - such as philosophy, psychology and linguistics - all relate to performance. This statement was confirmed through self-analysis and my experiences within the autobiographical performance. After the completion of this autobiographical performance, during which much use was made of philosophical and psychological theorising, *personal catharsis* was recognised.

Although this study falls under performance studies, it is applicable for self understanding and development. It was originally intended as a study of my own autobiographical performance but through the exploration of the workshops (Ch 5), it became apparent that this study is applicable for any person wanting self-development, within psychology and as a study on social performance.

1.2 Background

Discussing performance within the different areas of the anthropological sciences provides a broader basis of analysis and critical thought for performance and narrative. Within this study, the analysis relies fundamentally on philosophical understanding as

¹ In all of these studies, the concept of the autonomous I and the notion of self as parts of identity become a framework for dialogues. Postmodernism has shifted the questioning mirror onto ourselves as everyday autobiographical performers (Kearney, 2001: 20).

well as with psychological ideologies of the formation of identity. Identity is the impetus behind the narrative of the autobiographical performer in both everyday performance and on stage (Kearney, 2002: 13). My understanding of identity is greatly influenced by mimetic and empirical theory (Pinker, 2002:5). Experiences create new ideas, yet these experiences are formed by ideas created by other individuals that are also based on experience. These experiences merge to create 'new' ideas, but there is never real originality in it due to the mimetic nature of experience and idea creation (Kearney, 2001: 4). Attributing mimetic theory to the formation of the self and of identity, I started to question the originality of the self. Is the self and identity true and unique to itself; or is it a construct of experience? Some of the arguments that arose in thinking about these questions dealt with the idea that experiences change a person and consequently these experiences can alter the identity. This led me to the question of whether or not there is any originality within the construction of identity and the self.

To answer this question research was done into how identity is constructed. Two philosophical enquiries were important in my research for understanding this formation. John Locke (Pinker, 2002) and his theory of empiricism as well as René Descartes' (Synnott, 1992) theory of dualism were relevant in forming and understanding my own theories on identity. These two theories have been used because I felt that many of the philosophical books (and fictional books) that I have read all incorporate the essence of dualism and empiricism (see Herbert 1965, Anderson 1997, Dun 1997, Hostadter 1999, Kearny 2001 2001). They are foundational philosophical ideas that are used in many areas. For this study, the basic principles of these theories for identity construction and recognition of the *other* have been used. Although the original writing of Descartes and Locke is not contemporary, I have found an interest and recognition with them. The motivation for using philosophical inquiry within a performance study is that research of the self is philosophical in nature. My experiences can only be assumed to resemble a construction of another's way of experiencing. Empirical theory states/proposes that a person is born without any inherent knowledge or understanding. It is that person's experience, and cultural and social teachings, that form the person's identity (Scruton, 2002: 83). However, those events are unique to that person's understanding and analysis of them.

Since ideas are grounded in experience, which varies from person to person, differences of opinion arise not because one mind is equipped to grasp the truth and another is defective, but because the two minds have had different histories (Pinker; 2002: 5).

Identity is formed through experiences gained over time. This process of creating an identity occurs through the conscious and sub-conscious mind (Pinker, 2002: 5). The conscious mind is the everyday thoughts of a person that occur in 'real time'. The sub-conscious, which forms part of the *other*, is a form of ideal representation of self that is suppressed and dislocated from the conscious identity of that person. My definitions of what the conscious and sub-conscious are, are based on Henri Bergson's book 'Matter and Memory' (2007). From his writings, I perceive consciousness as our inner history. Our sub-conscious is a hidden narrative that works with memory. The two are co-dependant but separate in function. In Chapter 3 it will be argued that the conscious and the sub-conscious are different and how '...memory is radically distinct from perception' (Bergson, 2007: 318). Within the mind, it is the unique understanding of the self and the analysis of the subjective experience that creates the identity and behaviour of an individual. Identity construction is an internal process, but the mind is dependent on the body in order to experience as well as to express behaviour². The *external expressive form* and the *internal expressive form* are both expressed through behaviour. Although the intentions of the behaviour can come from the same source, it does not mean that the expressions of the intentions of behaviour will be the same.

The truthful³ behaviour of the *internal expressive form* is different from the behaviour of the *external expressive form*. As a result of this dislocation between the *internal* and *external expressive form* the repercussions of the behaviour of the *external expressive*

²The *internal expressive form* refers to the self which is the inner identity, the truthful self. The *external expressive form* is the external representation of the self. This is also spoken of as the *other*, which is dislocated from the *internal expressive form*.

³The behaviour of the *internal expressive form* is referred to as being truthful because it is the original expression, it has not been manipulated or changed. This does not mean that the form is incorruptible, but rather that the original intention had not been altered and is therefore truthful to the original expression.

form could possibly not be recognised by the self, since the actions chosen by the *internal expressive form* and the actions presented are different. There could be similarities between the intended and the presented behaviour, but due to the dislocation of the *internal* and *external expressive forms* the intentions change. In order to be accountable for our actions and the repercussions of those actions, we need to face the external *other* and acknowledge it. This *other* is the shown action in the real world, which is the interactive world, not the interpretive world of the *inner expressive form*. Therefore, we need to become the actor/spectator of the self. This means that the individual must perform his/her character of self while at the same time being a witness to and being aware of this performance. By witnessing his/her self, he/she is able to recognise their external actions. The actor/spectator of self is aware and conscious of internal choices and external representations of these choices. If one becomes this actor/spectator it is proposed that *personal catharsis* can be attained through acknowledgement and recognition of the external self.

The formation of identity, for the purposes of this study, is not only a by-product of experience and the subjective analysis thereof; it is also separate from the body as will be illustrated in Chapter 2. However, because of the separate relationship of the body and the mind, the external expression of the self through the body can be inconsistent with the intended thought and expression or the *internal expressive form*. The reuniting of the body and the mind for performance is a subject broached by many performance theorists. For this study, the work and theories of Constantin Stanislavski (1948, 1985, Toporkov, 1988)) and Jerzy Grotowski (1969, Menneb 1975, Schechner 1997, 1999, Slowiak 2007) have been researched. The reasons for this are the nature in which they approach the actor-character-*other* and the portrayal of a character through characterisation. Both practitioners explore the psychology of the internal exploration of character (fictional or the self) in reference to the exploration of the expressive choice of the external character (fictional or self) and the resultant emotional repercussions thereof. The role of the narrative of experience and of self becomes more evident within this exploration. This is where my research question begins.

1.3 Research question and aims

Storytelling or narrative is the medium in which people are able to explain their self to their self or to other people (Kearney, 2002: 3). Exploring definitions of who the self is usually presented in the form of narrative - that which is a history of the world and of the self. History and personal narrative are constructed through the analysis of memories and experiences (Kearney, 2002: 3). Through the construction and exploration of the narrative of one's life there is a possibility that new interpretations of the narrative can be portrayed which could result in *personal catharsis*. Taking this into consideration, the research question⁴ is:

How can performance elements such as improvisations be utilised to achieve *personal catharsis*, with the result that the performer gains confidence and finds his/her *creative voice of identity* and recognises the difference between the *internal and external expressive forms* of identity?

The *creative voice of identity* is the truthful expression of the *internal expressive form*. This is referred to as being truthful in the sense that the internal desired behaviour and intentions of the self are morally chosen creative expression. The original intended expression of the *internal expressive form* is moral to the self because it is the non-manipulated original. The experience of *personal catharsis* for me was a by-product of an autobiographical performance. The aims of this thesis are to define *personal catharsis* and to research the possibility for the performer of controlling the process of performance so as to attain *personal catharsis*. In order to understand this state, *personal catharsis* needs to be recognised and defined as a concept. However, before a concept of *personal catharsis* can be generalised, it first needs to be identified when and how this process took place subjectively in the development of my autobiographical performance. This will be done by describing the process I undertook for the creation of my autobiographical solo and from which the *personal catharsis* arose. Through the identification of the nature of *personal catharsis*, a series of workshops were offered to

⁴ The research question does not come across within motivation of each chapter and the link is therefore not always clear. The research question formed the basis of the workshops explored in Ch 4. The aims are derived through the process.

explore how performance inspired improvisational techniques and exercises can be utilised to achieve *personal catharsis*. The goals of *personal catharsis* are for the performer to gain confidence and find their *creative voice of identity*, and to recognise the difference between his/her *internal* and *external expressive forms*. By means of this exploration the possibility of using elements of performance to focus on the construction of the character of self is investigated.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology for this research is not traditional for the field of performance studies. Arts-based research can stem from literary review or another source, such as a performance itself, whereas conventional research practices usually stem from a series of hypotheses and research questions (Leavy, 2009: 21).

ABR (arts-based research) practices are a set of methodological tools used by qualitative researchers across the disciplines during all phases of social research, including data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation (Leavy, 2009: ix).

For the purposes of research for this study, a performance is created or discussed that explores the research practically. The performance of a text, be it in rehearsals or as a final production, is an ethnographic performance and can be used as a medium for additional data or as an analytical phase for refining the data (Leavy, 2009: 143). In this study a question arose from the experiences and repercussions of the performance and from the process of performance creation. This question was whether or not *personal catharsis* could be a generalised concept. This question was researched through source study and a series of workshops. These workshops explored the issues that concerned the creation of the research question and the results of the original autobiographical performance. The results of this exploration were the attaining of *personal catharsis* and the finding my *creative voice of identity*⁵.

⁵ *Creative voice of identity* refers to the truthful representation of the *internal expressive form*.

The research began by analysing and breaking down the creation of the autobiographical⁶ performance. The autobiographical performance, by means of the rehearsal and final production phases, is viewed as a text and data source. The performance research falls under narrative autoethnography. Autoethnography denotes researchers sharing a personal narrative and experience with the research material.

This method is directly applicable to the discussion of the process of the autobiographical solo as it is deeply personal research material. This method combines autobiographical writing with the conventions of narrative writing, often incorporating fiction. [...] Autoethnography can be communicated as a short story, essay, poem, novel, play, performance piece or other experimental performance piece. (Leavy, 2009: 40)

The style of the discussion of the solo has a personal tone. When using the methods identified within arts-based research, the manner of interpretation of the data does call for a personal identification with it, while the method of analysis of data can delve between qualitative and quantitative research methods. In this study, the possibility of using quantitative research methods is not applicable, so the main methods that are used for analysis can be viewed as qualitative methods.

The performance documentation will identify the process that allowed *personal catharsis* to take place and explore the dislocation between the *internal expressive form* and *the external expressive form*. The autobiographical performance is my personal performance and the discussion thereof is a first-hand experience of the pre-production and performance period. Due to the inherently personal nature of the autobiographical performance, the style of the discussion within this study is more conversational in tone. This is applicable because the personal journey is being used as data within the autoethnographical methodology. With regard to the theoretical aspects concerning elements of the study (such as the performative elements) a more traditional sources study was conducted.

⁶ Performance as research is relatively new concept that has been explored academically, It is for this reason that I was unable to find extensive relevant material, Much of the narrative research came of Barrett & Bolt 2009.

This research has been guided by a literary review of Schechner (1969, 1973, 1988, 1990, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2003) Stanislavski (1948, 1985), Grotowski (1969) and Butler (1988, 2001, 2005) on the platform of their philosophical principles of identity creation, specifically the mind-body problem. 'The [academic] move towards performance...is linked to developments in embodiment research and the mind-body connection' (Leavy, 2009: 137). *Personal catharsis* must be defined outside of, but also as part of, traditional theories of catharsis as recognised through Barnes (1984), Barrett (2009), Bloechl (2000), Dolan (2001), Dunn (1997), Else (1957), Golden (1962, 1973), Keesey (1979), Kruse (1979), Paskow (1983), Schaper (1968) and Synnott (1992). Once this has been done, the research of construction - the *other* and *personal catharsis* - will be applied to the facilitation and presentation of the workshops. Through analysis of the documentation of the workshops, which includes a questionnaire and personal perceptions, an answer to the research question will be formed.

Many of the theories that I am using within this study are foundational and can be viewed as outdated. This is specifically applicable to the use of dualism and of the concept of the body and the mind as compared to the more contemporary use of body/mind (Seem 1989, Zarrilli 2009). The motivation for the use of the body and the mind as two separate but co-dependant entities is linked to the concepts of *internal* and *external expressive forms* (see 1.6). I identify two dislocated forms of expression, one being internal and the other external. By using the foundational theories of dualism I was able to maintain a distinction between these two forms, the internal being referred to as the inseparable mind and the external as the mechanic body (Descartes, 1967: 177). Descartes argues that the body and the mind are created differently and are separate but co-dependant. It is upon this theory that I am able to discuss how a dislocation between the two forms can form through the difference in expression of each form. The use of the term 'body' is in conjunction with its external expression. I am aware of theories that discuss the internal landscapes and link these to the mind (Seem 1989, Zarrilli 2001), but the identification I found within the expressive form of the body is in its external form. This is again linked to my use of foundational theories of dualism. The mind has understanding and superior knowledge of the self and its experience, whereas the body is a reactive and responsive entity (Pinker, 2002: 9).

1.5 Chapter Outline

Chapter 2: The Construction of behaviour, identity, the *other* and *personal catharsis* within everyday performance

Behaviour is the foundation of performance i.e. everyday performance and daily performance. It is necessary to discuss restored behaviour, and the creation of behaviour and the *other*, as a starting point for the theoretical foundation of this study. Therefore, the issues discovered in my personal narrative performance are placed in the context of restored behaviour and the *other*. Restored behaviour is discussed as a function of the *internal expressive form* and the *external expressive form*. By identifying and recognising behaviour, it is argued that new behaviour can be relearned and rehearsed to become restored behaviour. But before new behaviour is relearned, the self needs to be able to recognise the dislocation of the self and, consequently, the *other*. In order to do this, Grotowski's concept of the actor/spectator is applied in order to view the self. An individual needs to be placed as the performer of the other while simultaneously observing the behaviour of the character. This allows the individual to recognise the dislocated behaviour as being different from the *internal expressive form*. In this chapter, the concept of the *other* as an external expressive representation of self forms the backbone of the argument since it is the idealised representation of self that ultimately aids not only the dislocation of self but ultimately *personal catharsis*. The construction of personal narratives will be explored in reference to this dislocation. Through this research there will be an identification of how the term of catharsis is traditionally used and referred to. Using this reference with a redefined application of the term performance, I will locate what *personal catharsis* is, what role it plays and how it is attained.

Chapter 3: 'I only ever use half of my double bed, I know but a single bed is just too small.' – The Personal Performance

In this chapter, the creation of autobiographical art through the pre-production process of an autobiographical solo is explored. From conception to execution, there were defining aspects of the solo that contributed to the realisation and attaining of *personal catharsis*. The process, as realisation and recognition of the creation of the character of self, is identified. This entails the exploration of the original emotive state of the creator as well as the driving forces behind the creation of the autobiographical solo. This process is integral to this exploration and to the origin of narrative with its connection to catharsis. The main issues will be discussed through the exploration of the creation of the autobiographical performance. These issues centre on the creation of the narrative, cathartic actions and personal awareness.

Chapter 4: The exploration of the dislocation of self through improvisation and identification of *personal catharsis*

In order to research the generalisation of *personal catharsis* as an outcome performance, a series of workshops was created to explore the ideas discussed in Chapter 3. The motive and structure of the workshops was very specific. In this chapter, the rationale, aims, process and outcomes of the workshops will be discussed incorporating specific reference to individual participants. The workshops were an experimental exploration of the theories that were found to support concepts of the *other*, recognition of behaviour and the concept of *personal catharsis*.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Chapter 5 is a summary of the research concerning the *other*, *personal catharsis* and self performance. There is a final analysis of the workshops, in which it is identified what was revealed during the process, the problems of the workshops and areas where development can take place. To conclude the chapter, the outcomes of the research

and applications of the results are summed up. The results will then be compared to the problems identified in the study and possible further research with regard to *personal catharsis*.

1.6 Terminology

The key concepts of the thesis will be discussed in more depth in the following chapters, but for the sake of clarity some working definitions will be discussed for some of these terms to try and avoid possible misunderstandings. This is necessary since some terms have fields of reference that are not necessarily applicable in their original use for this thesis. Many of the formal definitions of terms are inadequate for my purposes and so they have been used in new and varied contexts. New terms have been formed to refer to states of being that are discussed in new contexts.

The concept of the self or 'I' is used in the sense of who a person is - it is their identity and conscious self. The self is also spoken of as the *internal expressive form* and the *external expressive form* as interlinked forms of identity.

The *internal expressive form* or the internal self is the inner identity, the truthful self.

The *external expressive form* is the external representation of the self. This is also spoken of as the *other*, which is dislocated from the *internal expressive form*. The *other* is traditionally referred to as a concept removed from the self, but within this study the concept of the *other* is an external representation of the self. However, in the sense of autobiographical representation, this character is a reflection of the intended and ideal representation of the self. The *internal* and *external expressive forms* are terms that I have coined to define these concepts for the purpose of this study.

The *creative voice of identity* is the truthful representation of the *internal expressive form*. It is referred to as being creative because it is not suppressed or hidden. The *creative voice of identity* is an exploration of the truthful chosen behaviour of the *internal expressive form*. When the *creative voice of identity* is used, the *external expressive*

form (or *other*) becomes transparent so that the *internal expressive form* becomes visible.

The concept of truth can become a philosophical and categorical discussion. For my purposes the term is used as being the opposite of false and unknown. The *internal expressive form* is truthful in its expression and behaviour, since it is the self that chooses the intentions and the behaviour. The dislocated *external expressive form* is false in representation as it is not what the internal truthfully expresses. This is not to imply that the external form is always false, but if it has been manipulated, it no longer is the original and therefore truthful chosen behaviour.

Character is used in context to *everyday performance* and theatrical performance. When used in theatrical sense, the character is a fictional identity that is assumed by the actor. This is expressed by means of a mask that is placed on the actor which manipulates that individual's behaviour. Character in relation to self is the creation of a mask and the highlighting of specific behaviour, usually in context to the *other*. The character of self is expressed by highlighting the *other* in order to be able to perform it and to view it.

The body is referred to as an external form. The body is the canvass of the external expressive form that is an emotive signifier. The body expresses not out of choice but out of manipulation. Because the expression of the external body is a manipulated object, it is able to be dislocated from, but still be dependant on the mind.

Terms such as *performance*, *everyday performance* and the *other* are placed in context in the different chapters, since the terms are used within specific theories and circumstances.

Chapter 2: The construction of behaviour, identity, the *other* and *personal catharsis* within everyday performance

2.1 Introduction

Through the creation and exploration of my autobiographical narrative by means of a solo (to be discussed in Chapter 3), I attained a state that I recognised as *personal catharsis* in that I experienced a change in behaviour. This behaviour was rehearsed and relearned so as to become what Richard Schechner (1990) refers to as 'restored behaviour'. The understanding of performance as being both theatrical and occurring within everyday life (Carlson 1996), and the concept of restored behaviour, is discussed in this chapter in reference to the construction of identity, the *other* and to *personal catharsis*.

The *other*⁷ is a term that has been traditionally used to refer to an alternate identity that does not appear to share the same characteristics with the identifiable self. This term is used in this study to refer to the *external expressive form*. The *internal expressive form* and the behaviour associated with it is differentiated from the *external expressive form* or the *other* because of a dislocation of self. Before the self and the *internal* and *external expressive forms* can be discussed in terms of formation and dislocation, I shall place the concept of self performance within a performance in conjunction with the creation of the actor/spectator self.. The self is then discussed through the construction of identity as defined by the philosophical theories of Empiricism and Dualism. Both theories investigate how identity is formed in reference to the self, with specific reference to the external (the body), and how this creates the *other* or ideas of the *other*. The theories of Emmanuel Levinas (1987) and Judith Butler (1988, 2001, 2005) are investigated to identify the origin, role and creation of the *other* as a dislocation from the self and time.

⁷ The *other* is written as Other by Levinas (1987) and Butler (2001). I refer to the term as *other* and also as *the external expressive form*.

It is through the discussion of the *other* that the role of recognition is understood by means of the mechanisms of identifying and ghosting⁸ the *other* as a dislocated form. Recognition is the primary focus in the process of attaining *personal catharsis*. The self needs to recognise the *other* and its behaviour in order for *personal catharsis* to occur and the behaviour of the *internal expressive form* to re-emerge as the dominant form of expression. To counter the *internal expressive form* from becoming a dislocated *other*, a process of ghosting must take place. It is necessary to investigate traditional uses of the term *catharsis* before a definition of *personal catharsis* is offered.

2.2 The Construction of self performance and becoming the actor/spectator in order to discover behaviour

In Marvin Carlson's *Performance: a critical introduction* (1996), he provides a thorough interpretation of, and investigation into performance as a concept that is applied in a variety of contexts, other than the theatrical concept. Carlson (1996: 6) discusses how the *other* (used in the traditional sense) has historically been used in character construction, but recognises how modern forms of characterisation tend to be based on personal experience (Carlson, 1996:6). This section discusses how self-performance can form part of the identity of a social expressive body. It is through this body that behaviour is selected and manipulated. The behaviour of the social expressive body, or the *other*, will be placed within the context of performance as researched and described by Schechner, (1969, 1973, 1988, 1990) and the concept of the actor/spectator as recognised by Grotowski (1969). The concept of restored behaviour allows both the *internal expressive form* and the *other* to have behaviour. Through *personal catharsis*, a dislocation of behaviour is identified which allows new behaviour to be chosen. Schechner's writings (1973; 1990) and Grotowski's theory of the actor/spectator formed the theoretical basis for the series of workshops that were created to investigate whether *personal catharsis* could be evoked.

⁸ Ghosting refers to the constant removal and identification of the *other*. Through ghosting the *other* becomes more transparent and more recognisable to the *internal expressive form*.

2.2.1 Placing performance

Let's start by saying that I think all definitions are bullshit because they deny the perceptual nature of a thing, especially theatre. As soon as you define something, you are framing it. You are putting finiteness on it, boxing it in, packaging it. I think theatre is a set of perceptual transformations and elaborations on behaviour; it is where we become aware of our behaviour. (Schechner, 1990: 97)

According to Carlson (1996: 4) three concepts of performance are clearly identified: the display of skills; the display of recognised and culturally coded patterns of behaviour; and a standard of achievement decided on by an observer. Performance as a standard of achievement implies a consciousness of 'doubleness' - the actual performance is held in reference to a projected outcome, ideal or original character. The weight of interpretation lies then not in the actual performance by the performer or the observer, but rather on the ideal or potential of the *other* or that which the performer is not but tries to embody. Carlson (1996: 6) states that:

... although traditional theatre has regarded this 'other' as a character in a dramatic action, embodied by an actor, modern performance has not been centrally concerned with this dynamic.

Carlson (1996: 6) identifies that modern performers tend not to base the creation of their performance on an *other* that is founded on predetermined characters or interpretations, but rather upon their own bodies and experiences within a cultural and corporeal reality - a type of autobiographical review of experience. It becomes a performance of the everyday self in a theatrical context. This performance of the everyday self is a visual performance on the social expressive body. An investigation into the construction of the *other* in daily self-performance is also an investigation into identity and the dualism of self, as in 'I am I, and you are you ... the self is what's in here, and the not-self is what's out there' (Anderson: 1997, xii).

Behaviour understood as self-performance is concerned with the performance of one's own identity but with reference to predetermined categories or roles (influenced by

culture and religion) that are specific to each person and even within specific contexts (Polhemus 2004, Lichtenfels 2009, Synnott 1992). But it is possible to perform one's own identity as a direct projection of the *internal expressive form*. Yet in this representation, there will still be 'doubleness' - that which the performer is portraying of his/her internal emotional state and the original everyday self or character. A defining aspect of *Homo sapiens* is our ability for symbolic thought which has been linked to the development of verbal language and art (Polhemus, 2004: 6). The continuous development in these two areas shows an inherent need to communicate this internal emotional state. Humankind has something to say and something to express and often this is with the most basic of materials – the body. Ted Polhemus (2004: 8) identifies this as:

at the heart of the symbolic universe, the language and art of the styled customized body. We are the only creatures on this planet which choose and manipulate its own appearance.

The changing of the personal expressive body, as previously discussed, is the creation of the *other*. Altering the presentation of the body presents a different concept of identity and a person's role therein, but not necessarily a change in identity. The individual is performing a singular aspect of his/her identity. This type of performance is a very conscious representation. Changing the canvas of the expressive body is a deliberate process. But the analysis and recognition of the expressive body could become disorientated and misjudged. In the same manner, the performance of the social expressive body and the understanding of it becomes dislocated and disorientated from the *internal expressive form* and its understanding of self-performance.

This social expressive body is what this study refers to as the *other*, as presented through conscious and subconscious analysis. Although this *other* is socially aware, it offers a new perspective on identity once it is recognised and reconnected to the self.

If the *other* and self are reconnected, this study suggests that the *external expressive form* will be in sync with the *internal expressive form*. This would result in the

exploration and expression of tradition in the process of alteration because there is a new found truth in the re-exploration of the tradition of an individual outside of the group or the individual. .

On the other hand, much of the recent anthropological analysis of performance has emphasised how performance can work within a society precisely to undermine tradition, to provide a site for the exploration of fresh and alternative structures and patterns of behaviour (Carlson. 1996: 15).

It is because of this that it can be implied that new behaviour can be explored by the *other* by mimicking the *internal expressive form*. This mimesis is what Schechner (1985) refers to as twice-behaved behaviour, that is, the behaviour has been predetermined, rehearsed, learned and repeated.

In *Between Theatre and Anthropology* (1985), Schechner identifies behaviour as a part of *performance*. This concept of performance does not refer solely to the theatrical arts but filters through as an umbrella term to many anthropological sciences. Schechner (1973: 5) distinguishes seven areas in which the social sciences and performance theory coincide:

1. Performance in everyday life, including gatherings of every kind,
2. The structure of sports, ritual, play and public political behaviours,
3. Analysis of various modes of communication – semiotics,
4. Connections between human and animal behaviour patterns with an emphasis on play and ritualised behaviour,
5. Aspects of psychotherapy that emphasises person-to-person interaction, acting out and body awareness,
6. Ethnography and pre-history, and
7. Constitution of unified theories of performance, which are, in fact, theories of behaviour.

In reference to this study, these seven areas define what is referred to as *everyday performance*. *Everyday performance* comprises the daily activities of a person, their chosen and represented identities and the role of participation within these activities and

identities. This term, commonly found in the anthropological sciences (Carlson, 1996), is a psychological, physical and character signifier. When I write about the term *performance*, it can refer to both theatrical performance and *everyday performance*. Theatrical performance refers to performing a previously unknown character within a narrative created by somebody other than oneself. *Everyday performance* refers to performance of a character that is created by the self within that individual's narrative. Theatrical performance (within theatre) and performance of everyday life have similar aspects such as narrative and character construction and behaviour. This is why this study makes use of theatrical performance theories outside of theatre in the application of everyday self-performance and identity.

Performance is constructed through internal and external stimuli and results in restored behaviour, which according to Schechner (1985: 35) is the main characteristic of *performance*. The construction of *performance* within 'daily life, ceremonial life, and artistic life consists largely of routines, habits and rituals; and the recombination of already behaved behaviours' (Schechner, 2003: 28). 'Already behaved behaviours' imply that behaviour is something that is learned and rehearsed. It is not new habits that occur daily. Rather the behaviour is something that has been chosen and results in activities, conduct, manner et cetera that form a base for action for that individual. If already behaved behaviour is altered or relearned through repetition, it becomes new learned or twice-behaved behaviour. Performance is therefore created out of twice-behaved behaviour. Twice-behaved behaviour is also referred to (by Schechner, 1985) as restored behaviour.

Schechner (1985: 35) describes restored behaviour as behaviour treated as if it were a film strip which is able to be taken apart and rearranged. Each person and character has behaviour; which is comparable to a sequence of action in a film strip. Yet 'how the strip of behaviour was made, found, or developed may be unknown or concealed' (Schechner, 1985: 35). The behaviour within *performance* is a witnessed event but the origin of the behaviour may not always be known to both the performer and the spectator. Although the construction of this behaviour may not be known, there is a possibility that it is dislocated from the original behaviour. The 'truth' of the behaviour

could be lost or contradicted from the presented behaviour (Schechner, 1985: 35). This implies that internal intended expression (or behaviour) might not be the same as the external expression. As we do not know the origin or the original intended behaviour, an external observer must take the external expression of an individual as the intended behaviour. The intent of the behaviour can alter the manner in which the behaviour is viewed by an observer. In the same manner, the individual trusts his external behaviour to correspond with the intended expression and so would not necessarily recognise his or her behaviour as being different from his or her intention because the 'film strip of behaviour' can be altered. It is in this manner that the *other* becomes a dislocated *external expressive form* separated from the self.

Restored behaviour is learned behaviour and is 'put on' in the way that a mask or costume is 'put on', since it is the shape of the behaviour that is seen or identified from the outside (Schechner, 1985:37). The *external expressive form* is the viewed behaviour which is the restored behaviour, since it is action that has been repeated. The behaviour is chosen, which then alters the external performance (Schechner, 1985:37). The *other* chooses restored behaviour that is different from the original behaviour that had been manipulated through subconscious thought. As it is the *other* that is repeating behaviour, the *internal expressive form* cannot learn or create new behaviour and grow within this. The truthful *internal expressive form's* behaviour is therefore not seen. This indicates the dislocation of the *internal* and *external expressive forms* of the self.

Through *personal catharsis* this particular dislocation is recognised. Catharsis occurs for the performer but not within the performance itself (Schechner, 1985: 113). The *internal expressive form* and the *external expressive form* are recognised by the performer through his/her behaviour, which is the performance. This does not mean that because recognition has occurred that a change in behaviour will necessarily take place. The performer has experienced catharsis but the behaviour of the performer needs to be created, chosen and relearned. The intention behind the behaviour of the *external expressive form*, once recognised, becomes transparent to the *internal expressive form*. This process was explored in the drama workshops discussed in more

detail in Chapter Five. The workshops tried to create new and truthful behaviours of intent where the *internal* and the *external expressive forms* function as one. The idea is then not only to restore old behaviour, but to create new frames of action which are learned and consequently can be repeated. Only once the dislocation is known and changed so that new behaviour is created, can the behaviour be restored so that the *other* remains transparent. Later in this chapter I will discuss how this change comes about upon recognition of the dislocation. It is from the point of recognition of the *other* that the self is changed and new behaviour is chosen, it is then that new behaviour must be learned to insure the continued transparency of the *other*.

The action of choice that takes place with the restored behaviour allows individuals to explore different behaviours which can lead them to become what they once were or to behave in a manner that they wish to be (Schechner, 1985: 38). If the individual were to behave as they wish to be, this behaviour would have to be created and relearned. In other words, the new behaviour of the truthful self would have to be created first so that it would be able to be restored. This process is discussed through the *other* in Chapter 2.4 and the repercussions are investigated through *personal catharsis* in Chapter 2.5. In order for behaviour to be recognised, the self needs to become an actor/spectator of self in order to view his/her own actions. The actions of the *external expressive form* become a mask which can be discarded in order for new behaviour to be created. The discarding of masks by means of behaviour between the self and the *other* or the actor/spectator is identified by Grotowski.

2.2.2 The actor/spectator of Jerzy Grotowski

2.2.2.1 Introduction

Jerzy Grotowski was hugely influential with regard to proposing theories about the relationship between the actor and spectator, and practically through his personal involvement and one-on-one exploration in this field. His contributions to contemporary performance include a re-conceptualisation of the actor's physicality as an art, of daily training and the exploration of a performance technique based on Stanislavski's Method

of Physical Actions (Schechner & Wolford, 1997: 1). Grotowski emphasised the relationship between the actor and the spectator, and eventually offered the creation of the concept of 'actor/spectator' (Grotowski, 1969).

In Grotowski's later writings and practices, specifically his poor theatre and paratheatre phases, theatre takes on a therapeutic role through the discarding of 'masks' (Slowiak, 2007: 21; Schechner & Wolford, 1997: 9). Although a person can accomplish this act as a personal and private application, Grotowski's belief was that the change comes through the encounter with the audience or a spectator and through direct confrontation with him- or herself. This encounter through direct confrontation is what is referred to as *personal catharsis*. Grotowski's (1969) concept of a *poor theatre* strips away the theatricality of performance and creates a form of simplified communication where there are no 'masks' or conventions to hide behind (Slowiak, 2007: 13; Schechner & Wolford, 1999: 19; Grotowski, 1969: 19). The actor as an expressive self cannot hide him- or herself behind a character or costume. The performance is a story told by an actor who is an individual, rather than a proposed character. In this role, the actor is an individual because he or she is performing their self but not as an adapted character, they are presenting their self. If they were presenting a character, it would suggest that this character would have been created and rehearsed to function specifically in context to the performance. The acting individual is presenting their own restored-behaviour that is unique to them. Grotowski proposes that the role of the performer in this context can be considered 'naked'; the line between performer and spectator becomes blurred as the performer starts to view him or herself within the performance. Within this role the performer becomes the actor/spectator.

Grotowski created a model that falls within the constraints of social and personal constructs. By using a process termed *via-negativa*, a performer focuses first on attaining a neutral state before attempting to attain a desired character (Grotowski, 1969: 17). However, this process was purposely not concerned with attaining universal meaning or catharsis (Slowiak, 2007: 27). In my model of performance, in which the specific outcome was to achieve personal catharsis, this concept of Grotowski was reversed. The performer has deliberately created the *other* as an *external expressive*

form and as a presented character. This character needs to be experienced as a 'mask' before it is discarded. The 'mask' must then be discarded in order for the performer to reach a neutral state where the dislocation between the performed 'I' or *other* and the self is no longer present. In reference to twice-behaved behaviour, the performer first needs to view their self and their actions within the performance of the *other*, and then become the actor/spectator of self as a character. The performer needs to recognise their self before behaviour is able to be created or renewed within the neutral self. In order to achieve this, the emphasis lies on the person becoming the actor/spectator.

2.2.2.2 The poor theatre and poor self

In his later research into theatre, there were three ideas that Grotowski identified, explored and attempted to systematise:

First, that powerful acting occurs at a meeting place between the personal and the archetypal - in this he continued and deepened the work of Stanislavski.

Second, that the most effective theatre is the 'poor theatre' - one with a minimum of accoutrements beyond the presence of the actors.

Third, that theatre is intercultural; differentiating and relating performance 'truths' in and from many cultures. (Schechner, 1999: 7)

In the poor theatre, the actor transforms without reliance on 'tricks' such as lighting, costume and recorded sound (Grotowski, 1969:19). The performer as a body and signifier takes the central role. In this way the relationship to identity is highlighted.

The Poor Theatre was a concept that resulted from a realisation that the theatre can exist without 'make-up, without autonomic costume and scenography, without a separate performance area, without lighting and sound effects, etc' (Grotowski, 1969: 19). These conventions are attributed to, and dependent upon, by the Rich Theatre or the 'synthetic theatre'. *The Poor Theatre* is a theatrical event without the gimmickry of commercial theatre; it is raw theatre that relies on the actor/spectator relationship and

on live communication (Grotowski, 1969: 19). This is comparable to the performance of the everyday self and identity. Grotowski stresses that there is an infinite variation of performer-audience, and/or character-contact, relationships. The relationship into which the actor/spectator is placed is applicable to the everyday self outside of the theatrical situation. The everyday self becomes the spectator of the character of self, which results in recognition of the *other*, leading to *personal catharsis*.

Grotowski's theatre had developed with the use of the *via-negativa*, which is 'not a collection of skills but an eradication of blocks' (Grotowski, 1969: 17). To work within the *via-negativa*, the performers must be in a state of passive readiness, where one is not in a state of not wanting to do something but where one rather chooses not to do it. Slowiak's interpretation of Grotowski's *via-negativa* is that the performers' 'psychophysical blocks are systematically eradicated through the rigors of physical and vocal training and through creative work on the role' (2007: 61). By means of this eradication, the actor's resistance to learning, and the time-lapse between inner impulse and external expression, is removed. The inner impulse is immediately an outer reaction (Grotowski, 1969: 16). The mind is in a state of passive readiness, which implies that the actor or individual can choose to perform a gesture or decline from doing so. As in the Poor Theatre, the performer of self becomes a poor performer - one that breaks down any superficial 'masks', that does not blame or create excuses, but rather reconnects the self to the *other* in order to eradicate the mental and physical blocks. After the initial change occurring from the recognition of the *other* and the blocks that are immediately removed because of this recognition, this process becomes ongoing in that the self must eradicate blocks on a daily basis to ensure the transparency of the *other*. A true expressive form is found through this re-connection of the self to the *other* as well as the *other* to the self. However, this journey can only be made through the process of self-performance where the individual becomes the 'actor/spectator' of self.

2.2.2.3 The Actor/Spectator

According to the theories of Grotowski (1969), the actor/spectator is an individual who is performing and viewing their own performance simultaneously. The actor/spectator is able to recognise their self through this action, but before recognition can occur, all 'masks' (internal and external) need to be removed. This allows the self to be reconnected with the *other*.

The forms of common 'natural' behaviour obscure the truth; we compose a role as a system of signs which demonstrate what is behind the mask of common vision: the dialectics of human behaviour. (Grotowski, 1969: 17)

Our expressive *other* obscures reality since it is separate from the *internal expressive form*. It is suggested that the self is camouflaged by the *other*, and the lack of truth in the *other* has the potential to create unethical behaviour. The value of the *other* does not exist outside of the self because it is an unethical representation. The *other* can only be unethical because it manipulates the *internal expressive form* and its intended expression. The behaviour that the *other* presents to the world is a false presentation of the identity of the self. This is comparable to a costume created for a theatrical character that has no meaning unless it is used in reference to a particular character and that character's activities (Grotowski, 1969: 21). As the performer of the 'character of self' becomes the spectator of his/her self, the actor/spectator has a 'renewed awareness of his personal truth... and through fright and a sense of the sacred he came to catharsis' (Grotowski, 1969: 22-23). Once the performer views or sees this and acknowledges it, recognition can occur. And it is only through recognition that reconnection can take place. This is the recognition that the 'mask' of the *other* is dislocated and is a different form of the self. This can lead to fright, fear or guilt, but ultimately it is then that catharsis can occur. Once *personal catharsis* occurs at the moment of recognition the *other* starts to become transparent to the *internal expressive form*, and by choosing behaviour that aids the constant purgation and purification of the *external expressive form*, the individual can increase the transparency of the 'ghost' of the *other*.

In order to understand this miscommunication between the self and the *other* it might be effective to investigate discussions about the nature of theatre. Grotowski (1969: 28) does not focus on theatre as a single word that denotes a singular definition. This approach seems to me to be a realistic way to look at theatre as a whole in that it encompasses the theatregoer, theatre people, stage designer, the theatre producer as well as the academic influence of the researcher who concerns their work with the text and movement (Grotowski, 1969: 28). The theatre is divisible into parts but the actor in real life and within the theatre is indivisible. Therefore, his or her role must be defined and specific, much as Descartes' dualism of the body. The theatre is the machine, but the actor the mind. This is what concerns most of Grotowski's research - the indivisible performer. The actors' role is to work with his body and offer this work of the body publicly (Grotowski, 1969: 33).

In becoming a public body, the actor must remove identification with his/her body and become unconscious of it as part of the self. 'If the actor is conscious of his body, he cannot penetrate and reveal himself' (Grotowski, 1969: 36). The performer must separate his or her sense of self from the body so that it 'ceases to exist'. In everyday performance, in order to reconnect the self and *other*, the self-performer must 'release' the body. There needs to be heightened consciousness in the body in order for it to perform independently. Once the psycho-physiological reconnection has taken place within the actor, trust is created in the newly discovered truth of the expressive body and the *creative voice of identity*. This truth is found through the process of 'giving' oneself. 'One must give oneself totally, in one's deepest intimacy, with confidence ...' (Grotowski, 1969: 38). This journey is also applicable to autobiographical performance. As the actor becomes a public body by becoming unconscious of it, in the same manner, the autobiographical narrative becomes a performance as the performer/creator removes their self from it.

Nevertheless, this journey - from recognising the self and the *other* to attaining *personal catharsis* - is specific to each individual. The construction of identity is specific and the construction of the *other* is dependent on, and specific to this journey as well. In the architecture of self it is the 'surpassing of limits, of a confrontation, of a process of self-

knowledge and, in a certain sense, of a therapy [sic]... method must remain open...and is different for each individual [sic]...for intrinsic nature demands that it be individual' (Grotowski, 1969: 99). Through construction of the self by empirical understanding, every journey and expression thereof is specific to each person just as understanding the self is specific to each person. The expression of the self, as an autobiographical performance or exploration, is a specific and intimate exploration to that performer.

2.2.2.4 Summary

There is something incomparably intimate and productive in the work which the actor entrusted to me... His growth is attended by observation, astonishment and desire to help; my growth is projected onto him, or, rather, is found in him - and our common growth becomes revelation. This is not instruction of a pupil but utter opening to another person, in which the phenomenon of 'shared or double birth' becomes possible...what is achieved is total acceptance on one human being by another. (Grotowski, 1969: 25)

Grotowski's work was formed with direct contact and input with his workshops rehearsal participants (1969: 25). This differentiated his directorship from others. He understood the individuality of each performer and the need for the removal of blocks rather than overstepping them and creating a 'mask' (Slowiak, 2007: 61). For Grotowski, representations of the 'character of self' needed to be real to the performer. He focused on neutrality and the need to create the actor/spectator (1969). Although his method is altered in this study in order to attain *personal catharsis*, his underlying theories provide the foundation upon which my model of performance is based. It is a one on one interaction with a performer so as to remove the 'mask' of identity and to view the self outside of his/her self, ultimately reconnecting to the internal self and eventually attaining personal catharsis. The external 'masks', *the external expressive form* is a construction of the self but is also dislocated from it. The *external expressive form* is a separate aspect of the self and a separate character. This is why the *other* must be explored as a character in order to identify it and to recognise it as a 'mask'. By

incorporating the *via-negativa*, new behaviour is learned as the old blocks of the *other* are recognised. The re-emergence of the *inner expressive form* can then become a chosen action.

2.2.3 Conclusion

The exploration of the self and the *other* falls under the performance of the everyday self. It can therefore be assumed that *personal catharsis* forms part of performance theory, as it is the outcome of this performance of self. By using the principles of Schechner's twice-behaved behaviour within self-performance as well as the role of the actor/spectator, it can aid the process by which *personal catharsis* takes place. When a person is performing his/her self as a character within a performance in everyday life, they are able to recognise their self in the act of performing the *other*. It is through this recognition that the disconnection between intended behaviour and expressed behaviour can be seen. It is also through this recognition that new behaviour is created and learned. Creating new behaviour that is truthful to the self will be attempted and discussed through the exploration of the series of workshops in Chapter 4, which incorporates the doubleness of performance.

By placing the emphasis on the ideal representation in the doubleness of performance, the self is able to disconnect and view the performance as a spectator. It is by re-experiencing the self through a performance that it is treated as an original and separate product, and that the self can participate in the performance of its self. Once this has taken place, and because of the disconnection of the self from the performance-behaviour, the *external expressive form* is recognised. This mimetic act has a therapeutic function, as it is the means whereby *personal catharsis* can occur.

2.3 Construction of Identity

I have argued about the doubleness of performance and the role of the actor/spectator of self within everyday performance. The issue that arises here is the construction of

the self as well as that of the 'other'. The creation of the 'other' is fundamentally reliant on the creation of identity. For this purpose I have chosen to use the theories of Empiricism and Dualism. Both of these theories can be said to be outdated. I have used them as foundational theories to create basic ideas of the creation of the dislocation of the self. Dualism is implemented in our everyday language - it is us and them, pupil and teacher, observer and observed. We live in a binary world with post modern thought. Dualism is the basis of the body and the mind as separate but co-dependant forms. Modern theories have done away with the distinction of body and mind to create the term body/mind (Zarrilli, 2009). This is not applicable to my use of the terms body and mind. Although the body/mind concept can be seen as relevant, the vocabulary used for this concept is not supported in this study.

I attempt to prove within the workshop discussed in Ch 4 that dislocation from the other is also a dislocation from the body. Through this dislocation the body becomes an external skin, with the inner machinations of its complexities removed through this dislocation. It is ultimately the dislocation of the *external expressive form* that causes the body to be viewed as a machine and to be purely external. But this theory relies on empiricism. Since empiricism states that the mind is a blank slate which we write upon, this suggests that our experience forms us and it is this experience that can form the dislocation of the forms of self.

2.3.1 Empiricism and Dualism: Introduction

Within this section, the foundational principles of both the theories of Empiricism and Dualism are summarised and as well as their application to the self as a starting point for identity and for the creation of the *other*. So as not to oversimplify the extensive content of the theories, the specific idea of experience as the construction of identity, the separation of body and mind and the repercussions of this in reference to the expressive self will be highlighted.

The theory of Empiricism is concerned with the architecture of identity as an everyday experience and construction (Pinker, 2002:5). Because identity is perceived as

constructed from a blank slate, the construction of the *other*, as an *external expressive form*, is dependent upon this construction of self. This exploration depends on the construction and dependency of the two forms as the frames of reference, since the experience of self (*internal expressive form*) and the *other* (*external expressive form*) are located within the same system of reference, even though they can each present a different experience of this system.

Descartes introduced the dualism of the body, and consequently the dualism of the Self as self and *other* (Synnott, 1992:93). The two states of body and mind, as well as self and *other*, are individual but co-dependent. From this point forward, this discussion will follow the exploration of the corruption of the self to the presented *other*. The corruption of change in expression and intention, will be linked to the self as the self moves towards the external expression of the *other*.

2.3.2 Creation of the slate

Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper void of all characters, without any ideas. How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store which the busy and boundless fancy of man has painted on it with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the material of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from experience. (Locke, 1947: 26)

The theory of Empiricism states that we are born with a mind that is a blank slate (Pinker, 2002: 5). The experience gained through living is what an individual uses in the construction of personality, identity and understanding. Our identity is created through the experience of events and the familiarity of other individuals' identities. A person is defined by their experience of these events and therefore if the experiences change, the individual's identity will also change. Identity could be expressed as a process whereby experiences are filtered onto a blank slate, and the way in which an individual expresses their unique understanding of their own experience (Kearney, 2002: 4). It is unique in the sense that no one has an identical history, influence and experiences.

Our unique and subjective reality forms our identity. The way we speak and explore physically is our expression of that reality.

Empiricism states further that an individual is born without any inherent knowledge or understanding of their immediate reality and that it is the person's experience, as well as cultural and social teachings, that help to form their identity (Pinker, 2002:6). However, events are unique with regard to that person's understanding and analysis of those events.

Since ideas are grounded in experience, which varies from person to person, differences of opinion arise not because one's mind is equipped to grasp the truth and another is defective, but because the two minds have had different histories. (Pinker: 2002, 5)

Identity is constructed over time since each experience changes that person. This process occurs through the conscious and subconscious components, such as moral sense, reason and the ability to love (Pinker, 2002: 1). The conscious refers to the everyday thoughts of the person, which is a real-time pattern of the analysis of daily happenings. This study uses the term subconscious as being part of the *other* - a form of ideal representation of self that is an *external expressive form* and *other* to the identity of that person.

This *other*, as has been stated, is an ideal. It is an external representation of the self that is separate from the self. This idea will be further discussed throughout the chapter. An individual's experience is subjective. An understanding of his or her identity and the *other* must occur through a journey specific to each person. To know the self, one must experience the self as 'walking in your own shoes'.

2.3.2.1 Walking in Your Own Shoes

The theory of empiricism seems to coincide with elements of Method Acting such as character construction. The performer takes time to try to think as their character and therefore experience as their character would (Stanislavski, 1948: 14). The character

could be a researched enquiry, such as if the character was Napoleon or Nelson Mandela, but due to the fictional account of the majority of performed characters, the final presentation is a matter of the fictional mimesis of an ideal, a real personality or an interpretation of the character.

The character becomes the *other* through the representation of a performer. The character has been performed in the representational world that the performer believes the character would have lived in and experienced. This 'fictional representation of an ideal world' of the character is mimetic of the actor's previous experience or of what he/she is willing to experience. Stanislavski spoke of the 'magic 'if'' where the performer asks 'what would I (the performer) do in the situation' in which the character is placed within the play. The performer and character are linked through this process in order for the character to be better understood. The actions of the character are held in direct comparison to what the actor would intend to do. The *others'* behaviour is held in direct comparison to the internal truthful intention of the actor (the self). This has been recognised as coinciding with the blank slate of the performer's mind that has gained subjective experience, which is the medium through which the ideal character will be held in interpretation. The actor is changed through this experience, since the experience of the character takes place through the performer. In the same manner the information is gathered, understood and processed. It is proposed that this is done by the performer and his subconscious, and is realised through the conscious. Certain information will remain in the subconscious, but with realisation, the applicable information is stored in the conscious. The performer's real world and the character's ideal world are intermingled and co-dependent on each other for understanding and interpretation. The performer has created a link between his/her self and the character, and the performer ultimately becomes the character through action. The link is an understanding or interpretation of the character, in which the actor uses action or behaviour to represent this. It is through exploration of the character in reference to the performer's experience (and imagination) that the *other* is created as an ideal of the character.

Yet in autobiographical work, this process works in another way. The character of the

'self' is known intimately to the performer, but the performer still needs to 'act' the character in order to understand him or her. This character of self is what the performer intends to show. The self or the 'I' becomes an altered form of the 'I represented'. The performer needs to become the *other* in order to become the character. But this product of the autobiographical character ultimately changes the performer in the same manner as acknowledging the *other* changes the self. The autobiographical character is not subject only to the theatrical stage but also to the everyday performance of self in the real world outside of theatrical representation.

Although the *other* is known to the performer as part of the self, auto-ethnographical research⁹ of the autobiographical self needs to be done in order to understand the character of self. This research, as I experienced it, is able to be done through writing, interviews or intense sessions where the 'I' (performer) reflects on the self or *other* (*external expressive form*). The autobiographical performer creates a character out of the *other* that is not yet fully understood by the performer, because of the intimate relationship between the self and the *other*. The performer must take the *other* from the ideal representation and place this identity as character in the real world. The character is understood as a character only after the action has taken place. This character is not a direct representation of the *other*, but a representation of it as understood outside of the self. As an alternative to acting this understanding, the performer needs to purge that intimate link with the character. Instead of creating that link in reality, in order for the *other* to become the autobiographical character, it has to become a representation of the original and therefore not the original itself. This is where the role of *personal catharsis* becomes part of the process.

2.3.2.2 Summary and Conclusion

The construction of the self is specific to the frame of reference and experience of

⁹ Auto-ethnographical research refers to the researcher sharing a personal narrative and experience with the research material. This is conducted through writing (literal or fictional) or performance (Leavy, 2009:40).

individuals. However, there is a difference between the self that is the *internal expressive form* and the representation of self that is *the external expressive form* or the *other*. A single person's interpretation of their experiences cannot be held in higher regard or relevance to another interpretation thereof, as it is the experience itself that creates the tools with which to understand it. A personal interpretation of an experience as compared to another's interpretation of that same event may differ due to the understanding of that event, but neither of these two interpretations are more truthful nor relevant to the other. It is the individual's experiences that provide the information and frame of reference that allows understanding to occur for that person. Consequently, the identity and construction of oneself will not always be evident to, and understood by, another as it is subjective and reliant on tacit knowledge.

Since the 'self' has an individual frame of reference, differences can occur between representations of the 'self' in the reality outside of the self – which uses another frame of reference. For that reason, the represented 'self' or the *other* is often an altered form of the 'inner self' that has been reframed in order to be understood. This implies the dislocation of the *other* and the self. With reference to the creation of a fictional character in the context of theatre, the performer acts out the character in reference to their own identity and in this way the character can become *other* to the performer and the representation thereof.

The representation of the *external expressive form*, both in theatrical performance and performance in real life, is outside of the self. This is the dualism of the body and of the self.

2.3.3 Dualism

Dualism, as attributed to René Descartes, deals with the binary relationship of the body and the mind (Pinker, 2002: 9) which can also be translated as the binary relationship between the actor and observer, the creative and the critical. The 'ghost in the machine' of Dualism states that the individual has two components - the body and the

mind (Pinker, 2002:9). The dual state of these two components is that they function independently of each other but are also co-dependant.

Descartes favoured the mind over the body in his theory of dualism (Synnott, 1992: 94). The physical body does not control the mind, but the mind chooses the actions and reactions of experience. Decisions such as speaking are not caused, but are chosen. The mind forms sentences, but it can choose not to say these thoughts or to speak them. The body is not independent in this same way¹⁰. The mind has understanding and superior knowledge of the self and its experience, whereas the body is a reactive and responsive entity (Pinker, 2002: 9). Therefore, it is the mind that is able to choose and to decide, contrary to the experiences of the body, which are caused. The mind does not have the divisible parts that the body does; it is an eternal and separate entity (Pinker, 2002: 9). The experiences and reactive responses of the body, although caused,, form the identity as much as the experience and understanding ability of the mind. Although contemporary findings about the mind are able to separate and divide the mind, for my purposes the basic division of conscious and subconscious found in Dualism, is being used. The motivation for this is to not overcomplicate the process that has been taken for the understanding of the *other* and *personal catharsis*. In Chapter 4 it is discussed how it became evident that a further study into the machinations of the mind is needed in order to develop the workshops. But in the initial research for this study, the two older foundational theories, as spoken of by Descartes and Locke, were purposely used.

2.3.3.1 The Self and the *other*

One of Descartes arguments for the dual state of existence is the way in which the mind

¹⁰Issues such as a bodies nature response to certain stimuli where the responses are not chosen or an illness such as tourettes syndrome where the verbal impulses are not chosen are valid points to be discusses (Tourettes, 2009) . For the purposes of this study, I am taking the foundational application of chosen behaviour and identity within that and within dualism. This also addresses modern findings and theories about the 'bodymind'. To represent the dualist nature of the body and the mind, I am purposely using the internal mind to represent the separate *internal expressive form* as an undivided unit. The body is an external form as a machine which is manipulated as represented by the *external expressive form*.

and the body are constructed (Descartes, 1967: 177). The body can be divided into sections or pieces, as in a machine, and labelled and placed, as a leg goes below the trunk, et cetera. Nerves, muscles, bones, organs and limb are all separate and divisible in their parts, yet the mind cannot be dealt with in this manner (Descartes, 1967: 177). I refer to the mind as the consciousness of a person, the internal landscape that controls the body and makes decisions. The mind is the central awareness. While this study refers to the mind as being conceptually divisible into conscious and unconscious (or subconscious), this was originally not part of Descartes description and philosophy.

Descartes rejected the idea that mind could operate by physical principles. He thought that behaviour, especially speech, was not caused by anything, but freely chosen. He observed that our consciousness...does not feel as if it is divisible into parts or laid out in space. (Pinker, 2002: 8)

Descartes could doubt the existence of the body in the hierarchy he proposed, yet he could not do this with the mind. He considered and rejected the body, but the mind was inseparable to him (Pinker, 2002: 9).

Through freedom of choice and the experience of that choice, we construct our identity and subsequently, how we create the *other*. Because the self has performed an action, that self is accountable for it. However, I recognise that accountability is subject to the same problems as a character in a theatrical setup that performs actions that influence other characters and the narrative. For example, some actions that are performed are not necessarily wholly evident to that character in terms of the possible repercussions that these actions may cause.

This theory can be applied to the performance of the everyday self in the real world. An individual can make decisions and perform actions that seem relevant and appropriate, but in retrospection the repercussions of the actions are not coherent with the motivations for the action. One must confront the result of choices made in order to realise them.

Our consciousness is ultimately experienced as a 'solid' entity, although it can be expressed as, and conceptually divided into, conscious and subconscious. Therefore,

by coming into contact with the repercussions of the choices made through either of these states of mind, we can understand the motivations for these choices and our behaviour. This understanding is not necessarily immediate and may require retrospection. As discussed before, according to Dualism it seems that the mind and the body are perceived as separate but co-dependent forms. Because they are separate and have different methods of processing data, experiences and the way of experiencing differ, and consequently so does the expression of either form.

In the matter of speech, the mind chooses what to say and forms it into sentences that are coherent and understandable. Nevertheless, the way in which the mouth produces this expression can change the perceived meaning and understanding of it. If the body is referred to as a machine, in order to produce the sound of the expression as speech, body parts such as the vocal cords and movable speech articulators must be used. Through the process of change of tone, speed and facial expression, the meaning of the expression is able to be changed. This can be a controlled choice, or it can be influenced without the conscious mind. The indivisible mind is in a sense corrupted by the mechanical body. An action chosen by the self, viewed by an outsider is able to be very different from the action that was intended or from the intended meaning of the action. This creates the possibility that the repercussions of the action could have been hidden from the self, since the actions chosen and the actions viewed are different. Therefore, in order to be accountable for our actions and their repercussions, we need to face the *other* and acknowledge it. This *other* is the shown and externally interpreted action in the real world. It is external to the self and referred to as the *external expressive form*. This entails that we become the actor/spectator of the self.

Even though a 'misunderstanding' between desired and real expression can occur, the self must take ownership of the actions of the *external expressive form*. With reference to the dualism of the body and mind, and the self and the *other*, a choice must be made to regain control of the *internal expressive form* of the self in order to restore truthful behaviour.

2.3.3.2 Summary and Conclusion

From the perspective of concepts such as 'the blank slate' and the 'ghost in the machine' - approaches to identity construction supported by Empiricism and Dualism - experience dictates the development of the identity and the self. The mind and the body are separate but co-dependant entities. The experiences and reactions of the body are caused, yet the reactions of the mind are chosen. Since the reactions of the body are caused, there is a possibility that there might be lack of control of the external body. If the mind chooses to express aspects of the 'self', it must do this through the body. What the mind chooses to express will not necessarily be what is presented in reality since the body is reacting to a choice made by both the conscious and the subconscious as an indivisible entity . Within the dualistic nature of the self there is a dislocation of the *internal expressive form* and the *internal expressive form*. The external presentation is a performance - a created identity that functions outside of the true self, a performance that is created through the conscious and the subconscious. The performance of the *other* within reality is linked to the performance of character in the theatre, acting as a correlation of these two identities. Structures can then be explored in reference to reuniting the *internal form* in real life and the performed *other* in a real 'theatrical' perspective. The theatrical elements can then be used in the development of the series of workshops, which are aimed at liberating a participant's *creative voice of identity* through *personal catharsis*.

2.4 The *other*

Identity is reliant on experience which functions through the body and the mind. The *internal expressive form* is understandable to that persons' unique psyche. The *external expressive form* is represented to any observer and is consequently judged to be the intended expression of the self. In the next section I will discuss the formation of the other outside of the internal identity and how there can become a dislocation between the two. Using Butler's theory, a solution is identified regarding how the two

states can be re-connected or at least identified by means of recognition. It is through recognition that the self is changed and the other becomes observed.

2.4.1 The *mystery of the other person* theory of Emmanuel Levinas

2.4.1.1 Introduction

The mind is an immaterial substance: it has powers possessed by no pure physical structure, and can continue to exist when the body dies. The mind is made up of several components, including a moral sense, an ability to love, a capacity for reason that recognizes whether an act conforms to ideals of goodness, and a decision faculty that chooses how to behave. (Pinker, 2002: 1)

Emmanuel Levinas (1987: 1) will be discussed in relation to what he refers to as the 'mystery of the other person' in order to contextualise the *other*. The main point of departure for this discussion comes from *Time and the Other* (1987), where Levinas sets up a parallel between the *other* and the self with identity as a product of time. Levinas (1987) argues that it is only with death that time fails to be a defining factor for identity and the self. However, the identity and ego, although products of time, are also outside of time, living in the instant. Levinas' theory of the Other forms the basis of much of Judith Butler's work as discussed in Chapter 3.2.2. Before Butler's work is investigated, it is necessary to summarise findings on the concept of the *other*.¹¹

2.4.1.2 The Other/*other*

The *other* is a concept of dualism related specifically to the body and the mind. This dualism can also refer to the division between the self and the *other* (Synnott, 1992: 93). The self is separated into two states or forms: the *internal expressive form*; and the

¹¹ For further readings also see Bloechl 2000, Bruner 1986, and Hand 1996.

external expressive form or the *other*. These two forms are separate but dependant on each other because they come from the same source: 'The Other as Other is not only an alter ego: the Other is what I myself am not' (Levinas, 1987: 83). The *other* is that which the self is not, yet is part of the self and connected to it. The *other* is traditionally spoken of as a separate individual from the self, but this study uses the concept to refer to the *external expressive form*. This *external expressive form* is other to the self, as the expression is altered through the mechanics of the body and through the subconscious, as is discussed in Chapter 3.3. Levinas (1987: 98) separates the subconscious from the conscious as being an inferior and deficient aspect of the mind: 'Consciousness, of which the unconscious is itself a deficient mode, remains the dominant characteristic of our interpretation of the mind [*esprit*]' (Levinas, 1987: 98).

The consciousness of the self is the dominant part in the partnership. The *other*, although it is an external and separate expression, is influenced by the subconscious which is 'separate' from the self: 'The relationship with the other is not an idyllic and harmonious relationship of communion... we recognise the other as resembling us, but exterior to us' (Levinas, 1987: 75). Because it is exterior to us, it can be assumed that it experiences events and time differently from the *internal expressive form* and the conscious self.

The two forms of the *internal expressive form* and the *other* are individual forms of experience but are still linked because they have the same frames of reference and experiences. The separation of the individual forms is also due to 'the instant as originary¹² sensation or materiality 'it is an originary self-sensing, where the sensing and the sensed are one and the same, yet are nonetheless, paradoxically, non coincident' (Levinas, 1987:5). They are non-coincident since the interpretations of the shared experiences differ, in the same way that the conscious and the subconscious differ. What the *other* and the self experience differs from instant to instant. This inherently influences the self-relationship since the experiences and time frames related to the self and the *other* change. This is because time is subjective and isolated from the self and

¹² Originary is a term Levinas (1987) uses to denote a way of understanding that originates in and of the thing in question (Bolt, 2009:30).

the *other*. 'So as to characterise time solely in terms of the subject's originary self-relationship, the materiality of the instant [sic] is insufficient because the subject is not only [sic] an island unto itself, but is also ecstatically projected into the world' (Levinas, 1987:7). The *external expressive form* (the *other*) follows time and experience that is different from the *internal expressive form*. The self (the subject) is concerned not only with itself and the sensation of the instant. The self lives in reference to time in instants, since it analyses and experiences the moment as separated and in context to the next moment. The self therefore becomes enclosed and secluded within the instant, since its reference to time and experience differs from the external experience within the *other*. In this respect, the way the self experiences and the way the *other* experiences are not totally reliant on each other. Therefore the self becomes dislocated from the *other* in reference to time, behaviour and memory.

Because the self needs to communicate, it cannot be totally contained and isolated as an *inner expressive form* - it needs to express itself in a way that is external to the self. 'The subject always only finds *itself*, its enjoyment, its labour, its knowledge, in the ecstatic movement which seems to offer the promise of an escape outside of itself' (Levinas, 1987:7). By allowing the *other* to experience and labour, the self can experience too. This creates distance and separation between the self and the *other* because the one is doing the experiencing and the other is responsible for the analysis and observation thereof. In this way both the elements of experiencing and analysing are responsible for the self's reaction, although the expression of the reaction can be different. Over time, as the self's enclosed space decreases, the inconsistencies between the *internal expressive* and the *external expressive forms* increase. The self, although still wanting to express its identity, starts to protect its identity through different choices: 'What, then, is this personal relationship other than the subject's power over the world, meanwhile protecting its personality?' (Levinas, 1987: 81). The *internal* and *external expressive forms* relate to each other with regard to protecting the identity, but because there is dislocation between the two forms, inconsistencies can be present. In this relationship, it is the *external expressive form* that becomes the dominant expressive power over the increasingly isolated *internal expressive form*.

The self draws away from the true¹³ *internal expressive form* and so the dominant *other* expresses itself in ways that are different from the self. It is as if the *other* draws more and more from the subconscious as the conscious hides away. The *internal expressive form* expresses itself, but because the *other* - the *external expressive form* - is influenced by the subconscious through a dislocation of the internal self, the external expression can differ from the original.

The relationship with the Other, the face-to-face with the Other, the encounter with a face that at once gives and conceals the Other, is the situation in which an event happens to a subject who does not assume it... but where in a certain way it is in front of the subject. (Levinas, 1987: 79)

The *other* lies to the self since we are not able to distinguish the difference between the self and the *other* as external to ourselves. Because the *other* is still part of the self and therefore experiencing the same things, the same frame of reference is used. The behaviour of the *other* is relearned and implemented while the truthful behaviour of the internal form becomes isolated and not fully expressed.

Are there situations where the self and the *other* complement each other and work in unity? In situations where the self and the *other* could reunite only one part will remain internal and the other external. Yet, '[i]f one could possess, grasp, and know the other, it would not be other' (Levinas, 1987: 90); it would be recognition of the self, and 'ghosting' formation of the *other*. This is the relationship that is explored and attempted to be attained with the series of workshops discussed in Chapter 4. This is done by reconstructing my experience with the autobiographical performance together with the participants. Through specific performative aspects, the participants try to reconnect the self and the *other* (through recognition and acknowledgement) in order to reassert the *internal expressive form*.

¹³ I speak of the true form, or the *internal expressive form* being the truthful representation of self to place it as being the original expressive form. This does not imply that the *internal expressive form* is incorruptible, but rather, for the purpose of this study, that the *internal expressive form* is original and truthful as being compared to the dislocated *external expressive form*.

2.4.1.3 Summary and conclusion

Levinas refers to time and the *other* as dependent on each other: time changes the self and the *other* by dislocating and separating them. The way in which the self and the *other* experience time is different, and this is what can change the expression of each. By looking at the separation of the self from the *other*, the expressive change becomes evident and plausible. This is because the two entities are transformed by relying on different parts of the psyche. The self becomes secluded, but tries to remain the dominant part of identity, while the *other*, being removed from the self, starts to tap into the subconscious and the suppressed images in it. By realising the dislocation of the self, the actor/spectator can start to recognise the repercussions of this. The following section will discuss in more detail the repercussions that occur after the separation of self and *other* and makes suggestions as to how these could possibly be dealt with.

2.4.2 'I' as Autonomous - Judith Butler

I have previously discussed Dualism and made it the basis for understanding the *internal* and *external expressive forms*. Butler's work seems to contradict the objectivity of dualism, but my focus is on the construction of the *other*. It is in the construction of the *other* that dualism and Butler can co-exist since they are inter-dependant. Butler takes the objectivity of dualism and offers solutions to the binary relationship through recognition and reconnection.

2.4.2.1 Introduction

Since I cannot tell the story in a straight line, and I lose my thread, and I start again, and I forget something crucial, and it is too hard to think about how to weave it in, and I start thinking, thinking, there must be some conceptual thread that will provide a narrative here, some lost link, some possibility for chronology, and the 'I' becomes increasingly conceptual, increasingly awake, focused, determined, it is at this point that the thread must fall apart. The 'I'

who narrates finds that it cannot direct its narration, finds that it cannot give an account of its inability to narrate, why its narration breaks down, and so it comes to experience itself, or, rather, re-experience itself, as radically, if not irretrievably, unknowing about who it is.

(Butler, 2001: 35)

Judith Butler is usually associated with phenomenology and gender theories, both of which are concerned with the *other*, specifically as something that is separate from the individual (Disch, 1999). Her work has been analysed from the perspective that the *other* is an unknown part of the self and that in order to regain the autonomous nature of the self one must recognise and acknowledge this *other* before the self is renewed. The *other* in a sense must be a constructed character that is dislocated from the self and performed so that recognition can occur.

2.4.2.2 The Self and the *other*

From my personal experience of the *other*, I discovered that it seemed to be an altered representation of the ideal person that I wanted to be, but was not part of the self that I presented. It was assumed that the *other* had to be an ideal as it seemed to be the most successful representation of me. However, the *other* was not truthful because it was different from the self; it was also detrimental to the self because the repercussions of the actions of the *other* arose from unethical behaviour. I had recognised the *other* as counter to the self:

Recognition becomes the process by which I become other than what I was and, therefore, also, the process by which I cease to be able to return to what I was.
(Butler, 2001: 23)

In retrospect, it was possible for me to recognise that because of the dislocation of self and the *other*, my intended 'ideal' and the projected 'ideal' were not the same. Therefore, my behaviour could be considered as unethical towards the self. The behaviour is unethical because the behaviour of the *external expressive form* can

contradict the *internal expressive form*. Consequently, the external behaviour can project an identity that is not coherent with the internal form, which is moral misconduct and misrepresentation. The *other* is other to the self. Yet the *other* can be an ideal and it can be represented. The dualistic nature of the *other* needs to be placed in reference to the state of the internal form which presents itself externally as an ideal. The *other* is referred to as an ideal, because it is not real or concrete. It is a separate concept or idea, something that can only be attained consciously and realised physically once recognition has taken place. The ideal self is attainable, but the process of attaining it will not necessarily be known to the self. Since the *other* incorporates a state of subconscious desire (which is suppressed by the consciousness of self) the process of connecting and recognising the two is not evident to the self. However, as the self and the *other* are somehow linked, this study proposes that it is through the (re)presentation of the *other* that these two forms can merge and outwardly express a character of self. It is only by presenting the *other* (not the self) as a character that this interaction, and ultimately recognition, can occur.

2.4.2.3 Recognition of the *other* and of the self

By presenting the *other* as a character it can be recognised by an individual, together with the frame of reference for its construction. An individual is able to recognise the *other* because the *other* in the character expressing the ideal has to become known and experienced by the self as well. The self and the *other* have been created out of the same experience and recognition. But as Butler (2005: 27) observes: 'does recognition...consist in a reciprocal act whereby I recognise that the other is structured the same way I am?' It is with reference to this point that it is argued that although the self and the other both have different frames of reference, they are indeed structured in the same way. In the same way that the self experiences, so must the subconscious and the *other*. Therefore, this suggests that their experiences are the same, but what each form acknowledges and attains is different. Their reactions to the stimuli that create the experiences are also different. This shared source material is the reason that there can be a reconnection between the self and the *other*. Butler (2005: 27) states

that the self starts to learn through 'recognition [and that] becomes the process by which I become other than what I was and so cease to be able to return to what I was'. By recognising and becoming the *other* through a performed act, the individual can merge these two forms. By recognising their commonalities, the individual can ultimately alter the self so that it cannot return to what it originally was. It is as if the recognition of the *other* allows a veil to be lifted providing a pathway towards realising the ideal. This is what is referred to as *personal catharsis*, where the mask of the *other* becomes more transparent as new behaviour is learnt.

Not all of its past is gathered and known in the act of recognition; the act alters the organisation of that past and its meaning at the same time that it transforms the present of the one that receives recognition. Recognition is an act in which the 'return to self' becomes impossible for another reason as well. An encounter with the 'other' effects transformation of the self in the course of this exchange from which there is no return (Butler, 2005: 28).

Once the self recognises what is being presented as the *other*, alterations to that which is being presented can occur.

The lifting of this veil does not necessarily lead to an understanding of what originally created the veil. Not all previous historical and psychological data of transformative acts are known, only the results. The person that the self has become originates from a specific and unique background. This is also applicable to the *other*. These backgrounds have now been understood and recognised differently by remembering specific historical details of the past. Yet, this act of recall has already altered some of the information as the memory focuses on specific aspects of the background. The method in which the self has changed and the *other* has been developed may fall outside the realm of personal history and memories since they are referred to differently.

The way in which historical data are remembered by the self may differ from the actual events and from how the presented *other* acted during the event due to the subjective nature of this data. However, by finding a common denominator such as a memory

reference that is revealed by the subconscious, and by playing the role out as the character represented by the subconscious, the act changes and new understanding is attained. The key, however, is action. The self has to transform towards the *other*. It needs to be played out as a role identity that takes one outside of oneself so as to become an actor/spectator. Certain aspects of the self need to become externalised so that an individual can view the action and the repercussions thereof objectively and thus understand the *other*. The objectivity is achieved through the removal of oneself from the action. By incorporating a dualist approach of objectivity, the subjective nature that Butler speaks of is removed with the recognition that the self observer and the self actor are separate. This does not imply a further dislocation, but a temporary removal of oneself as a primarily emotional spectator to a more rational spectator of the self.

2.4.2.4 Understanding the *other* through representation

If I try to give an account of myself, if I try to make myself recognisable and understandable, then I might begin with a narrative account of my life. But this narrative will be disorientated by what is not mine, or not mine alone. In addition, I will have to, some degree; make myself substitutable in order to make myself recognisable. The narrative authority of the 'I' must give way to the perspective and temporality of a set of norms that contest the singularity of my story. (Butler, 2005: 37)

As Butler states, the action of going outside of oneself in order to know the *other*, needs to take form in a narrative, a story that is told, such as a subconsciously driven memory. The self needs to step away and fully become the 'presented other'. The self needs to remove its control in order to experience the presented *other* without influence, and without any rationality and emotional control of the self. The self then becomes a rational spectator of the self. In essence, the self needs to experience how others perceive and experience the *external expressive form*. Any autonomous action must be removed from the source of the act, since it is through this process of removal that understanding can occur. The self allows the *other* to become a character that is

enacted and performed for an audience. The embodiment is created through the realisation that there is an external form of the self. The embodiment of the *other* occurs when the self releases the control of the external that it thought it had. The self can no longer hold any form of ownership to the performance – the link to the work needs to be removed in order to become a rational spectator. If the self continues to hold ownership, the act cannot transform and it will remain a presentation of the expressive self rather than an expression of the *other* because it has not been released from the self.

‘The ‘I’ finds that, in the presence of an other, it is breaking down, it does not know itself’ (Butler, 2005: 69). This ‘not knowing itself’ refers to the ‘I’ not having the confidence to be honest. The ‘I’ or self has to lose all ownership in order to fully face the *other*. By facing the *other*, perception of self is changed and cannot return to what it was. The self must be broken down through deliberate action in order to know itself. By deconstructing the self, an individual is able to acknowledge aspects of self beyond any boundaries that were originally placed around it. In the deliberate act of performing the self, the self becomes the *other* when it can be broken down - that which is ideal and beyond the self. In this way the self is accountable - it may express a narrative without pride and fear. The self is humbled and subjectified in order for an ideal but true representation of self to be given.

Before the other one cannot give an account of the ‘I’ who has been trying all along to give an account of itself. Certain humility must emerge in this process, perhaps also certain knowingness about the limits of what there is to know. (Butler, 2005: 69)

By breaking down, the *internal expressive form* can re-emerge as the dominant expression. This results in *personal catharsis*. If the self was not able to return to its truthful form or if it was not able to recognise itself, it could never be a whole form and *personal catharsis* could not occur. Reassertion of the *internal expressive form* and recognition of the *external expressive form* requires humility - the removal of an arrogant manner of ownership. To face the *other*, the *other* needs to be separated and heightened, as in a performance, in order to allow recognition of behaviour.

Language, both verbal and non-verbal, is a means of recognition of the dislocation between the internal and the external. The self can express itself in a way that makes its inner thoughts and actions very specific, controlled and clear to the self. Once these thoughts and actions are placed outside of one self, the language may stay the same but the interpretation by others may be different. The semiotic system stays the same, but the denotation and connotation differ. By performing the *other*, the self has the opportunity to recognise these languages and, more importantly, to observe whether the impact or result of these languages in action differs dramatically from those previously conjured in the mind.

During the rehearsal period for my autobiographical solo, I did not want to show specific sections of the material that was being worked on to my supervisor/friends/colleagues et cetera. The reason for this was my fear of judgement and not knowing whether a spectator would understand what was being expressed or the origins of the expression. As soon as my self was removed from this fear and allowed my thoughts to be expressed outside of my self, recognition took place and the truth of the language came out. 'The possibility of the 'I', of speaking and knowing the 'I', resides in a perspective that dislocates the first-person perspective whose very condition it supplies' (Butler, 2001: 23). By allowing the spectator to experience my ideal, I was able to see the reality of it. By performing the *other*, it was noted how I was being observed and to recognise my external actions and how they differentiate from the internal dialogue that was taking place.

2.4.2.5 Summary and Conclusion

The *internal expressive form* and the *external expressive form* or the *other* are two representations of the self as part of one body. Each has a specific role and a specific interpretation of action and expression. There is a dislocation between the two that can only be addressed through recognition and understanding of the repercussions of each form in their expression. Once the recognition and repercussions have been performed, the *other* is rerouted to the conscious; it is returned to the self. The self is changed

through this contact, but whether it is influenced by the *other* or if the *other* is made transparent, is a choice. This choice is centred on accepting or rejecting the repercussions of the actions and the changes that need to be made. What cannot be told has been enacted. The self has been recalled and placed in context with the *other*.

This does not mean that I am possessed by the Other, since the Other is also dispossessed, called upon, and calling, in a relation that is not, for that reason, reciprocal. (Butler, 2001:33)

That which is being presented and thought is recognised, reconnected and changed. Personal catharsis takes place during the reconnection and recognition of the two states.

2.5 Construction of Catharsis

2.5.1 Introduction

In this section, the traditional use of the term catharsis and its definition will be discussed before a definition of it is constructed. During this process the theories of identity construction and my model of performance will be linked so that *personal catharsis* is able to be defined for this specific context of the study.

The concept of catharsis is very briefly mentioned in reference to tragedy within Aristotle's *Poetics* (Kruse, 1979: 169). It is upon this brief note that the majority of the research into catharsis is based. Therefore, the exploration and re-exploration of this concept will focus mainly on academic writing of catharsis and not on the original text itself. The rationale for this is that I do not intend to use the word within the confines of tragedy alone, but rather in reference to the self and the presented *other* in contemporary performance and the everyday performance of self.

2.5.2 Purgation or purification of Catharsis

In Aristotle's *Poetics*, catharsis is related to tragedy and art, however 'Aristotle does not discern exactly what catharsis is, but he refers only to the catharsis of something akin to 'these things'' (Kruse, 1979: 169). The general consensus amongst scholars is that catharsis refers to three basic categories: clarification, purgation and cleansing, all of which refer to an emotional or physical response, or both (Kruse, 1979: 164). Alan Paskow (1983: 59) translates the catharsis passage in the *Poetics*:

Tragedy, through the piteous and fearsome (or terrible) events [depicted on stage], incites pity and fear (or terror) [in the spectator] and then [by a process not explicitly disclosed anywhere by Aristotle] these emotions are purified [which is to say that the future fearful and pitying responses of the spectator in both their dramatic and real-life forms will be of a better, more stable quality].

Catharsis is often specifically taken to mean either the 'purgation' of the emotions of pity and fear from the consciousness of the audience that witnesses the tragedy or as the 'purification', in a moral or ethical sense, of these emotions (Golden, 1962: 51). These two definitions work within specific frameworks that have been associated with the forms in which catharsis may function. Catharsis is identified under the following three classifications:

- (a) A form of moral purification through which a proper discipline is placed on the audience's reaction to pity and fear;
- (b) A form of structural purification in which the development of the plot purifies the tragic deed of its moral pollution and thus allows the audience to experience the emotions of pity and fear;
- (c) A form of intellectual clarification in which the concepts of pity and fear are clarified by the artistic representation of them. (Golden, 1973: 473)

As part of this study, these forms will not be discussed individually, but they do form part of the exploration of purgative catharsis and purification catharsis.

Some commentators believe catharsis is a moral or intellectual clarification or enlightenment for the audience. However, catharsis has been identified more frequently as the purgation of audience members' emotions, the purification of an action - which would otherwise be considered censurable - through plotted elements, or even the removal from the mimesis of that which would, in reality, produce confusion. (Kruse, 1979: 164)

Catharsis purges a spectator's emotion through the act of spectatorship. This breaks the spectator away from copying or mimicking the portrayed actions because they recognise the fallacy of this. It is this recognition that allows the emotions to be released. This is applicable to personal catharsis, excepting that the purged emotions are linked to the self as produced by viewing the self.

A general consensus towards the definition of catharsis is usually associated with the result of tragedy as experienced by the audience. In a tragedy the morals and truth of the world become obscured and a tragic hero comes under the influence of fate to which he/she will be held accountable. Catharsis occurs in the spectator of these events. The spectator experiences emotions of fear and pity because of the events presented in front of him/her which affects the body and the mind. However, as the tragic hero recognises his faults and tries to restore balance and order in the world through the recognition of his tragic flaw, the spectator attains catharsis by purging or purification of these emotions (Worthen, 2000: 128).

2.5.3 Application of Catharsis within the dualism of the body and mind

As discussed, catharsis is either the purgation or purification of emotions (Kruse, 1979: 164). The purgation of emotions is the dissociation and removal of specific emotions from an event or events. Purification is concerned with renewal of the emotions and acceptance of them (Kruse, 1979: 165). The different applications and forms for defining catharsis either promote or demote these applications. But there is a psycho-

physiological connection to these emotions (Kruse, 1979: 166). This is a major barrier in the emphasis of each definition.

The first interpretation of purgation stresses catharsis as a:

Process of clarification or enlightenment, aligned with the pleasure Aristotle says we derive from learning something ... discovery of the relationship between incidents and universals and with our ascertainment of how things come about. (Kruse, 1979: 164)

The focus is on the acknowledgement not only of the character's flaws, but of the spectators' recognition of and identification with these flaws. Through the process of learning comes the release, since understanding of the events and of the repercussions allows the total release of the emotions. This release brings enjoyment to the spectator (Kruse, 1979: 166).

Catharsis as purgation entails the 'medical context of healing and curing through expulsion and evacuation of harmful elements; it means getting rid of disturbances by removing their causes' (Schaper, 1968: 32). The body is purged of the emotions, a total removal of the emotions. Therefore, the traditional emotions of fear and pity, which are created during the tragedy, are totally removed from the body. This indicates that the emotions have been recognised and released as the repercussions of the actions that caused these emotions become known. The spectator returns to a neutral state and those negative emotions that were experienced before are no longer present. With an Elizabethan interpretation this normal state involves the four humours:

Tragedy, according to their [Jeanne Croissant and D.W. Lucas,] interpretation of the Poetics, artificially induces in its spectators pity and fear. The bodily humour (black bile) responsible for these emotions is partially used up by the emotional excitation and then discharged. The spectator, because he is relieved of excess bile and no longer suffers emotional pressures, experiences pleasure. He has, at the same time, achieved both a proper balance of his four humours as well as dispositions to pity and fear in forms that will be less disruptive of the whole psyche. (Paskow, 1983: 60)

But attaining catharsis also evokes the psyche. In the evoking of the mind, 'catharsis' is said to mean 'purification', and this meaning derives from a 'religious context of cleansing the spirit and sublimating the emotions in order to prepare for or to achieve a state of exaltation' (Schaper, 1968: 32). The spirit is the same as the mind since it is an untouchable element akin to consciousness. If the spirit is cleansed, then it is the mind that realises it and benefits from it. As purgation refers to the body, purification refers to the mind. The mind recognises the actions of the tragic character as being applicable to the individual audience members. The emotions of fear and pity that arise are the responses evoked on a personal mental level. It is as though the character is the *other* of the self, which is a visual representation of possible fears that the self can recognise and acknowledge. Catharsis allows the release of these emotions rather than a removal of the emotions. Release of the emotions implies that the emotions still exist, but no longer have intense negative repercussions. If the emotions are removed, there exist no repercussions for this action because the emotions no longer exist and cannot be replaced. The release from a state of tension and fear creates new emotions of elation and renewal. The negative emotions are purified and released (Kruse, 1979: 164).

The purification theory of catharsis is that it is a mimetic function. The spectator reacts upon recognition of the events within a performance as being applicable to his or her own life.

He [Aristotle] asserts in the *Poetics* that human beings learn by imitating and that we delight in artistic works that imitate (in some sense reproduce) human issues. (Paskow, 1983: 61)

Catharsis works as a therapeutic function attained by the spectator through recognition of the plot. The events in the performance - the plot - allow catharsis to occur. Traditionally, it is in a tragedy that this mimetic function takes place. According to Aristotle, artistic representation allows pleasure through the representation, as it is only mimetic of the real life experiences which the audience can recognise (Kruse, 1979: 166). Yet there is a distinction between pleasures of the body and of the self. The body and self are separate in this as a distinction between internal and external. The self is

the internal truthful nature while the external is the corruptible, presented self. This distinction is important to divide the internal and the external, because the internal ultimately controls the external as a hand controls a glove. But the glove can still be altered without the hand being affected.

The cleansing of the body and cleansing of the senses is a result of the release of physical inflictions caused by emotions. The reaction of the mind in reference to emotions such as anger would be exactly that - a reaction to an event. The mimetic function causes a psycho-physiological connection, but these two reactions of the body and mind are independent of each other. The fear and pity that is evoked by the tragedy results from the recognition of a process that we have seen. This recognition means that we identify with the possibility that the tragedy could be inflicted upon ourselves in the future. Pity towards the character is evoked through the recognition of the fear that misfortune could happen to us:

They will experience fear because plotted incidents will lead them to understand that the tragic persona is like them, and because the sequence of action makes them aware of their own precarious existences in a universe where a human error or oversight can upset the established order. (Kruse, 1979: 170)

However, in both of these emotional states and in the spectrum of emotions caused through tragedy, we use ourselves as a frame of reference. The *other* that is the cause of this mimetic recognition is compared to the self. When a dislocation is recognised this can cause fear for ourselves and pity for the experiences of others. This causes a psycho-physiological connection to the events as both the mind and body reacts to the emotions. It is only once the order is restored, that we are able to release the emotions and purify the response of the mind and the body. Our direct reference to ourselves is released through the catharsis.

Catharsis is then a product of the function of the plot. The events allow the catharsis to occur. Leon Golden (Kruse, 1979:163) translates Aristotle as:

It is presented in dramatic, not narrative form, and achieves, through the representation of pitiable and fearful incidents, the catharsis of such pitiable and fearful incidents.

Catharsis is dependent on the event that will take place, and the audience is aided in achieving catharsis. This is a therapeutic function, as it is the recognition that allows catharsis to occur.

The traditional interpretation of catharsis attributes to tragedy a therapeutic effectiveness. On this view, a release from unwanted and painful emotions or passions is achieved through stimulation of the same or similar emotions, bringing about an emotional climax unbearable for long, and therefore discharging itself when a certain pitch is reached. (Schaper, 1968: 135)

But this is dependent on the assumption that the emergent emotions of fear and pity are uncomfortable and should be eliminated (Kruse, 1979: 164). Somehow, in viewing a tragedy, these affections are raised to a pitch, and when they are finally relieved, the morbid element is discarded.

In both these translations of purgation versus purification, emotions and incidents of the character are mentioned. However '(i)t is impossible to discern from these translations whether catharsis applies to emotions or incidents' (Kruse, 1979: 163). Aristotle speaks of catharsis, tragedy and emotions, but not of how it happens, that is, whether it is the emotions themselves or the actual events that result in catharsis. It is also not clear as to whether it is the body or the mind that is responsive to catharsis. Catharsis is interpreted as being experienced as a mind-body expression. Because the emotions that are experienced in the tragedy affect both the body and the mind, the body and the mind can be reconnected into unison. Both parts experience the same thing, both are put into a state of tension, but once events have been recognised, acknowledged and released, the connection to the self is re-established through the release of tension and emotion.

2.5.4 Catharsis outside of Tragedy

The recognition and acknowledgment of the repercussion of the events that the audience witnesses, assists in attaining catharsis. The purgation and purification theories of catharsis occur through acknowledgement from the spectators' side or from recognition of the character. As a result it is something that needs to be viewed or presented in order to occur. '(C)atharsis can only happen to someone who in the presence of a work of art accepts the role of an aesthetic spectator' (Schaper, 1968: 140).

Catharsis can be applicable to forms other than tragedy and placed into any art form. For that reason catharsis is not solely dependent on the emotions of fear and pity:

In art forms other than tragedy, catharsis is affected through other emotions of response, for other art forms not only employ other devices, but in their fictional statements are concerned with other aspects of human life (Schaper, 1968: 141).

Art based on other forms of human life is specific to forms of emotions outside of fear and pity. The emotions that are specific to the art form can be the catalyst to experiencing catharsis within that form. Fear and pity is necessary for catharsis in tragedy; other art forms create different mimetic contents and structures (Schaper, 1968: 137). This is because emotional involvement differs for different art forms. Different real life events affect those involved with specific emotions, but through representation and mimesis of the same events these emotions are altered. If tragic representation evokes fear and pity, other forms evoke different emotions, such as a comedy evokes joy and a political drama can evoke anger.

Aristotle's insistence that a catharsis of emotions is requisite for tragic enjoyment stresses the difference between emotional reaction to life and emotional reaction to art. (Schaper, 1968: 169)

This indicates that the emotions that are highlighted within a performance are different to those in everyday life. This is why the *other* needs to be viewed outside of the self as a performance in order to attain personal catharsis. The emotions that arise in

autobiographical art or in everyday performance can lead towards attaining *personal catharsis*. The catharsis of these emotions is specific to each individual. As only the individual experiences their own emotions, only they are able to recognise how and where these subjective emotions have been evoked. By highlighting everyday life as a type of performance, the behaviour in the performance is highlighted and relearned. Since the performance is outside of real life as a heightened production, the emotions experienced by viewing this performance will be different from the emotions experienced in real life. An individual (with their real life as the subject for heightened performance) will be able to experience the resultant emotions, recognise the dislocation and flaws and attain catharsis. This allows the *other* to become transparent as control of the *internal expressive form* is restored.

2.5.5 Personal Catharsis

Neo-Freudians, asserted that the rejected traits tended to gather together and to constitute within the same body a second personality, what Frederick Perls named a sub-personality and what Herbert Fingarette labelled a 'counter-ego nucleus'. There is not, it seems to me, simply a rejected part of the psyche that rots - and by its decay periodically wreaks havoc on the ego - in a garbage can called the unconscious; there is instead, I believe, a counter-ego nucleus within each human being that is a personality in its own right and that constitutes a unified and intelligible force of opposition to the principal ego of the entire psyche. And on account of its failure to find a legitimate place within the psychic order this counter-ego nucleus opposes and attempts to thwart the strivings of the principal ego, struggling to gain, often by devious means, recognition and acceptance from its more powerful rival. (Paskow, 1983: 64)

The self, through the conscious and subconscious mind, and through experience and expression, can create two dislocated forms of identity and self; that is, as has already been stated, the *internal expressive form* and the *external expressive form (other)*. The

external expressive form can become dominant in expressive behaviour to such an extent that the external expression can become unrecognisable from the original expression of the *internal expressive form*. To recognise this dislocation, everyday behaviour needs to be viewed as a performance. In this context, this implies that within this viewing there will be a separation of self that would allow recognition of behaviour to occur. Recognition can result in an emotional reconnection which is a result of *personal catharsis*. *Personal catharsis* is the purgation and the purification of emotions evoked through witnessing and acknowledging one's own life, the dislocation between the *internal* and the *external expressive forms* and the repercussions of this dislocation. Catharsis occurs as a result of the recognition and acknowledgement that there is a dislocation between the *internal expressive form* and the *other*. The problem lies in recognising and acknowledging this *other* as being a construct of (amongst other aspects) ourselves. It is recognising the *other* as being part of us and external to the self. We have an ideal self, although through a negative self image and ideas of whom and what we are, can become distorted. However, this assertion is an internal process and an idea of what we are or how we externally represent ourselves. Because we judge this ideal to be what we propose it is, the self cannot comprehend any other representation or description of the self, and it is for this reason that we deny the existence of it and cannot recognise who we really are.

But as the tragic hero in our 'real' lives, we realise that somehow the negative events that surround our lives are caused by (amongst other aspects) ourselves, yet we do not recognise how. Since there is no understanding, there is a disconnection between the body and the mind and, much more importantly, the self and the *other*. We do not accept that there is a different representation of ourselves obvious to others (the spectators) but not to ourselves:

There is also repression, a rustication of phenomena from explicit awareness, a screening that prevents me from even apprehending what I cannot accept about myself. Freud of course believed that the rejected traits were thrust into what he called the unconscious (Paskow, 1983: 64).

The suppressed subconscious influences the *other*. True feelings and thoughts are correlated through this *other*. An example is when an individual speaks to a person they do not favour. The words that are spoken are often neutral, but the tone or facial expression betrays the true feelings of the speaker. As previously discussed, the expressive *other* does not always show what the self chooses to express, rather it is a caused reaction. Because the self does not recognise this, the self cannot understand the repercussions of its actions. As stated before, there is some degree of realisation of the responsibilities afforded to the actions and repercussions. To alter this we need to encounter the expressive *other*. We need to recognise the events leading to the construction and expression of the *other*. This does not mean that recognition alone will reconnect the mind and the body or the *internal* and *external expressive forms*; we cannot just explore the conflicts of self and *other* but rather 'we need to re-solve them' (Paskow, 1983: 66).

In order to be able to resolve the conflicts, the self needs to view the *other* as an external entity or even a character. The self needs to portray the *other* as, not only an external, but also a separate character. In this way the self becomes the actor/spectator that not only portrays the events and the plot that allows catharsis to occur, but also views them objectively and allows the emotions to be evoked in the self. *Personal catharsis* is a personal experience and realisation. Because the experiences of the self and the *other* are only known to the self, only the self can recognise the 'wrong' in the *external expressive form* compared to the 'right' of the *internal expressive form*, and find the connections between the two. Any other representation outside of the *inner expressive form* has the possibility of being a false and consequently, an ethical presentation. Once reconnection has taken place, the two can begin the process to merge and the moral balance is able to return to the character of self.

Personal catharsis is not a final state. It is the beginning of a process of self recognition. Although there is an immediate change upon recognition of the *other*, the *other*, as part of the personality and identity of an individual, can never be totally removed from the self. The *other* is part of the behaviour of that individual, and although new behaviour can be learned after *personal catharsis* takes place, the *other*

can only become more transparent to the *internal expressive form*. There is a reconnection between the two forms, which implies that the information received and understood by the two forms is coherent. While there is a connection, the *internal expressive form* must consciously work at making the *other* transparent. The *other* was a learned behaviour that is able to become reintroduced or used. This behaviour cannot be totally removed from the self, for that implies removing part of the self. I am arguing that this would alter identity and the *internal expressive form*. The *internal expressive form* becomes dominant in expression using the *external expressive form* as medium to express externally. The *other* will always be a 'ghost' that, depending on conscious control and assertion of *the internal expressive form*, either remains a 'mask' or is recognised and seen for what it is. The self will always have an *external expressive form* that can re-emerge as the *other*. This can become a danger to the truthfulness of the self, because the external self is constantly under threat of being dominated by a new constructed *other*.

2.5.6 Summary and Conclusion

Catharsis is a term mentioned but not defined by Aristotle in the *Poetics*. Although this term traditionally has been used in reference to tragedy and the emotions of fear and pity, it can be referred to in different art forms and different emotions. As various art forms evoke different emotions, they will not necessarily be dependent on the emotions of fear and pity for this catharsis to occur. But there is a need for a performer and spectator relationship.

In *personal catharsis*, due to the disconnection of the self and the *other*, a person is able to partake in both those roles as an actor/spectator. The *other* is the actor and the self is the spectator. In this relationship, the self is able to observe the *other* in the knowledge that it is treated as separate from itself. Upon this observation, the self can acknowledge the *other* and become aware of the repercussions of the disconnection between the *internal expressive form* and the *external expressive form*. Although catharsis is usually a physical and mental release in the sense of tensions and negative

emotions, in *personal catharsis* the physical release is the *other* and the mental release is the reconnection and purging of negative behaviours that have influenced the *other*. The mind and the body are reconnected and the result of this is possible coherency in the actions of the self and of the *other*. The self is more aware of the part it plays in its everyday performance and thereby, the secluded habitat of the mind is opened so that the self can recognise how it is being read externally, outside of itself. This recognition creates *personal catharsis*, but the *other* can never be totally removed from the self. It will be ever present, but *personal catharsis* gives the *internal expressive form* the place to re-assert itself as the true form. The recognition of the *other* is the start of the journey to the re-emergence of *the internal expressive form*.

Although all of the connections made from the theory are based upon my own experience, it is not known whether or not this performance of self can become a generalised method to attain personal catharsis. As previously discussed, each person is unique in their construction of identity due to their unique experiences and interpretations of these experiences. Applying the method of identity construction to others raises the issue that what I have experienced and the method that worked for me (placing it in an historical context of my studies and the preparation for the autobiographical performance) may not work for any other person. But the theory promotes a possibility that it is able to be applied to other individuals. On this assumption a 12 week series of workshops was created aimed at confidence building and allowing participants to experience their character's self externally and internally and to pinpoint the discrepancies between the two forms.

Chapter 3: 'I only ever use half of my double bed, I know but a single bed is just too small.' – The Personal Performance

3.1 Introduction

The theory of the *other* was identified after the discovery of the role of my *external expressive form*. This was unearthed through the process of an autobiographical performance. Issues of behaviour, performance, the *other* and consequently *personal catharsis* were all researched in conjunction to my own experience and discovery of the different forms of my self. In this chapter I re-explore the process that I went through in order to achieve *personal catharsis*. This was needed in order to locate changes in behaviour and to determine when these changes occurred. The process of my autobiographical performance was subjective, consequently the results were subjective and specific to me. By deconstructing my narrative process I highlight methodologies that helped in the attainment of *personal catharsis*. In this way I was able to create a workshop based on my journey as documented in this chapter.

3.2 A Personal Narrative

During my BDrAm Honours year at Stellenbosch University, during which I specialised in physical theatre, the stress of academic studies and practical work in reference to my personal life during that period led to a point where two options were available to me: I could either quit my studies for the year or continue with the course work which included class attendance, lecturing duties, practical assignments, academic assignments and exams. The reason for these feelings of discontent was related to a growing awareness of inadequacy with regard to the responsibilities that needed to be addressed. I felt a deep desire to separate myself from these responsibilities, although the competing desire to fulfil these responsibilities was equally strong. This conflict arose from the lack of confidence that was I felt in the capacity of *my creative voice of identity* or my ability to complete the year. Although I was experiencing fear of failure, there was still an urge

to complete the course since I was already halfway through the academic year. During this time of indecisiveness my supervisor proposed that I should create an autobiographical solo - a performance that would be researched, created and performed by myself on the subject of myself. There were several parameters that would need to be followed in the process of the creation of the autobiographical performance:

- it should be a solo performance,
- it should be autobiographical,
- the style should fall within the genre of physical theatre,
- the solo should be full-length, running from between 20 to 30 minutes,
- it should be performed on the H.B. Thom stage,
- decor design, lighting, sound, costumes and make-up should be integrated.

The idea of creating an autobiographical solo resonated with me as an ideal solution for addressing the fears and issues of my *external expressive form*. At this stage, I did not know it was dislocated from my *internal expressive form*. Nor was I aware of the repercussions of this dislocation. This solution generated fears about the process of finding and creating a text, and regarding the logistics of the performance. Furthermore, I wanted the work to be of excellent quality and for the audience to be amazed by the art that was being presented. I believed that if this personal goal was not realised, then the project would be a failure. Therefore, the fear of judgement played an important role in my journey towards *personal catharsis*. It was ultimately this fear of judgement that was fundamental in the recognition of the disconnection between my *inner expressive form* and my performed *external expressive form*. Even though the work would be autobiographical, I wanted to remove the audience's judgement of myself. Paradoxically, I wanted the work to be autobiographical but not about me.

Many art forms are in a sense autobiographical. The actor, performer or artist inevitably incorporates a part of him or herself into their work during their interpretation and creation of it. Specific schools of acting call for different methods of creating a role. Within the theatre, Constantine Stanislavski's method led the actors to live as the character they were presenting (Stanislavski, 1948:14). Jerzy Grotowski (1969)

acknowledged a binary relationship between actor and character. In many of the methods used, the performer must become *other* to their self. Becoming the *other* involves some form of self-examination. It cannot be assumed that the interpretation will hold elements of the creator, that is, that it will be an interpretation of him or her. However, the process evokes an emotional connection for the performer, a form of reflection in the work. The actor is required to transform him- or herself, while still being conscious of who they are as an identity and individual, in order to portray another character. The actor and the character are dependent on each other for creative creation. If either the actor or the character changes so too will the *other* due to the co-dependant binary relationship.

When the work is purposely autobiographical, the emotional connection between individual and character is more evident for the performer. In many forms of theatre, the distance between the actor's binary relationship with the character either diminishes or increases.

In an autobiographical content the distance between the two dimensions is very close, and releasing the artist from their self towards the *other* can be a difficult process. The process of finding the artistic dimension involves a triad: the observing-I, the I-in-situ and the not-I or the *other*. The process of my autobiographical solo demanded that I be forced into the I-in-situ position. The inner oppressed identity came forward as the narrator, but not a narrator of a story, but rather the narrator of the oppressed story. Augusto Boal speaks of the oppressed within a different context to the manner in which the term is used for in this study, but the same principle applies.

When the oppressed, in the role of artist, creates images of her own oppressive reality, she belongs to both these worlds. It is vital for these two worlds to be truly autonomous. The artistic creativity of the oppressed-protagonist must not limit itself to a simple realistic reproduction of the actual oppression: it must have its own artistic dimension (Boal, 1995).

Within the autobiographical solo, myself (as a performer and the intended performance) needed to be two separate worlds or realities. As creator and performer, I had to

observe myself outside of myself. I was the actor and the spectator of my Self in my bedroom, which was the performance platform. I was unable to hide behind a character; an artificial persona that could be blamed for any failures or that could lead me through the creative process. There was no external director present during the rehearsals I conducted in my room that could tell me what to do or to control the creative process beyond the parameters that were given. I had to lead myself through an improvisational self discovery experience to attain the 'not-I' and therefore a performance of the *other*.

As a rather private person, the idea of performing without the mask of a persona proved intimidating. However as an artist there was a desire for my creative expression to be seen and heard. The forms of art were usually expressed as a scripted text or a representational character that was other than myself and presented to an audience. In the initial stages of the process the concept of creating a character based on myself that would become *other* than myself was not apparent. My first interpretation of the task was that I would need to present myself¹⁴ whole and raw to an audience within a performance. This was achieved by creating a character of myself in the form of myself performing. There was no realisation that the character would be *other* to myself. During my performance, I felt that I would have to communicate my secrets to people who would be able to make a judgement based on the outer representation of myself, and who would never fully understand the content of the work. I did not trust the spectators to be able to handle such a complex subject as myself. It was this assumption that led to my *personal catharsis*. When I was able to trust the spectator and become a spectator of my own work, I was able to recognise my self and my actions.

¹⁴ Within this thesis I speak of myself and my self. Myself as one word refers to myself as a whole, that is the internal and external representations of self. My self, is me as a subjective individual recognised separately to myself.

3.3 The Process and the importance of improvisation

The¹⁵ creative process of the autobiographical solo was originally focused on the parameter that the performance must have a length of 20 minutes. This time frame was daunting and seemed extensive based on my experience, as I had previously only created examination group work under 10 minutes. I did not know where to start with this process in terms of material and creating a script. As I was specialising in physical theatre, I assumed that the process should be focused around the body; since it was the body that would relay the message and information of the narrative. However, I did not know what I would signify as there was no text. I still needed to create a text to relay my personal narrative.

My initial attraction to physical theatre was connected to the creation and use of the body. The relayed messages were observed as being first felt emotionally and then understood. Movement and gesture, though they can be specific to cultures, generate a vocabulary that is seen and felt. In a performance that is based on spoken text the knowledge of the *lingua franca* is vital for understanding and creating coherency between the different components of a performance. Since the body can become generalised in form and function, understanding the body as a text can also become more generalised. From this perspective, the body is able to become a text that is not dependent on any theatrical conventions to convey a message. These conventions include the written text, sound, lighting, costume and set. If and when these theatrical conventions are used, it can be to highlight or contradict the movement itself. This helps to define the movement that creates the journey of a performance and ultimately to help guide the audience within it.

Improvisation was needed in order to generate the creative vocabulary. Much of the creative expressions which were generated within certain parameters were manipulated by the fear of expressing myself and of judgement. I became aware that no improvisations could be set in order to generate thematic vocabulary, for it would be a

¹⁵ In this chapter I speak of both exercises and improvisations. The improvisations account for the exploratory stages of the rehearsal period. Once the improvisations are set and performed, I refer to them as exercises.

false representation of the self. Although I did not want to show my real self, paradoxically that which was shown and expressed could not be false representation. I felt that there had to be a truth to the work so that what was specifically chosen could not be a fictional presentation. The parameters as well as the outcomes of improvisations could not be pre-determined. What was to be represented had to be original and created organically without being a copy of ideas, images and movements I had used or seen in the past. The movements had to be specific to me and my personal movement style. This was necessary because otherwise I would be attempting to reach the end of the journey before the journey had even taken place. I had to go on a journey of discovery to find the improvisations required for expression so that I could arrive at the end. The only manner in which the movements could be truthful was for me to execute the action of my *internal expressive form*, which became the external performance character that is unique to me. This does include some degree of manipulation, but once the *internal expressive form* expresses externally the behaviour must change because of the dualist nature of the mind and the body. A still life painting done in oils and another in water colours might be of the same picture, but because the mediums are different the final products will not look the same. Once my behaviour became externalized, only then would it be truly autobiographical and not just abstract representations in a desired form. In order to do this, I had to dwell inside the suppressed images - everything that was *in-potentia* to be expressed. Using improvisation allows one to tap into this reservoir by seeking ways to express this limitless potential. Therefore, the improvisations had to be true to me or at least the parts of me that needed to be expressed.

3.3.1 Improvisations as a process of discovery

When the decision was made that the vocabulary and staging of the solo were to be based on/inspired by my experience of my personal bedroom¹⁶, certain physical parameters became evident: its size and layout, the position of my bed in reference to

¹⁶ This choice will be explained later in the chapter.

the sliding door and the entrance door, the tiled floor and the carpeted sections. Each of these parameters would influence and change the improvisations that I would structure and execute/perform. Exploring the physical parameters was done as an improvisation. I walked through my room, observed and felt what it was like in each section, and then improvised movements accordingly. To generate the autobiographical material, I found that these improvisations came almost naturally. My body had a habituated movement relationship to the room. To create a relaxed and open atmosphere, the sessions were started with music, using various songs to evoke specific emotional states such as joy, sadness or frenzy. This became a warm-up and focus, where the room was explored and filled with movements. Movements that seemed to originate in the form of dancing were a structured expression and became a comfort zone that I expressed within when alone in my room.

I recognised certain gestures and positions that were constantly repeated that would become a basis/foundation for a 'personal movement expression': through repetition - a movement ritual was sought, found and performed in my bedroom. The generalised dance movements were stylised by further repetition and embellishment until a recognition of myself within the movement evoked something within me. This would be a memory, a feeling or a thought. The start of my *personal catharsis* began when I started to recognise myself and the *other*. This *personal catharsis* occurs when the *inner expressive form* and the *external expressive form* are reconnected, resulting in recognition of the character of the self. This was the start of allowing the vocabulary to generate improvisations i.e. finding out what the movements were progressing towards and what the connection was to my autobiographical research. Often, the improvisation was not set, but rather flowed out of conscious thoughts at that specific moment and the particular section of the room that was being occupied. A subconscious narrative that I was being guided by seemed to emerge. This narrative materialised through a process of written free association that was created as an abstract for the piece.

I only ever use half of my double bed

(I know,... but a single bed is too small)

My name is Teri. No, wait, my name is Teresa but everyone calls me Teri. My bedroom is mine, it is private, it is separate. What I do there is what I do. I do not have to pretend to act to what others call me, I can pretend to what I call myself. I do not have to pretend. I get angry when people make a noise while I am sleeping. I retaliate. I shout. I do what the others are doing to me. I do not deserve it but they do. There is something under my bed or in my closet, I have not decided which one yet. Do not look down towards the lounge, for then you will see it too. I smoke by my sliding door next to my bed. The asthma pump is on my bed. I dance on the Persian carpet, never the tiles. My asthma pump is on my bed. When sleep comes, my feet must be hanging off the bed. I hate headboards. I pray in my bed. I praise God, I ask God, I fight with God. I do not understand Him. I love Him. I love Paul. I miss Paul. Paul is dead. I feel dead. Every morning I wake, I do so so that I can die a little every day. I am not depressed. I have just partied too much and now I am tired. I am lonely in the crowd. I am alone in my bed. I sleep alone. I have a double bed but I only ever use half of it. The right half. Always. I know, but a single bed is too small. Just give me my space and I will be fine. It does not mean that I will use it. I like knowing that it is there. Just in case. Come and watch me in my bed. Just do not enter or make a noise because I will retaliate.

Once I recognised my narrative within this, I reflected back on other writings that I particularly enjoyed creating and then created new, more relevant work to aid the artistic expression of the autobiographical process and to communicate how I was feeling¹⁷. *Chiaroscuro* was an important part of this.

I was little and I thought that there were things living in the back of the lounge suite. In the middle of the night, in the house was a passage with all the bedrooms, at the end of the passage a dining room, the kitchen to the side,

¹⁷ Addendum A-C

then TV room and down to the lounge. The passage way and other things played with the light because of all the arches. I went to the end of the passage and thought, don't look down there. It's weird that I can still remember it. I went to the kitchen because I was thirsty. The kitchen was very big. I had something to drink. When I came out, for some reason, I looked to the lounge and saw something. I saw it. I heard it. I felt it. I felt its breath. I ran down the passage to my parent's room. I couldn't open the door. I heard the thing running down the passage. Heard its breath. Eventually the door opened. I went round my parent's bed, climbed under the covers between my mom and dad. I felt it climb up me, its breath. As it got to my chest, my dad put the light on and it was gone. Until this day I can't explain it.

This text was written as though the event was being told to someone vocally using the exact words and phrase structures. In the exploration of this exercise I was able to start studying the way that I speak, write and create poetry. I noticed how I communicated with words and the types of words that I used. This brought another realisation. When watching the language of a body, one is interpreting the flow, rhythm, form and effort of movements. Similarly, it is these qualities that become stylised in improvisations. These are the same qualities that I saw in the words. I was stylising my specific flow and expression to create a mood and emotional response. It was one means of expression that could be used as a catalyst to create another expression in another form. My automatic writing is a poetic expression of a subjective point of view. It is my subjective view that was needed to evoke the truth of the situation and personality, so that the truth could set the parameters of my improvisations for the creation of new material.

3.3.2 Material

My relationship to my room is very personal as it is a private and intimate place. For most people, the bedroom is a place of comfort, secrecy and vulnerability. It is the room

in which we can relax, have private time and sleep. The relationship to that space tends to differ from any other space, even if we enter a hotel bedroom or a friend's bedroom. This space influenced the creation of the autobiographical production in terms of the intimacy and the design of the space. The space became the outline of the production.

As an automatic writing exercise, I expressed who I am in my bedroom (I only ever use half of my double bed; *I know,... but a single bed is too small*). The stream of consciousness writing is a type of autonomous or automatic writing where whatever comes to mind is recorded. Later on I tended to rationalise these thoughts to make them more coherent and attempted to find a narrative that was written without form, structure or meaning. In this way a style emerged that was specific to myself. This is the tendency to write in short blunt sentences, playing with thoughts rather than explaining the entire idea that emerges. Most of the writing was done on a computer. As I typed, I was able to set down many of the thoughts as they emerged, keeping them more true to the original idea, whereas when writing with a pen and paper, the thoughts can be changed and corrupted during the period it takes to write out each word¹⁸. This writing, which was intended to be shared with other individuals, expressed not only who I was in my bedroom but also who I truthfully was.

All material used in the final performance was self generated. Many of the poems that were created were edited during the process by changing a word or two when I felt the mood of the writing needed to shift slightly. This implies that I was reconnecting to my *internal expressive form* as I was coming in contact with my truthful expression. As the improvisations changed, so too did my writing and my writing style. During the process, Addendums A -C were the most significant writings out of all the originally autonomous free-flow writing that was created to be edited. The writings that are not included were usually words or phrases that seemed out of context to each other. By focusing on this writing I realised that lack of information and context was a problem that could very much occur in my solo. There needed to be a balance between how much information was given to the audience and the contextual clues to understanding this information. I

¹⁸ The idea of the body corrupting the original behaviour of the *internal expressive form* will be more fully discussed in Chapter 3.

found that too much portrayed information can make the production uninteresting and slow. Giving too little information can make it abstract and difficult to follow. I knew that setting up the gestures to make them understandable was vitally important in order for the production to be understood. This involved manipulation of content. But this was unavoidable when processing from the *internal expressive form* to the *external expressive form* before a dislocation was realised. Even after *personal catharsis* takes place, a form of manipulation will occur since two different mediums are being used to express the internal and external forms. This is distinct from a manipulation of intention which is what happens when there is a dislocation. The difference in intentions alters the perception of the expression.

The information that I would use would not necessarily be sufficient to portray everything that needed to be shown. Therefore, it was after the vocabulary was generated and linked that it became evident that I needed to give more information to the audience beyond the use of breath and movement. My supervisor suggested I should use some of my text to help with this issue of coherency. I returned to the initial abstract (I only ever use half of my double bed; *I know,... but a single bed is too small*) and used phrases and sentences from this piece of writing in the development and execution of the final solo. In doing so, it added not only more understanding to the solo but also set the mood of a private space more clearly.

By using the text it was as if I was divulging private and intimate information to the audience. By playing with the text in reference to the movements, there were times where the audience was invited into the space, while at other times they were made aware that I was in essence speaking to myself in a private narrative as though they were listening to my private thoughts. The aim of this convention was to try and focus the audience's attention on slight details that might otherwise not have been noticed. An example of this, is 'walking towards the lounge' (section 3.2.4.3), where the movement indicated that I was travelling somewhere. When text was placed with the movement I told the audience where I was going and why the journey was difficult. I assumed that the tension in my body and breathing would become more recognisable

once they were placed within a context through the text. The text, by changing rhythm and tone, also helped to end off and start new scenes within the solo (Addendum I).

3.3.3 Natural selection

I had decided to rehearse in my bedroom because I felt it was a 'safe space' in which to improvise with movements and thoughts. These rehearsal periods were spontaneous and usually at night so that I could work in the darkness. This decision was based on my self-consciousness in space. I found working in darkness released this self-consciousness. The room became a symbolic womb - warm and dark, sealed off from the outside world - where creativity emerged. As I am acoustically inclined - that is, I use rhythm and beat as an impulse for moving - music played a vital role in these spontaneous improvisations. The selection of material came naturally, as will be discussed within this section. The material that emerged, though initiated from written material and physical improvisations, progressed naturally into how the individual exercises could be linked. It seemed as though sub-consciously I had something to say and that by tapping into my physicality, these sub-conscious ideas emerged. Some of these ideas were concerned with identity, irrational fears and need of approval. During the process it was not often that I had to alter any form of improvisation according to time constraints or lack of material.

3.3.4 Exercises

The final product of the solo was divided into different 'ideas' or scenes that emerged out of the autonomous writing (the abstract and *Chiaroscuro*). The texts were not the keys by which I tapped into the emotional connection of my private space, but rather provided parameters and guidelines to focus my thoughts and cognitive decisions. This connected the inner emotion and the outer exploration in reference to thoughts and emotions in the text which emerged as a single

vocabulary. I have given each exploration a simple title and will discuss in this section the creation of those thoughts through an improvisation and what felt fitting for the particular thought.

Since there was no external director besides the feedback from my facilitator during showings or other cast members, I had to use intuition and my own emotional state to observe myself during the rehearsal period. Therefore any work that I decided to show had to be based on what felt right. This made the process intimate since in order to observe my actions I had to 'listen' to myself and find a reconnection to myself. Most of the exercises came through improvisation, but it was usually through thinking about the actions that links became clear and I was able to develop and link the exercises into a final coherent piece.

3.3.4.1 Phantom hand (Addendum D)

As a relaxation exercise I would lie in my bed and make random free movements with my limbs. This was an exercise of dichotomy by trying to move the body without thinking of the movement. I was playing with the idea of internal landscape and external landscape, in other words that which we reveal and what we keep private as separate. When I got uncomfortable while lying in bed, I would shift my body to compensate until I became comfortable again. It was this action that led me to try to move the entire body without the rational mind's knowledge. This improvisation changed so that I would place my arms at random positions, then after a few minutes, with my eyes closed, I would try to surmise where my arms were. The surprise of the exercise was that the majority of the time I was able to move my body and not know what position I was in. I tend to place emphasis on the rational functions of the mind, interpreting experience through logic, whereas the subconscious 'I' or creative identity taps into experience on the level of sensation. I was conscious that there was movement, but I tried to separate my rational mind from that movement. Whether this was an accomplishment of mind over matter or

matter over mind I did not know, but it led me to think that perhaps my body could do things without my knowledge or awareness thereof.

Research has shown that in the case of some amputees a syndrome known as phantom limb occurs due to memories of the amputated limb and so can still 'feel' and receive sensations from that body part. (Dorlands Illustrated, 1965: 835). The mind acknowledges a connection with a body part that no longer exists and cannot function. Another phenomenon is a type of self-mutilation where the body literally attacks itself physically. This can occur internally, when the body does not recognise its own organs, or externally, when the body hits or kicks itself. These two ideas created an image for me of a severed evil hand crawling over graves to attain vengeance (see Fig. D.1). Could my body attack myself (if I was my mind) as vengeance for neglect? I used this thought for improvisation, lying as if I was sleeping, allowing my breath to slow down my the body to relax. Taking my right arm I would try to move it up my body without being aware of it, trying to separate the movement from the rest of the body almost as if it was a phantom limb. The sensation was strange and I found myself often looking up to see were my hand was and what it looked like. I allowed the exercise to develop by taking my hand further up my body towards my neck so as to play out an improvisation of my hand attacking me but in a loving manner (see Fig. D.2).

As this improvisation developed, I had to separate some parts of my mind from other parts of my mind in order to create the sensation that my body was not aware of the action of my self-mutilating arm. The biggest problem I had in this regard was with the use of breath. I used breath as a catalyst to both represent and to create an emotive response - deep breaths for relaxation and calm movements, quick or shallow breathing for fear or anger. I found that creating a scene where the body was relaxed yet having one limb held in tension was an exercise in breath control, yet it was this exact control that created the underlying tension in the execution of it. This exercise highlighted the separation/dislocation I had in my life. The dislocation highlighted my true intentions compared to my actual behaviour - the difference in my *inner expressive form's* intention and *external expressive form's* intention. My

creative identity of self was being oppressed and stifled through the 'phantom' identity of the *other* that was in control.

3.3.4.2 Something under my bed

This improvisation was inspired by a common childhood fear of monsters under my bed and in the closet. In my abstract (I only ever use half of my double bed; *I know, ... but a single bed is too small*) I state that when I sleep I usually have my feet dangling off the end of the bed. This in itself creates a problem when I start thinking of 'things' being under my bed while wanting to have my feet dangling off the bed. That action opens the possibility of having to make contact with the 'things' if indeed there are 'any'. I usually have to talk myself out of this irrational fear, but often I end up giving into the fear and making sure my feet are secure in the blanket away from the edge. As an improvisation, and consequently a therapeutic release, I waited until I needed to use the bathroom then I sat on my bed and visualised that there were things beneath me that wanted to touch my feet. If these 'things' touched my feet they could pull me under the bed. I experienced a state of hysteria because of the visualisation of the fear, because I would not allow myself to touch the floor in conjunction with the pressure from my body.

Again, breath became an important factor in this exercise as there was the dichotomy of needing to relax the body while it was tensing up from the fear. I explored not breathing for long periods of time during the improvisation as a technique to manipulate the body and mind. If I breathed heavily and quickly I was able to hyperventilate and by slowing the breath I calmed myself. When I was not breathing, I started to panic and my body became tense. When the time came to eventually place my feet off the bed and onto the floor, I had to fight myself and the irrational fears that I was consorting with. Eventually after many jerks and hesitant movements my feet were placed firmly on the ground. The moment this happened, there was an immediate flush of relief and my breath would return. This exercise was placed in the performance before 'going past the lounge' (*Chiaroscuro* see 3.2.1). This was one exercise that became harder and more difficult to do truthfully the longer I rehearsed it. I now recognise that this was

because I had experienced a cathartic release. I had recognised myself, my fears and my behaviour within the fear, and this had suggested a change of behaviour. By taking a situation and exaggerating it I was able to face it, release it and move on¹⁹. It was the recognition of the repercussions of my actions that helped this release. Each time I moved the exercise outside of my bedroom, the dynamics of the exercise as well as the fears it created, changed. The setting of the improvisations was starting to shift (to the lounge and halls). This caused the exercise to 'open up', to step outside of myself and the improvisations. The security of the bedroom had to be left behind in order to explore the exercises in depth.

3.3.4.3 Walking towards the lounge

I explored *Chiaroscuro* as a fear of the unknown and of elements that could not be controlled. The aim of the exercise was to explore a childlike state with its irrational and impromptu feelings as opposed to an assumed adult state where rationalisation is more prominent. As a contrast to the previous exercise, but was rather able to take control of it.

This improvisation started by exploring the uses of the blanket. The blanket was quite large and thin, so it was easily moveable. Initially I tried to walk inside the blanket as a hub, but this did not work. There was not enough space to move in, and since the blanket was not tightly pulled around the body, there were not many details of movement that could be projected through the blanket. The other option was to walk with the blanket firmly around my body. A picture that came to mind was of a clean silhouette of Muslim women in their burka's where only a section of the face is visible (see Fig E.2). I associated the mouth being covered as forced silence which highlighted the eyes as the narrator of their story. This idea

¹⁹ I no longer fear that there is something under my bed, but as an ironical twist I no longer sleep with my feet dangling off the bed either. This was a result of *personal catharsis* - my behaviour was changed through recognition of my actions.

corresponded with the improvisation and I decided to have half of my face covered for this section in order to play with the idea of forced silence and of children seeing things that they cannot explain because they do not have the vocabulary or understanding of the events.

To contrast this section in the solo, I improvised another piece with the blanket but this time the blanket left my body exposed and my head covered (see Fig. F.1). My arms were in the same shape as when I walked, that is, holding the blanket with arms lengthened out. In this improvisation I chose what I saw and voluntarily kept my thoughts private. This expressed the shift that I identified from observation of a child's openness to the world compared to the reserved adult with his/her inhibitions. I use the word 'reserved' to denote an unwillingness to be that child with its irrational fears and lack of vocabulary. For me this journey signified the change in my attitude and behaviour - how I had become dislocated from the *external expressive form* and dwelt in the *internal expressive form*. This is what I portrayed on my bed: the smoothing out of one's life as when you climb beneath a blanket. This action was reserved only for the head which implied that this was the *internal expressive form*. Wrapping the blanket around the head enlarged the shape of the head, making it heavier, which resulted in the body placing intention towards the head. As a by-product, the blanket made it hard to breathe resulting in a feeling of suffocation.

3.3.4.4 Sliding door

This exercise was inspired by the action of opening the sliding door in my room. As the door opened a sharp breeze hit me as well as the curtain. I focused on the feeling of the wind on the front of my body and the heat I was still feeling on the back. I improvised playing with the breeze by holding tightly onto areas on the back of my body and then releasing the tension by bringing the arms back around in large sweeping arcs. This movement reminded me of breathing and I made a connection between this scene and the previous where I was suffocating myself in

the blanket. As I walked to the imagined 'sliding door', I could not see because of the blanket around my head. Therefore the feet that previously could not leave the bed because of fear were now leading my body not only off the bed but also to a place where I could remove my burden and breathe again.

In this exercise my body's behaviour was reversed. My head was the subject of fear for it did not see or know what was before it and the feet became a rational body part, feeling and pushing through this fear until it found a place of safety. My body had become encompassed by the mind's fears. This commented on the binary relationship of the body and mind. There was compulsory embodiment of the mind's fears. I discussed in Ch 2 the dualist nature of the body and the mind and that the body does not choose actions, that it is an aspect that is controlled in majority by the mind. In this exercise, the body reacted to what the mind was experiencing or at least this was the assumption that I recognised. There was a degree of consciously allowing any emotions that arose to be embodied, but the 'natural' external expression given by the body also spoke of kinaesthetic-motor intelligence that played a definite underlying role throughout all the improvisations and exercises.

3.3.4.5 Breathing/ drinking/ smoking

During my studies I had not taken proper care of myself due a very social lifestyle that included late nights and alcohol abuse. I had suffered with constant fatigue and body ailments during the year and when socialising, I often abused alcohol to help my body to relax. I was in essence filling myself by drinking and eating as a coping mechanism for the dislocation of my *inner expressive form* and *external expressive form* of self and the emptiness that it induced inside of me. I had created an identity around these two elements that had spun out of control during my university years and which consequently left my body damaged by my actions. I represented this by standing by my sliding door and showing the progression of my addiction and of my weakness to it. The sliding door was a place of comfort and freedom; a place

where I could feel again. It is also the place where I choose to smoke when I am at home because it is private and separate.

I started off with gestures of smoking which led to gestures of drinking. Initially the movements were slow and calm, a natural swinging movement whereby I turned from side to side to 'smoke' and then to 'drink'. During the progression I rejected an offer of alcohol three times but I eventually capitulated and my movements then gained pace when I no longer had the control to refuse. As the pace increased it seemed that I had lost all control and the gestures began to express that I was preparing to inject myself with what was assumedly drugs. This was the one thing that was fully declined; it was one place where the body would not go. But in the process of overcoming this, the drinking and smoking continued at a faster pace until I was portrayed as an open mouth with teeth bared while the body withered away. There was a disconnection between the hand and the mouth that it feeds, and this is where the filling began.

3.3.4.6 Filling (Addendum G)

This was the one exercise that I did not want to show others. It was too truthful and revealing since it was a real depiction of where I was at that point in time (see Fig. G.2). I do not know where the motivation came for this improvisation, but again it seemed to be a natural progression from the previous exercise and improvisations. This improvisation developed rapidly during the rehearsal process. As I gained confidence through my *expressive voice of identity* and *personal catharsis*, I no longer recognised the actions as part of my behaviour because the connotations to my life were slowly being released the more I practiced the character of self²⁰. This

²⁰ As I have previously mentioned, I do not assume that the *internal expressive form* is incorruptible. As the internal identity is formed through experience of the external world and ideologies, the *internal expressive form* is created corrupted through this. This is not to say that internal expressive form is not truthful. I speak of this form as truthful within original expression, even if that expression has been corrupted. The issue arises when the *internal expressive forms* expression is different from the external behaviour, this is when the lack of recognition of behaviour takes place.

exercise did not arise out of a mental and logical connection in the way that the others had. Rather it was if my body were explaining to me what was going on and once my mind grasped and accepted this truth, I was able to purge myself of the actions and tell the narrative truthfully and without fear of it.

The improvisation showed myself filling up from the outside by placing things firstly in my mouth and then progressively onto my body (see Fig G.1). As the body was built up further and further there came a point where the body would sag and so the process would be repeated again and again. Eventually towards the end I had built up the body to such an extent that it became too overwhelming and the body deflated wholly towards the ground where I lay defeated and powerless. I had returned to a child-like state of fear and of wanting to hide away as a result of having revealed my true self. I was revealing the self that I did not want others to see.

3.3.4.7 Prayer

After I had 'filled' myself, I pulled myself towards my bed where I explored the original improvisation that I had created based on prayer. I found the prayer improvisation the easiest exercise to do as it was an amplification of real everyday events that I was willing to share with others. This exercise is an exploration of prayer to God that began with a pious state of fear and of submissiveness to the movement. As the exercise continued, the intentions changed which resulted in a transformation of attitude from begging to self-mutilation to thankfulness. The prayer's mood changed as the solo had changed, following a journey of my relationship with God as well as recalling the journey of the solo. The exercise commenced in stillness, of acceptance and realising my own true nature and ultimate fear of judgement. The final words: 'Come and watch me in my bed. Just do not enter or make a noise because I will retaliate' was the final synopsis of the piece and of the journey I had taken. I was telling the audience that it was

acceptable to watch what I was showing, although I did not want to know about it or hear about it.

3.3.5 Execution

During the pre-production period, there were discussions on the production executions. Even though I had released a lot of the original fears and anguish of my work, I still did not want to show my solo in front of an open audience. Different options were discussed in reference to the space where it could be shown. I wanted to have only one performance to an invited audience. This idea was rejected as I had to perform a minimum of five performances for adjudication purposes. The next idea was to have the performance under the stage, so that the audience had to travel to get to a secluded spot to watch the performance. The idea behind this was one of voyeurism, of having the audience intrude onto a private space. It would also create security for me as a performer by not having an audience sitting right in front of my performance space. In the end, the performance was to take place upon stage, with the audience seated on the stage as well.

As the solo had been created and rehearsed in my room, I wanted to represent my room on stage. Therefore a bed was needed as part of the set. Other than this, I had not thought further with regards to set design. Because the stage is relatively large, the lighting had to focus the audience's eye onto the centre of the stage within a relatively small space. After discussions with various people I decided to have three beds next to each other with a lamp behind each bed. A carpet was placed on the floor and a single bare light bulb hung above the first bed which was placed centre stage. To create a sense of privacy, I used net curtains, hung in front of the audience, with the centre gap pulled back slightly (Addendum H).

The reason for this was to obscure the audience's view slightly, so that they felt as if they were peeping into my bedroom. This also created the privacy that I needed, while allowing the audience to feel that they were looking into a private space (Addendum F and H). The set design was in essence not only a replication of my

bedroom, but also a continuation of it, hence the three beds were necessary to introduce a sense of continuation and repetition. I created the lighting so that there would only be a wash of light from the centre of the performance space ending roughly where the net curtains ended. As the beds faded into darkness, this created the illusion that the beds went on for an undetermined space, so that the action taking place was a highlight in a thought and a brief glimpse into another reality.

There was no music and distinct or special costume; I wore everyday comfortable clothing, trying to make it as neutral as possible. All jewellery was removed and basic stage make-up applied. The application of the make-up was an important process for me. During that time I would focus and relax. By applying the make-up, it became a mask of the performance. Not a mask to hide behind, but rather a mask that allowed me to separate myself from the material so that I was able to take the journey truthfully as the *other*.

Each performance made it easier to partake in the journey because I became more willing to participate. Every performance distanced me from the initial fears and anxiety of judgment and allowed me to give over to the audience so that they could experience it for themselves. By releasing myself to the audience in this manner, it was no longer about me and my experiences, but rather about the audience and the willingness, even a desire, to have them resonate with my experiences on a personal level without this being about me as a performer.

3.3.6 Showing

After the improvisation and rehearsal in my room, I had made a connection with myself that led to an understanding of the dislocation of myself and my need for approval. But this epiphany was an individual discovery that had no context outside of the room. I had to expose myself, meaning that I had to show someone what was happening in my private rehearsal times:

The first initiation is Self-initiation - the exposure of oneself to oneself. This means to leave the self-conscious watcher behind and enter the circle of participation. Words...images...explanations all belong to the watcher. To the participant - experience is everything. (Alli, 2006: online)

During the process I learned to show myself to myself. This was the type of exposure of self that allowed me recognise myself. It was this that allowed me to participate and become an actor/spectator of self. In turn this allowed me to experience the journey - the visual aspect, that which I could not see for myself, belonged to the watcher. I was being the spectator of my experienced and internal landscape. Rehearsing in my bedroom did not allow me to encounter a watcher. I had found safety and security within this. And so this was the first major problem I encountered. I had to share the work with someone else. I had fears that the physical vocabulary would not be understood by the audience and that I would look stupid. There was hesitancy in sharing a personal interpretation of myself to another without being allowed to explain or justify the actions. I had to participate in the showing, not only by watching it for myself or by explaining it to others, but by participating in the journey. The journey had to be shared and released for practical reasons and in this respect an outside perspective was needed - I needed to release my fears of judgement in order to move forward. This aspect proved to be a challenge almost until the end of the process. Even during performance certain places within the solo were glossed over in fear that it would reveal too much of myself (this is discussed further in the chapter). I had not allowed the piece to express itself outside of myself completely. This implied that I was not ready or willing to face myself and that my *external expressive form* was still dominant in expression and behaviour.

The majority of the showings were individual rehearsals with my facilitator. This was more a process of finding confidence in my work and discussing ideas to find clarity in the movement and intentions. But these individual rehearsals became stagnant. At one time I commented that I felt as if I was on the right track in the wrong train. This highlighted the need for the binary relationship between the performer/audience, which was the relationship between me and my facilitator. Within the security of the rehearsal

space I was the external performer and internal observer, but this binary relationship of self needed another relationship in the same role where the observer was external. During the showing I was able to express where I was feeling that I was misinterpreting any movement and have another side of the binary relationship give their observations. As previously discussed, the dualistic nature of the body and the mind indicated that the mind was influencing the body. I had needed another 'observing mind' to form another binary relationship, that of facilitator and student, which was an external director and my self.

The feeling of abandonment arose from the lack of connection in allowing the work to become a separate autonomous journey. Every showing or rehearsal required having to relive the experience that the vocabulary was based on, and so every time I pushed deeper and harder to find that place. The improvisations became therapeutic in that I was dealing with emotions and things that I had suppressed but that were part of me. As I dealt with these emotions and began recognising the emotional response, I began to rely on the emotion to fuel the movement and not the movement to generate the emotional response. As the emotion surfaced and was released in the original improvisation, I tried to find that same emotion during one of the subsequent showings or rehearsals, forcing a desired emotion onto the generated vocabulary to make it real to me:

There is a point at which personal stress overrides creativity and would be improvisers, whether in a game or on a job, revert to their 'previously learned successful behaviour'...some combination of inexperience, a lack of preparation and a loss of self-confidence. (Mirvis, 1998: 587)

The stress I experienced resulted in a disconnection with the movements, as I had to force myself, through mental connections, to find the emotional connection to fuel the movements. The emotional state was not a physical one but a mentally induced recognition and evoking of the emotions. I was not willing to attain a state of catharsis because I did not understand the purpose of it. I wanted the audience to feel what I was feeling, enforce it upon them, never thinking that I should allow them to experience it for themselves. The audience were there to watch my performance and to be moved by it

within the boundaries that I had pre-determined. By attacking the audience in this matter, there was no room for them to experience it. They were a blank wall to shout against, not an entity to have a dialogue with. I did not want to share my fear of being judged with my audience; it was this fear that would not allow the exercises to become a performance. In this form the work was not autobiographical; I had created a mask. Therefore I was doing what I had originally intended, that is, to show an autobiographical performance that was not me. The repercussion of this was that the mask was finite and predetermined, where even I, as the creator, could not have any choice within it. The performance could not develop or be understood because of this mask of the *other*.

I had found self observation to be subjective, but to make it a performance I needed to find objectivity to the work; it needed to become the *other*. The creator chooses what is to be shown, cuts it and adapts it to represent the truth of the narrative and not only what the performer is comfortable with. The process of improvisation takes vocabulary and transforms it into extra-daily - it is no longer an original discovery but a re-discovery and discussion thereof.

She could not be the 'I' who lived the scene being recounted, since that would be denying the space and time separating the two scenes: the one which is lived and the one which is recounted. (Boal, 1995)

Once this connection was made I allowed myself to partake in the ritual, and not allow it to just be a mimetic representation of myself. This movement forward in time and space is therapeutic. One observes oneself in action. When faced with various alternatives in direction, one must choose one and experience where it will lead. In improvisation, through exploring different alternatives, I observed different outcomes and so came to realise the purpose and consequences of my actions. In '*I only ever use half of my double bed*', there was a scene where I was 'filling' myself with various devices till there came a climax of total inflation when everything became too much and the body collapsed. This section specifically was the hardest and most truthful part to perform. I did not totally comprehend why this happened, just that I did not want to show it to the general public. But only through performing it as the *other* did I recognise the pattern of

its origins - how I had achieved it and where it left me. This realisation gave me freedom to explore with the movements and not just the emotive sensations, but rather the function within the movements and the freedom in my creative voice of identity.

As the audience watched me as I plotted a route, the binary relationship with the viewer was formed. At this stage I, as the performer, realised the effect of my actions and becomes conscious of the response these actions have on others thereby releasing the story by becoming the viewer on his or her journey. The performer surrenders the story, participating in it but no longer being the creator thereof.

This simple yet profound adjustment, from being the forces to playing them, marks a transition from self-expression towards the prospect of communication and maybe, Art. (Alli, 2006: online)

For myself I found that once this relationship has settled, *personal catharsis* set in. This was aided by constant recognition of the self every time the autobiographical journey was performed. But the performer must surrender the journey and accept this before *personal catharsis* can be attained. The audience must be allowed to enter the story in order to promote the catharsis, because in this way, the gestures become larger, more symbolic and clearer making it more difficult to hide behind the movements. When one does not hide behind a mask, it gives the spectator the room to explore and recognise the performance as information is being released and not being hidden from the spectator. Thus the journey is shared. By surrendering and inviting the spectator to experience selective creative journeys, they too can participate in the journey and experience the work for themselves. By finding questions to my answers, it allowed the audience to ask the questions their self. I recognised that one cannot place the audience as the centre focus of a performance and action because this would hamper their ability to participate in it. With improvisation, as well as with performance, by doing the action and partaking in the exercise, experience is gained.

3.3.6.1 Catharsis issue

The process of *personal catharsis* began by releasing and acknowledging my suppressed emotions. Physical Theatre was an important medium for this process. It is the expression of the body/mind that comes from personal experience and vocabulary. Whereas there was a specific outcome, it was the process of creating that was important in recreating the psycho-physiological connection. This is the process of reuniting the body and the mind as one unit of expression. One goes beyond just putting on a costume and presenting lines and actions to convey a message. Although this theory and methodology is applicable to other forms, in physical theatre the body as a form is highlighted. The body is the medium of expression and so one has to delve into the body to free this association. Each of my gestures has a specified meaning and message and I recognised that through repetition the meaning is understood for myself and an observer, and only once the gesture has been taken outside of oneself can the message be known to both parties.

Greek Tragedy aims to bring about catharsis in the audience, while psychotherapists help to purge their patients by taking on the role of guide. There is a need to relinquish the secrets and suppressed emotions to someone outside of yourself in order to actually experience it. In my autobiographical solo, it was only once I went from I-in-situ to the *other*, and gave the suppressed emotions to the *other* and the audience, that the purging began and the pathway of catharsis opened.

I only realised that catharsis had occurred after the entire production process of the solo. Even though I felt confidence building and tension being released during the process, I still held fears and did not allow the journey to become separate from myself up until the end. At that point I did not want to alter my behaviour. It was upon retrospection that I realised that something had happened. I realised that I had calmed down a lot, was more accepting of criticism and more articulate of what I was thinking and feeling. All of the previous fears about confidence and ability had disappeared. However, I do not know when this happened; it was a subconscious renewal that was

recognised consciously. There was a difference between this emotion and the feeling created by the completion of the process. This is an issue when discussing *personal catharsis* because I cannot pinpoint the exact time that the catharsis occurred. Rather, I suggest that it is the entire process of accessing and witnessing oneself that leads to one becoming aware and accepting change or the possibility of change. I speculate that it is upon recognition of the self that *personal catharsis* can take place, but this does not mean that behaviour will change. This is the idea that will be explored in the workshops discussed in Chapter 4. *Personal catharsis* then becomes an issue because an individual can say that it has occurred and their actions can verify this, but the mechanics of it cannot necessarily be spoken about because it is a subjective event. My experience and attaining of catharsis would not necessarily be the same for another. The exercises and happenings around the catharsis are evident, and a conscious realisation of issues can be discovered, but as to when and how the catharsis actually takes place, this is something that needs to be researched further.

3.4 Analysis

In attaining *personal catharsis*, the process relied on personal experimentation and the expression of personal fears in a truthful manner without hiding behind conventions. These conventions are varied, such as using music, sound, lighting, directions from others, costume, et cetera. The process was a self-contained one that was specific to me as an individual. Working with autoethnographical documentation such as autonomous writing, personal stories or personal expression opens the door for further exploration and analysis of these documents beyond a purely aesthetic role.

By participating in the journey of the creation of the solo and by not focusing on the end product, I was not fully aware during my performance of how the end product was changing from my original creation of it. It was therefore only after the production, as the journey ended, that the changes became evident. Participation in the journey, allowed my mind to sort through the issues that arose during that

period. It was upon retrospection that the journey became complete and was understood.

3.5 Outcomes

The result was not the one I had originally aimed for. At the beginning of the process, knowing that the final performance was going to be my own work, I had wanted people to be amazed, amused and moved by what I created. The journey itself should have been one of constant justification and encouragement of the material I was producing. But this was neither the end result nor the process. Obviously the process left me exhausted and drained both emotionally and physically. The fear of people rejecting my art was also not founded and therefore no longer a part of the process. The justification that I thought was needed to fuel the process was a hindrance in the creation of any exercise, as I would be creating work that would please the viewer and not work that would be true to the subject matter that was me.

But it was only at the end of the process that I performed the solo for a larger audience. This is because a shift had taken place through *personal catharsis* where I was no longer performing for audience's recognition or for a self-serving purpose. I was now able to take the audience on a very private journey without having to subject them to my ideas and without having to tell them to feel what I was feeling. This was part of the process of catharsis. I gave the audience freedom to do this and as a result gave myself the freedom to not become concerned about their experience of the journey. The best criticism I received from an audience member was a simple 'thank-you'. And that was all that was needed. I had purged my need for acceptance and recognition from others on the basis of whether or not I had done well enough. I was able to express myself with confidence without worrying about another's opinion of it.

This state not only influenced my creative work but also everyday life as well. The process has liberated my *creative voice of identity* again. Honesty has become

important to me; I no longer hide my opinions in order to avoid hurting or offending someone who might not react well to those opinions. My judgement or observation became just that - an observation. The fate of the world did not fall either upon what I thought, or on what others thought of me. I had freedom in creativity and confidence in it because it was mine - it was what I chose to express and if others did not understand something the way I did, it was accepted. So not only was my creative voice liberated, but I took ownership of that voice.

I chose for my *internal expressive form* to become dominant in chosen behaviour. This was also a sense of ownership of the material produced in connection to the creative process and creative journey. This gave rise to a major behaviour change in me; I had freedom to allow others to have an opinion other than my own, for others to be better than me, and for others to experience my journey in reference to their own narrative. I no longer took everything as a judgement against my opinion or action. Having attained *personal catharsis* I let go of many personal restrictions. The irony was that I was so scared of being judged as inferior that I projected this onto others and therefore made everyone inferior to myself. By allowing myself to be in a position to be judged openly, I no longer needed that recognition.

3.6 Conclusion

The role of narrative is fundamental to the construction of daily living. People tell stories to explain their self to others and to their self. 'Telling stories is as basic to human beings as eating... stories are what makes our lives worth living. They are what make our condition *human*' (Kearney, 2002: 3). Therefore, our stories are how we define ourselves in reference to our past and present. Narratives are also how we interpret the present and the future based on our past narrative - it is our narrative identity. Through exploration of my narrative identity as a stage production, I externalised my *internal expressive forms*. This gave me the opportunity to view the world in a different manner. By being *other* to myself and viewing my own narrative, I was able recognise it from a different viewpoint and was

thereby able to recognise the repercussions of my actions. I was able to be a spectator to my self-narrative, resulting in *personal catharsis*.

By attaining *personal catharsis*, the original fears of inadequacy in my creative voice and lack of confidence within it were dispelled and released. By confronting them through self-generated improvisation and facing them for what they were, I was able to see the reality of these fears beyond my misguided conceptions. Ultimately by expressing my inner self to others as the *other* I was able to purge the negative connotations towards the experience and find understanding in other people's view thereof.

By exploring my self-narrative, specific issues arose, namely creating the narrative, awareness and *personal catharsis*. I experienced these states but was unable to define them in this specific context of autobiographical performance. In the following chapter, I will be discussing these issues by exploring personal narrative as a construction of the *other*. This construction is the identity of the *external expressive self* and the manner in which it can become separated from the internal expressive self. From this comes the awareness of one's action and repercussions of these actions. Nevertheless, the ultimate issue is one of defining what exactly *personal catharsis* is and how it takes place. However, this can only be understood within the context and understanding of the construction of the *other* and placement of personal narrative and narrative identity. It was for this purpose that I developed a workshop to explore the other and personal narrative for the purpose of attaining personal catharsis.

Chapter 4: The exploration of the dislocation of self through improvisation and identification of *personal catharsis*

4.1 Introduction

In order to investigate the relationship between catharsis and the construction of the *other*, a 12-week process of workshops using principles of performance-based research²¹ (Barrett 2009; Leavy 2009) was created. I had arrived at *personal catharsis* during the construction of my personal narrative through the use of performance development (as described in Chapter 3) and this generated the theory that the *other* is disconnected to the *internal expressive form* (stipulated in Chapter 2). In the process of facilitating the workshops, I was reliant on theory and ideas generated from the practice of the autobiographical solo; this process/methodology is in agreement with Barrett's view (Barrett & Bolt, 2009: 2) that there is 'the potential of studio-based research to demonstrate how knowledge is revealed and how we come to acquire knowledge'²². That does not imply that the workshops were unprepared; rather, an organic flow of ideas within the facilitation of the workshops allowed for adaptations to my own theories. At the conclusion of the workshops, two of the participants were sent a questionnaire on their experiences (Addendum J & L). This formed part of the research material. As will be discussed in this chapter, my role as facilitator was reliant on the participants being willing to express their feelings and experiences. The questionnaire provided insight into how they felt during and after the process, as well as highlighted specific exercises and sessions that helped to build their confidence and find their *creative voice of identity*.

²¹Performance-based research is also referred to as studio-based research, arts-based research, performance as research, practice as research and so on (Haseman, 2009: 147).

²² My *personal catharsis* came through physical theatre methodologies as this was my frame of reference. The workshops methodologies are derived from another concept of physicality and other needs of improvisation that are not related for my original exploration thereof. Within the workshops improvisation the body was not the main emphasis.

Performance-based research methodologies are being used to recognise the theory that emerged through exploration of my autobiographical solo. There is double movement within performance-based research that is a methodology of deconstructing and reconstructing the information (Carter, 2009: 16). Barbara Bolt (2009: 29) refers to double movement as a double articulation: 'Theory emerges from reflexive practice at the same time that practice is informed by theory'. The experiences concerning the *internal expressive form*, the *external expressive form* (the *other*) and *personal catharsis* were also identified within my autobiographical solo as discussed in Chapter 2. These states were explored through various theories (Chapter 3) which resulted in the workshops which were a reconstruction of the experience.

In order to research whether the theories surrounding the states were applicable as generalised concepts, the theory that emerged from personal practice had to be re-explored through group practice. The double articulation allowed desired outcomes to be achieved while at the same time keeping the process flexible through the use of various types of methodologies and theories. Having desired outcomes is a criteria for performance-based research since it allows the work to be projected forward with a 'speculative throwing forward of the mind' (Carter, 2009: 16). This does not mean that the desired outcomes will be achieved. There is space for the outcomes to change and develop.

When theory derived from practice is re-explored it is intended for the participant to reach the same outcomes of the original practice. An advantage of performance-based research is that the methods used can be altered during the process. The workshops were experimental for me and I relied on being able to change the structure or the set-up of the workshops when needed. For documentation, I recorded my findings of each session. This was used in conjunction to received e-mails and a questionnaire. Most of the documentation from the participants' side was compiled from written material that each participant wrote in a book they received. This was not used documentation for the thesis. This decision will be discussed later in the chapter. All information regarding the feelings, writing and experiences of the participants of the workshops has been

used with the permission of each participant. Names and specific details have been omitted to respect the participant's requests.

The workshops were held over a 12-week period, with one weekly 2-hour session. The time span for the individual sessions and for the weekly length of the workshops was open to change. The workshops were aimed at adults and it was highly likely that the participants would be professional individuals, whom I assumed would not be able to attend a single 2 ½ or 3 hour workshop due to time constraints. It is for this reason that it was decided that each session should be roughly 1½ - 2 hours long, with each session developing towards the next session over a 12-week period. The workshops were aimed at increasing the confidence of the participants and to discover their *creative voice of identity*. A further aim of the workshops was to offer the participants the skills and techniques necessary for self recognition of their *internal* and *external expressive forms* and thereby recognising their self as being dislocated from their internal form. It was anticipated that through this recognition, *personal catharsis* would take place. A further aim of the workshops was to observe whether *personal catharsis* could be applied as a general concept or law. In other words whether, when catharsis takes place, it is generalised or specific to each participant. The group situation was used to research whether a participant could construct an autobiographical character which could be used as the performer/spectator of his/her self, resulting in confidence building and the discovery of their *creative voice of identity*. The only performance data used in the construction of the workshops was my autobiographical solo, and so the workshops ran parallel with the main ideas or themes that arose from the personal solo.

4.2 Session structure

Sessions were structured in such a way that each one would follow a similar structure each week based on a specific theme. Each session started with both a physical and vocal warm-up. This was followed immediately by an icebreaker game intended to energise the participants. Every session had a predetermined theme that was discussed and explored through specific exercises. The sessions ended with a final

debriefing, allocation of homework, and time permitted, a cooling down and relaxation period.

The workshops were advertised on gumtree.com (an online advertising community) as an adult drama class/workshop. My experience teaching first-year level students had demonstrated that individuals about the age of 20 years would have a far greater insight and focus into their emotional states during the sessions. I wanted participants that would be willing to discuss a point beyond mere observation. Over the 12-week workshop period, the observation was aimed at the progress and growth of each participant. This observation was influenced by discussions that took place after every exercise, referred to as debriefing. It was during these periods that the participants were given the opportunity to communicate/verbalise any findings, including resistances that they had encountered during that exercise.

The individual sessions were each structured around a particular idea, such as hearing, speech and physicality, and these ideas were constantly reintroduced into the discussion. The use of improvisations provided new opportunities for exploration that could be based on real experience. It also created the opportunity for the participants to remove themselves from the exploration in order to experience the *other*. An aspect of using performance-based research is that the approaches are driven by real-world challenges and problems (Barrett & Bolt, 2009: 5). The participants are engaged in finding solutions to these real problems. Within the workshops the general real life problem was lack of confidence and an inability to express truthfully, which indicated that the *external expressive form* was dominant in their expressive behaviour. Another way to express this is that the participants were reliant on an external 'mask' and were reluctant to remove it. My desired outcome for the participants of the workshops was the gaining of *personal catharsis*, which was based upon my own experience. I tried to create guidelines for attaining *personal catharsis* by translating my experience into solutions for the participant's problem. My solution focused on encouraging the participants to play out their performances within their everyday life. It was anticipated that in this way new behaviour would be created and learned as 'we cannot separate knowledge to be learned from the situation in which it is used' (Barrett & Bolt, 2009: 5).

By experiencing their self playing out 'solutions' or other identity 'masks' they were able to recognise their own dislocation of forms. This occurred by exploring different behaviours and how they differed from their own behaviour.

Each debriefing was comparable to autonomous writing, in the sense that the participants were encouraged to express openly without over-rationalising their thoughts. Although a certain degree of rationalising takes place in a discussion, expression of feelings and thoughts through gestures and inarticulate sounds were encouraged. The emphasis of this practice lay on the release of the expression and not the coherency of the expression. Each participant was given a diary in which to record their findings, and for recording homework and autonomous texts that might have emerged during and after class. This diary became a personal journal, storing private reflections and so was not used as a resource for this study. In the role of facilitator I was relying on what was able to be observed during exercises and information gathered during discussions. A majority of this research is based upon the empirical philosophy that knowledge and identity are based on experience, but it has been stated that each experience is unique and catharsis is subjective. Empirical approaches emphasise universal laws, while hermeneutical approaches use 'individual understanding, subjective interpretation and a plurality of views' (Barrett & Bolt, 2009: 4-5). These approaches can co-exist. Within these workshops, I tried to discover whether there was a universal law for attaining catharsis even though it is subjective. Knowledge is generated through action and reflection; this empirical law is used to generate subjective interpretation.

Since creative arts research is often motivated by emotional, personal and subjective concerns, it operates not only on the basis of explicit and exact knowledge, but also on that of tacit knowledge. (Barrett & Bolt, 2009: 4)

Even though laws were being determined, much of the reflective knowledge was tacit in nature. This is why cathartic experience is subjective to each person, since that individual may not always have the means of explaining or sharing the experience in a common code. This was a problem within the workshops. There were attempts to try to form discussions that would allow the participants to reflect their findings, experience

and emotional states verbally, yet this was not always possible due to tacit knowledge that was not yet understood because it had not yet been reflected upon.

4.3 The location

The workshops started in February 2009 at the Durbanville Racing Club venue. The location and venue were chosen because the Northern Suburbs in Cape Town, especially Durbanville, are generally considered quite conservative. Personal development or similar style workshops are not common within this area, especially workshops that would span roughly three months. Therefore, a new medium was being introduced into the area, as well as providing an opportunity to individuals interested in this type of exercise to participate in workshops closer to home.

The Racing Club was chosen not only because it offered a convenient location and price, but it also correlated with the rehearsals in my bedroom. My bedroom was a private and separated space. The Racing Club is located at the centre of the racing track next to the polo fields. The venue is separate from the main part of Durbanville and it is situated in a very quiet area. Arriving at the location one had to drive down a dirt road towards the centre of the location. The club house, polo fields and stables were all incorporated within the workshops to provide new and different areas for exploration. This added variety when exercises were repeated, as well as different spatial moods for exercises. Working within the enclosed club house compared to the open polo fields provided entirely different spaces in which to explore projection and articulation when dealing with the speech aspect. The spaces were chosen in relevance to the session's theme and the availability of light.

4.4 Workshop participants

From the five responses received via gumtree.com, three participated in the workshops. The other two participants were both invitational because more participants were needed for the workshops. The inclusion of Participant 3 was connected to the venue.

This will be further discussed later on in this chapter. It was originally aimed at having between eight to twelve participants for the workshops. From dynamics experience during my studies I felt that a larger group would initiate greater discussions and would help with the improvisations. The final group of five participants was a good number for me to handle. In hindsight, if the workshops had had ten participants I suspect that I would not have been able to handle the large group due to lack of experience in handling this number of participants. The smaller group was also beneficial for creating intimacy and a safe space, as the workshops dealt with various personal issues.

Participant 1 was a middle-aged single mother who works in the banking industry. As a product of her abusive childhood, she is currently on a journey of rediscovery and 'finding herself'. Her reasons for participation in the workshops were to find confidence in herself and in what she had to say. She was hesitant to speak openly during debriefing of the exercises. After some of the workshops she commented that she felt more relaxed and open but the sessions were tinged with a fear/need of approval. This seemed to manifest during the debriefing as she always fully participated in the exercises. During the exercise 'What are you doing?'²³ it became evident that she has a brilliant wit, is well articulated and did not become self-conscious when having to perform. When she was needed to 'perform' outside of an exercise, she was not able to participate in the same manner. This allowed me to assume that she was extremely dislocated from her *internal expressive form* but was able to 'play' with different 'masks', excepting her own true identity.

Participant 2 was a 26-year-old multimedia developer. Being a professional singer and a songwriter, she found that she needed to work on her stage presence and to find confidence in her everyday life. Though she was able to express herself through her song writing, her fear of confrontation and displeasing others often influenced her true intentions and desires in life. During a one-on-one discussion, she expressed that her

²³ What are you doing? Participant 1 stands in the space and performs an action. Participant 2 comes forwards and asks participant 1 'what are you doing?' Participant 1 answers with an action that is anything but what he or she is doing. Such as if participant 1 is brushing her hair, she could reply 'I am defending the Crown.' Participant 2 then acts out the reply. Participant 3 enters the space and so it continues.

greatest fear is failure, while a strong desire is success in her career as a singer/performer. This dichotomy creates conflict in her everyday choices, and she has lost many opportunities because of her fear of failure and her feelings of inadequacy. She became involved in the exercises, but felt that this was a performance and not a true expression of herself. Therefore she felt that her participation during the first few workshops was not internalised or honest. There was a conflict between the expressed and the performed, which is between the *internal* and the *external expressive forms*.

Participant 3 was a single, 49-year-old mother of two children, intensely involved with the community and nature affairs. Her participation was invitational. The club had to be unlocked and locked when in use for the workshops. Participant 3 took this duty and waited at the venue for the duration of each session. Participant 3 was therefore invited to join in the sessions as a matter of practicality and to gain numbers. She did show an interest in drama and public speaking. Her reason for accepting the invitation was to have fun and a laugh. Participant 3 has an aggressive nature, is very assertive in her ideas and feelings and has little empathy for others. She tended to draw focus away from herself as an individual and to focus on her role and identity within conservation and as a community leader. Participant 3 acknowledged early on in the workshops that she intentionally 'hides' her *inner expressive form*. This could imply that *personal catharsis* cannot take place as she had chosen behaviour in reference to her *internal expressive form*. Her involvement was used within this study as study material, because she could still, through self performance, recognise the repercussions of hiding her *internal expressive form*. She had already realised that her internal and external behaviours were different. During the workshops I desired for her to realise the dislocation of the two forms and the repercussions of this unmoral behaviour.

Participant 4 was a 30-year-old waitress. She suffers from depression and is on prescription medication for this disease. As a rehabilitated drug addict, she was uncomfortable with being on chronic medication and expressed a desire to find an alternative to this. She was invited to join the group to try and break through her insecurity and total lack of confidence, as well as to give her a medium in which she could explore her emotions. It was anticipated that this would be a stepping stone

towards being open to therapy and alternative medications. Her participation in the workshops was never intended to be a therapeutic function, but rather a tool for self-recognition. It was anticipated that if she could recognise herself as an *external expressive form*, through *personal catharsis* she would be able to experiment with expressing the experiences of her *internal expressive form*.

Since she struggled to engage with professional help, I anticipated that this was the connection needed when consulting with a trained psychiatrist. This assumption was based on my personal hypothesis on *personal catharsis*. She does not trust easily nor becomes comfortable in a space very easily. Participant 4 has very poor posture constantly looking down and she clenches her fists and arms constantly. Only until recent years has she been able to look people in the face. This was a by-product, she claimed of years of teasing during school. She acknowledged that sexual relationships help her gain confidence, but past experience has shown her that she suffers loss of confidence when the relationship ends. Her participation in the workshops was brief for specific reasons which will be discussed further in the chapter, but a contributing factor to this was a fear that arose when relationships started to form within the group. A discussion with Participant 4 two months after the workshops ended, revealed that she was afraid to disappoint me and the other participants as well as herself.

Participant 5 was a marketing executive who previously was involved in acting and creative arts. His reasons for attending were that he might reconnect with his creative energies, which were not being incorporated into his job life. At the start of the workshops he acknowledged that there was a dislocation between his true desire with reference to his work and character (*internal expressive form*) and his participation in the reality of this (*external expressive form*). His participation was inconsistent for ten weeks. Often meetings or work responsibilities would not allow him to attend a session. This influenced the workshops set-up as well as the other participants. Later in the Chapter it will be discussed how having a masculine energy in the group changed the improvisations and the other participant's energies.

4.5 The original 12-week theme plan for the workshop.

The workshops were originally intended to span 12 weeks, with each session having a specific theme. Within these sessions, the theme-based exercises were followed by a debriefing and discussion. The week to week developments with the workshops were explained to the participants. After each workshop, the following week's theme was discussed. When discussing the weekly progress, the participants were able to express whether they would like a theme to be re-explored.

Week 1. The art of the introduction: Learning to introduce and to be introduced

As an icebreaker for the group, the first session was aimed at introducing oneself and the importance of this action. Introducing oneself invokes a need for confidence. This workshop dealt with saying your own name in public and relaying part of your personal narrative. The desired outcome for this workshop was that the participants would learn how to present their self and speak their own name with confidence. This was the basis for discovering their *creative voice of identity*. By giving their self a name and conveying personal information to another person, I had anticipated that it would help the participants identify their self as individuals with a story to tell that was interesting and relevant. I anticipated that the confidence building had to start with self-identification. Upon this identification of self, the personal narratives would be discovered and the journey towards *personal catharsis* could take place.

Week 2. Story telling: Tell your story in a creative way

This session was aimed at giving the participants a safe space and an opportunity to start 'opening up' emotionally within this space and with the exercises. Each individual had a story and I desired the participants to recognise that this story was interesting, informative and something that they could take ownership of. Their knowledge and experience is all 'handability' i.e. that knowledge is derived from doing and from the senses' (Barrett & Bolt, 2009: 1). Therefore because their knowledge and experience

was their own they needed to own their narrative as experienced by their Self. Without ownership of their narrative the participants would not be able to participate within their narrative. The process of attaining their *creative voice of identity* would begin once their narrative was explored. The creative process needed to be fuelled by their own identity and their own narrative, not only to become the actor/spectator but also to be able to recognise their self and attain *personal catharsis*. Personal narrative, like *personal catharsis*, is subjective. By exploring one's own narrative, one can recognise where there is a dislocation between intended behaviour and *other* behaviour. Only the individual is able to recognise this and therefore attain *personal catharsis*. It would be by telling the story through the means of performative exploration that *personal catharsis* would be able to take place. This was because the participants would be making their own rules and tools of exploration for their own narrative. By 'telling your story' in a creative way, I attempted to assess what the participants were ready and willing to reveal, as well as their level of confidence in telling their story. Confidence was vital for discovering their *creative voice of identity*. Creative exploration was a broad term used for improvisations. Working in a creative way was attempting to explore outside of the parameters that the individual would usually work.

Personal catharsis can take place without the individual choosing to explore their internal identity and their voice.

Week 3. Real vs. ideal characterization: Learn how to create a character

By Week 3, the idea of *internal expressive self and external expressive self* was being introduced to the group around the theme of dramaturgy and the character of self. They learned that these characters are influenced by others around us and our own personal history. The creation of a character within the class was based on the ideal person the participant thought they should be. The character was explored physically and in dialogue with the other character.

The exercises that were used were based on role-play and improvisation using the constructed character. An example of this was an improvisation where three of the

participants had to walk into a shop. They had to deduce as a group where the shop was and what kind of hat they needed to purchase. They had to discuss what they wanted and interact with any suggestions and ideas from the other characters. The emphasis with the character building was on experiencing a character. It was my aim that by experiencing a character as a 'mask' that is portrayed, recognition of the *other* as a 'mask' would be easier to realise. This experience would also distinguish between acting 'truthfully' and acting *other* to the Self. The participants needed to start discerning between their true intentions and actions and their *external expressive form*, and the dislocation between the two.

Week 4. Body of lies: Body language and movement

Building on the previous week's theme, Session 4 centered around personal physicality and interpretation of physicality. The focus shifted from generalised body language to each participant's personal body language and identification thereof. I anticipated that a new behaviour could be created and learnt from this insight - a behaviour that would project confidence and counteract misconceptions of expression. This workshop was concerned with getting back in touch with the body and observing each other in their own physicality.

As previously stated, in performance-based research, emergent methodologies, real world problems and challenges are used, while it is through the senses, actions and reflection that solutions can be found (Barrett & Bolt, 2009: 5). Using the body and experiencing through the body was an important step in understanding the dislocation of the self. In Chapter 2 the body is described as being separate from the self and in a different form. The structure of the body and consequently the *external expressive form* was explored as something that the participants needed to own and understand. This understanding would come out of a dialogue with the body and the individual's narrative. My aims were to promote an understanding of the dislocation of the body and mind.

The workshop session was started with a lengthy warm-up. This time was used to identify physical pains and problems, to try to identify the origins of these problems and

to accept the body for what it is. The workshop was concerned with recognition of the physical self and identification of how other individuals viewed their bodies. The participants were also given time to explore different body postures, gestures and behaviours to find out how they 'feel'. The *external expressive form's* behaviour is shared within the real world, whereas due to the dislocation the *internal expressive form's* behaviour and intentions are kept internal. The participants explored external behaviour as something that could be manipulated and altered. This created a link for direct dialogue to the *internal expressive form*.

Week 5. Voices made heard: Speech and voice exploration

By Week 5 the idea of having ideal characters had been explored. Although this was not much time in which to explore this idea and to create a platform to work upon, I did not want to focus solely on this concept. The workshop was a journey that needed an organic flow, even if this meant that some ideas would not be sufficiently dealt with. This week was intended to explore the voice and creative use of it. This was aimed at finding the *creative voice of identity* - reconnecting external expression to the internal intention. This exploration occurred through each person's unique voice and then in finding the confidence to speak with it.

The speaking would not necessarily be intelligible, but could occur through an expressive sound that correlated with the participant's emotions at any specific time. I had intended this method to be a discovery and exploration of the dislocation of intended verbal response and performed response. Using the voice in this method, the participant needed to identify how often their original intention in conversation and their original verbal expression differed from the external expression. The desired outcome would be that the participant would begin to become aware of this dislocation and would start to alter his/her behaviour.

Week 6. Improvisation: Creative thinking out the box

This sixth week was allocated as a 'fun' session. In order to break the 'training' seriousness of the previous weeks and to start using the character development, Session 6 was aimed at improvisations and playing with the internal expressive self. This session's workshop was aimed at being quick and energetic, with a mood of experimentation for the participants. The focus moved away from discussions and exploration of a specific theme. Games such as 'Mafia', 'Musical chairs' and 'Moir's box' were re-explored. This also allowed the participants to experience a change in attitude and action from when the games were first played. By having a 'break' in the workshop, I intended the participants to relax and realise their own growth and to take this growth outside of structured improvisations and workshop behaviour.

Week 7 - 9. Theatre practitioners: Boal, Grotowski and Brecht.

The three practitioners mentioned above were intended to introduce different schools of thoughts to the participants, so that they could experience other types of character exploration. Even though I had not researched Boal or Brecht for my academic work, I wanted to explore these two practitioners practically. If my motivation for the exploration of these two practitioners were realised, I then intended to explore them more in depth for my academic thesis.

Boal and Grotowski were chosen because of their involvement with Forum Theatre and Paratheatre. My use of the work of Brecht was intended to encourage the exploration of the idea of using theatre or drama for social use, (as I was attempting to do) and his theory of *Verfremdungseffekt* as compared to climactic catharsis. I had not done any research applicable to the workshop, as I had waited till the sessions were at hand so that I could focus my research on specific problems that had arisen during the previous six weeks.

It was at this stage that the original workshops plan was cancelled due to attendance. The remaining sessions were created with specific issues in mind as well as who was

able to attend the sessions. An example of this is that in the 8th week, Participant 1 and 3, who both had body issues, were aided in a discussion on body presentation and identification. The aim was to highlight the uniqueness of their bodies, to highlight any neglect or abuse of the body and to try to reunite the self and the body. The final session was a feedback and discussion class. It was intended that the workshops would be completed through a performance day. This was not able to happen due to a lack of attendance during the last couple of workshops sessions. As an alternative to this, it was an opportunity for the participants to discuss their journey over the past weeks and their outcomes and agitations within it.

Week 10. Ritual and praise poetry: Learn to be spontaneous

Week 10 was aimed at recognising a change of behaviour through spontaneous praise poetry. By allowing autonomous thought to be the catalyst of speech and movement, I wanted to see whether free-flow speech and spontaneity could aid an unconscious release and conscious realisation of the dislocation of the self that would result in *personal catharsis*. Once the participants had experienced their *internal expressive form* in the exploration of autonomous speech they should recognise the dislocation in reference to their *external expressive form*.

Week 11. Acting out: Acting techniques for the everyday

At this point, a desired outcome was for the participants to identify where in their everyday performance they were dislocated from their *inner expressive form* but were unable or unwilling to change and accept change in these areas. Techniques would then be shared to 'fake it' in order to create new behaviour. The participants would have to identify any difference in internal intention and external expression. Once this was identified new behaviour would be explored. Through repetition and rehearsal the new behaviour could be relearned. Whether confidence was not fully built by this stage,

techniques would again be shared until, through *personal catharsis*, acceptance and confidence would become the product of finding their *creative voice of identity*.

Week 12. Performance day: Time to show your stuff - your 15 minutes of fame.

On the last day of the workshops, it was intended that the participants would be able to express their self in any medium they chose in front of a small audience made out of friends and family. The desired intention was to create a trophy performance of their gained confidence and any cathartic moments. They could perform their self as the new character of self that was a direct representation of their inner expressive self. It would also close the workshops.

4.6 Workshop progression

Analysis of the workshops will follow a similar methodology as Chapter 3. Through the use of performance-based research methodology, the workshops dealt with everyday life performance. Performance-based research speaks of this performance as dramaturgy which refers to the presentation of self in everyday life. Leavy (2009:7) says: 'the ways in which social life can be conceptualised as a series of ongoing performances complete with the 'front stage' and 'backstage' behaviours'. The 'front stage behaviour' was the *external expressive form* and the 'backstage behaviour' was *the internal expressive form*. Although the behaviour in the workshops was heightened, it was part of the ongoing performance. The participants' performances were also an auto-ethnographical journey for me, since I was deliberately looking for the evidences that were found within my autobiographical solo. Certain behaviours that emerged from the workshops process were able to be contextualised, but due to my limited understanding and experience in developing workshops aimed at specific outcomes, my observation of the group became erratic and subjective. There was a report for every workshop, but as there was emotional involvement in the content and as I was looking for specific markers, not all the data was noticed that was available at the time. There

were varied moments that stood out for me, that is, exercises and discussions that seemed to correlate with what I was looking for.

The first session was an introductory class. Using simple exercises based on breath, voice and group participation, the participants were 'invited' into the space. This was intended to relax the participants and to find an initial group dynamic. Some time was taken to introduce all the participants to each other and to find out why they decided to join in the workshops. The exercises used were based on conversation and the sharing of information. After this, each week followed a theme focused around forms, such as voice in Week 5 or physicality in Week 4. This was so as to create a coherency and flow between the workshops.

Each workshop started with a warm-up that was followed by games²⁴ and then a 'project'. This project would either be a solo exploration and presentation or a group presentation based on and for a single participant. The sessions ended with 'homework' allocation. This 'homework' was to write a page of automatic writing as well as to 'practice' and explore something that was discussed during the session. This could be walking as your ideal character (physicality), showing your true emotional responses on your face ('masks'), or to highlight and record different emotional moods compared to emotional responses during the day (true emotional intention). All of the 'homework' was optional and not checked on. This was intended to be an aid in the participant's growth and so they could take their time in experiencing or not experiencing what was discovered in the session in the 'real world'.

There was always a distinction between the workshop environment and the real world. The club was a safe space for the participants where they were able to view their self and play with reactions and feelings that they would otherwise not have shown in the real world. Through the exploration of their reactions and feelings, the participants' individual states of 'dislocation' were unknown to me, but it became evident that they were aware that the person they presented in the real was different from the *internal*

²⁴ These 'games' were variations on children games. For example, musical chairs was changed to incorporate questions and relaying information.

expressive form. This became obvious during the introductory discussions in Week 1. The common problem was that they did not know how to reconnect and therefore 'reprogrammed' their self in order to stop participating in this dislocation. Each participant had an ideal of who they wanted to be, but was unable to attain this.

Most of the material used was self-created and specific to each participant. At other times a text was given and used. This was usually a lengthy tongue twister or voice exercise text. The use of various short texts that were nonsensical and dislocated from the participant allowed them to explore the view, emotion and intended emotion outside of content. It was always emphasised that the participants were to use their own emotional reactions and interpretations at all times. They were encouraged to explore this new behaviour as it was this interpretation that would make the given texts personal and specific to that person. Because the participants used their own frame of reference and their own unique identity to interpret or create the material, anything expressed in the class is referred to as being autonomous in nature. This is not to presume that all the material was self-created, rather the use of the material was expressed in an autonomous manner. In other words, whatever was expressed within the class was chosen and expressed by the self.

At no time were the participants accused of being untruthful of their intentions or emotions, or reprimanded when not participating fully in an exercise. The sessions were a journey for the participants in which they could experience their own choices and make their own decisions. The participants needed to experience choosing their actions or inactions. This was recognised as a good indicator for each participant in that they could see the reactive responses of others as a reflection of how their level of participation and focus was being read and displayed. My role as facilitator was that of a guide and not necessarily a teacher. There were specific outcomes in mind and I wanted the participants to achieve these outcomes.

This stance was chosen as a reflection of the methodology of my own journey. When I was going through the process of attaining *personal catharsis*, it was always on my own time without direct outside influence other than when there was a showing with my supervisor or a small experimental audience during the pre-production process. The

indirect influence was through the showings, where feedback was given and there was chance to express how I was feeling during a specific exercise or creation thereof. During the workshops, this was the role in which the participants were placed. Although there was an attempt to guide them towards specific outcomes, I had to be aware to incorporate their responses, thoughts and realisations and had to adapt to these contexts to be able to guide the workshops towards the desired outcome.

The written material in class was one aspect that could be pushed from a facilitation point and, to an extent, controlled in contexts. When giving the participants a subject to write on or when giving them specific exercises to perform, I attempted to create an opportunity for participants to become aware of shifts that had been observed. One of the exercises we played was 'Mafia' which is a game that uses deceit and accusations to redirect a death sentence. Participant 1 bookmarked this game as an exercise where her actions surprised her. To refine this surprise and try to help her recognise the repercussions of this realisation in her everyday life, her homework was to write down real emotional responses compared to given responses. If she had an encounter in which she responded in a way that was false to her real thoughts and intentions, she had to write this down. In this way she became aware of how often she responded to people in a manner that she believed they wanted to be responded to and not how she intended to respond.

The purpose of this homework for her was to identify the dislocation in herself between the *inner expressive form* and the *other*. It was intended for her to consciously see how often her real intentions were 'overruled' by her *other*. Through this experience, I was anticipating that she would realise the repercussions of her behaviour in reference to not only expressing, but also experiencing her real self. I anticipated that by choosing to follow her initial and real response rather than the *other*, this would be an ideal method for her to gain confidence. It was with this exercise that I speculate that she attained *personal catharsis*. Participant 1 had begun to make her *other* transparent. But she was still hiding in her external self. *Personal catharsis* was the recognition of this behaviour. It then became her work to make the *other* more and more transparent so that her *internal expressive form* could become the new behaviour.

Exercises that incorporated the participants having to consciously make decisions created the opportunity for them to become the actor/spectator of their self. The exercises gave the participants real examples and realisations of how they express in the real, while allowing them to experience it and see the dislocation in it. In addition, by giving them the chance to respond to their true intentions, there was a physical release in the held tension and an experience of how it felt, both physically and mentally, to express the truthful internal self. This was the *personal catharsis* that was a desired outcome of the workshops, but with the added factor of a physical release and possible changes in behaviour. The participants needed to see their self and experience their self within a dislocation to recognise or realise the dislocation. The release attained through the achievement of *personal catharsis* would be both a mental and physical release. This suggests that the process is more applicable for personal purposes as compared to performance purposes. The function of the workshops was to use performance based exercises for personal development. Even though an aim of the workshops was to have a final performance at the end of the process, the focus was always on the development of the individuals. I believed that through personal development and release of the *creative expressive voice of identity*, that any performance (theatrical or everyday performance of self) would benefit from this.

4.7 Natural progression/selection and problems

At the start of the workshops, there was a predetermined lesson plan and session themes planned for the entire duration of the workshops. The time of each workshop session was two hours with a lesson plan that incorporated debriefing times and extra time at the end for further discussions. However, it was found that each session would go over the time limit and often one or two exercises had to be disregarded due to time constraints. By the fourth week, the lesson plan incorporated five to six exercises that were chosen and executed as the mood of that particular session suggested. This meant that the debriefing content would help determine which exercise would fully benefit the group in response to what was discussed with the group.

Although the workshops were originally intended to span 12 weeks, two of the sessions were cancelled due to absenteeism. After Participant 4 left the group, if two people were unable to attend a workshop due to work obligations, it was decided to cancel that session since although most of the work was an individual exploration it was to be conducted as group participation. When Participant 5 struggled to attend sessions, the group dynamic changed drastically and participation became a problem. The sessions eventually came to a close without the intended 'showing' at the end due to absenteeism. Participant 3 and 5 both were unable to finish the course, and so the workshops ended without the original progression statement.

In reference to the group dynamic, Participant 1 and 3 tended to pair together. Participant 1 was often influenced by Participant 3 because of Participant 3's loud and boisterous nature. Participant 3's energy often overpowered Participant 1 and her opinions which led to Participant 1 clamming up. During a discussion we spoke about how one person's energy can influence an entire group and how this can influence growth and external expression. After this discussion it seemed that both Participant 1 and 3 realised their own influence and how they were being influenced by each other. Participant 1 started to work with other partners from there on and Participant 3 became more aware of how her moods and opinions disrupted the others at times. It is maintained that this acted as a catalyst for Participant 3 to experience her *external expressive form* as a spectator, which changed her behaviour. Over time she became more supportive of the other participants and more willing to participate within certain exercises and improvisations.

Participant 2 was very relaxed with partners and flowed with the mood of the group. During all exercises she was responsive and often encouraged her partner in this. Participant 5, being the only male, was often looked upon by the older woman and she would 'act out' to get his attention. Although this could sometimes become a hindrance, his presence in the class added another dynamic by allowing the others to observe how their behaviour could change when confronted with someone to whom there is an attraction. This overt sexual tension in the group created another group dynamic which the participants had to deal with and become familiar with. After the physical workshop

in Week 4 and in the workshops that Participant 5 could not attend, the mood was more subdued and the remaining participants seemed more relaxed and comfortable within their own bodies. After a few workshops, this was noted by the participants and when Participant 5 returned to the sessions after some absenteeism, his influence was not as dramatic as before. This indicated that Participant 1, 2 and 3 had all attained *personal catharsis* and were able to begin to alter their own behaviour upon personal recognition of their behaviour. The transparency of the *other* for each participant varied in degree to how willing they were to alter this behaviour.

By Week 6, I sensed that each person's participation became a personal journey. A majority of the research process within the workshops was dependent upon my intuition and observations. It was at this time that the journey was not focused or overly influenced by the other participants' behaviour. At this time, it was judged that the relationship between their *internal expressive form* and their *external expressive form* was becoming evident and a shift from performing a response to performing a truth took place. It had taken six weeks to form the particular group dynamic, with some evidence of *personal catharsis* and conscious participation of the *internal expression form* having taken place on a small scale in Participant 2 and 3. In a more detailed and focused workshop schedule, the tools and ideas around *personal catharsis* can be handed over to the participants. This could also be the reason for the inconsistent and waning participation after the first six weeks. The participants had achieved what they intended on some level and were now experiencing their newfound confidence and expressive creative identity. From this point it was stressed that these gains had to be constantly maintained through constant recognition of ones own behaviour and intentions. This would be attained through exploring the new confidence and creative voice. The more the participants rehearsed their new behaviour, the better it would be to recognise this behaviour as compared to the *other*.

4.8 Exercises

Of the approximately 60 performance- and/or drama-based exercises that were used during the workshops, there were specific exercises that influenced an individual and allowed a shift to take place. This shift was encouraged either through observation by myself or another participant or through a realisation during a discussion. Although there was a shift, the repercussions of it were not necessarily immediate, nor were they even evident at the end of the workshops. But there was usually a change in execution of other exercises or in the debriefing conversations. Again, this was specific to each participant and exercise.

During the first workshop, Participant 3 was in the hot seat. The hot seat is where one person is placed in front of the other participants and they can ask that person any question relating to the individual. One of the questions was: 'What do you do for fun?' Participant 3's answer was that she enjoyed reading and eating. In a discussion in the following workshop, Participant 3 confessed that that question had haunted her the entire week as she does not know what she does for fun, or whether or not she actually has fun. By the third workshop, she realised that she does not do anything for fun and this was becoming an issue for her. From that week on, she began to apply herself more openly to the exercises and was more willing to let go and have a laugh. The seriousness of her previous action had relaxed which invited the others to 'play' more readily with her. This behavioural exploration was varied since during some of the exercises Participant 3 quickly became uneasy and covered her drop in confidence by being overassertive of her ideas and thoughts. When she was asked to be a street sweeper in the 'People in Space'²⁵ exercise she lay down on the ground and pretended to sleep. Even though this was an original interpretation, her opinions of certain things obscure the way for creative expression. She did not seem to be able to release an idea or look at it from another point of view. Although this can be viewed as creative expression, I judge that she was playing on clichés and personal bias in order to get attention from the group.

²⁵ People in Space: The participants walk in the space. When the facilitator calls out a job title, the participants explore that character.

A defining point at which catharsis set in as a conscious behaviour change for Participant 2 was during a 'show and tell' exercise. This exercise entails one participant telling the other participants three things that they dislike and like about their self. Under each category, a movement sequence is created by doing a movement for each item. Once this is completed, the participant who gave the examples watches the rest of the class perform the movement sequence.

Participant 2's dislikes were her thighs, the way she shuts people out and her fear of failure. She watched the sequence twice before laughing out loud, exclaiming how funny it was. As a result of that one exercise, in conjunction with other exercises that brought her to this point, the way Participant 2 viewed herself and her actions changed dramatically. Whenever she felt as if she was retreating or being harsh on herself, she imagined the sequence and the ludicrousness of it. After this workshop and in the remaining workshops she was more confident and outspoken. There seemed to be truthfulness to her views that no longer needed acknowledgement but rather were a statement of her observations and opinions. This reflected that she was using her *creative voice of identity*. She had started to consciously dispel the *other* and to reassert her *internal expressive form*. In a questionnaire, which formed part of my methodology, the session and exercise that stood out for her was 'leading the blind'.

The very first session – especially the exercise where we had to lead/ guide our partners with eyes closed - I realized in this session that I would love to be led, but tend to be the one leading most of the time – even though I just want someone to look after me so that I can let go and just be. And I noticed that when I led someone, I didn't like dragging them along with me as opposed to me just guiding them on their own time. I discovered my lack of patience then and there, and this was quite a turning point for me. That's when I knew the workshop would do me good. (Addendum L)

Participant 4 realised that she was not ready to explore her emotional states while the group was participating in an exercise called 'packing a box'. This exercise is not performed individually but as a group. The group opens a large imaginary box that is filled with positive attributes. Each participant takes five things that they would like to

have, such as patience or a better temperament and places it in or on the body. Once this is done, the participants remove five things of their self that they do not wish to have, such as their wrinkles, arrogance or self-pity. This entire process is done in silence and at each participant's own time.

In this exercise, Participant 3 seemed uncomfortable, while Participants 1, 2 and 5 took their time. These three participants were moved by the actions and found a peace and tranquillity in this self-focused act. However, Participant 4 was unable to release the things that she did not want to contain within herself. When discussing this in private she said that she knew that there was something that she needed to let go but she could not recognise it, and the things that she could recognise, she did not have the strength to remove. It was at this point that she recognised herself and where she was emotionally, but she also realised that she was not ready or strong enough to let go and change. She had realised *personal catharsis*, she recognised how her actions were dislocated from herself and the repercussions of her actions, but she was not ready to allow the change to happen. The participants who experienced *personal catharsis* described this usually along the line of self-empowerment and grounding. A sense of self-assertion took place. Even though they could not explain in words their present state, they were able to recognise themselves within it. At that moment she made a choice not to release and discover her desired self, but rather to sit in the position of viewing herself and her actions along with the repercussions thereof for a longer period.

It has been previously discussed how recognition of the *other* changes the person and in this particular case, Participant 4 did achieve recognition and therefore *personal catharsis*. However, she chose not to start a process of 'ghosting' her *external expressive form*. A choice was made not to push her to continue this journey through the workshops because I acknowledged that the change and chosen behaviour should happen when she was ready for it.

The progression of Participant 1 was extremely evident during improvisation. She has a quick wit and a dry humour that often had the entire group in hysterical laughter. Although she did tend not to express her emotions (physically or verbally) during the discussions, it was with the improvisations that she was able to identify and play with

emotions. An exercise has been identified that was fundamental in her journey, namely, the 'Moira box' where a dessert box's instruction is used as the text. Each participant is given an emotion with which to read the instructions. Participant 1 was able to express any of these emotions in a vibrant manner apart from clichéd or stereotyped forms of representation. This exercise, along with the Mafia, surprised her and pushed her to be more honest in her emotional state outside of the sessions. Since she now knew that she was able to express the emotion and that other people's judgement thereof did not influence the original emotion, she was able to gain confidence in expressing herself.

4.9 Questionnaire

Two weeks after the workshops ended, a questionnaire was sent to participants. Only two replies were received (Addendum J & L). This questionnaire varied from results and changes in the participant's life to aspects of their self that they would still like to change, as well as their experience of the workshops as a whole.

Participant 1 felt anxiety and excitement leading up to the workshops but at no time wanted to back out. Her biggest concern on the first day was the fear of meeting new people and the content of the workshops. Though this feeling changed over the weeks, she left the final session feeling thankful, sad and slightly frustrated. Many of the exercises redefined certain actions for her, such as an exercise in projection where a text from Shakespeare was spoken. In this particular exercise another participant halfway across the field had to be able to hear the person in order to reply. This exercise changed her connotations of shouting; that it was no longer a negative action but also a release and that it was good for her. In terms of performing herself, being the spectator/performer varied from being very good to making her feel self-conscious. By allowing people to view her openly, she is now aware that she cannot be controlled by other people's reactions to her, but is still unable to recognise any good feedback that others see within her. She states that 'she would like to see the mirror that others see me in' (Addendum L).

Participant 1 found that she gained confidence by actively participating in the exercises which often left her feeling energised and talkative afterwards. The workshops challenged her which is something that she wants to continue by challenging herself. In her relationships, she feels she is more honest and open. Her work relationships and experiences are changing as well, but this is an active process that she is working on. Although the workshops were just another step on her journey, she has learnt that it is good to reassess and recognise how one is presenting one's self. This process is aided when other individuals are honest with how they are interpreting that person's intent and behaviour. Participant 1 is also becoming aware of her choices and reactions to things. The dichotomy between having control of her life and living in that control has become easier since she has tried to take more risks and has curbed her laziness.

She is becoming active in her life since she has recognised how others view her and her oversensitivity to this judgement. As an active application, she is trying to be more positive, less sensitive and to talk more. The response to this so far has been positive. The changes that have occurred are believed to be permanent and she would like to be able to see herself in the positive light that others view her. By the end of the workshops she felt that the outcomes matched her needs. On two occasions she emailed a response after a session. They were:

March 11

Hi there

Hope that you are both well. Thanks again for everything. When I walk out the door after the class, I feel like a different person, which is such a great feeling.

I feel I want to say two things about last night - firstly I want to apologise for my unladylike behaviour, it was not intentional. It is just that I feel safe enough within the group to share about myself without it (I believe) having any further meaning. If I am way off course, please let me know. Secondly, yes I did have a crappy (for want of a better word) childhood. I don't have many good memories, or maybe they are just buried under the bad ones - I

don't know. I have dealt with the worst bits of my past, yet still battle daily to try understand why and break through the feelings of isolation. I am really desperate to feel normal in social settings and be able to connect with others. I feel that my emotional growth has not developed as I have got older, which is a frustrating place to be.

Otherwise, am still enjoying the course and am having fun.

February 25

Hi there

Just a quick note again. I am really enjoying the course and feel more 'alive' afterwards. My list of descriptive adjectives is somewhat lacking, so forgive the many 'I enjoys'. I enjoy expression and movement in all its forms, even though I am not very expressive and have two left feet (although a colleague says that my feelings always show on my face).

I agree with you that our moods can affect others and can testify to occasions when my quietness has affected those around me - not pleasant memories.

I am still sensitive to what I perceive others are thinking, but on the whole feel safe within the group.

I have been standing still for so long in most areas of my life, that it is great to be stretched and to learn and laugh (best part).

Thanks for everything so far - I am enjoying the journey!!

I speculate that Participant 1's tacit knowledge largely contributed to her ability to express herself openly in classes. When she had found time to think about and make sense of her experience, she was able to express and articulate her emotions. She was very systematic in her experiences of *personal catharsis*, not trusting the journey alone. Participant 1 took her time with this experience, but it was her own choice and therefore complementary to 'laws' surrounding *personal catharsis*.

Participant 2's major response to the workshops was the decision to move out of her parents' house. As emailed on April 14:

Thanks for the sessions I've attended so far, it has really helped me to become more independent... for one: I am finally moving out! Anyone who knows me well, will tell you that is the biggest step I've ever taken in my whole life. (Addendum M)

Her initial response to the period leading up to the workshops was also one of anxiety and excitement but over time she began to feel more comfortable until with the final session she felt happy and at ease. Her experience of performing herself was that she 'loved every minute of it! I came face to face with my ego, and as the weeks went by I felt the walls breaking down, and I started to accept myself as I am. And the more I accepted myself, the more at ease I felt to let myself go and just say what I want' (Addendum L) Her perception of herself was disconnected from how other people perceived her, but by learning to listen and be patient, she found a reconnection in this. Her confidence was reflected in her work.

'I first noticed it when my colleagues were dumbfounded and pleasantly shocked at my sudden blatant honesty, and the fact that I suddenly started taking part in group conversations where previously I would never have gotten involved. I learnt to voice my opinions and am not concerned about what anyone thinks of it and I reckon it's very refreshing. My colleagues told me I'm so much more hard-core now and that's a great achievement for me.' (Addendum L)

She felt that catharsis was a major role in her experience with many of the exercises. The exercise of writing became therapeutic for her as she could disregard structure or coherency in the autonomous writing and so it became free expression. She feels that she is noticed now and is able to handle criticism more maturely as well as being able to accept herself and her thoughts. This was as a result of learning to listen, even if there is nothing to listen to, and becoming more aware of the surroundings. Her overall attitude has changed over the course of the workshops, starting with how she perceives

herself, how she wants to be perceived by others and the personal confidence she gives to others through her fear of failure.

4.10 Catharsis issue

Throughout the workshops and the results of it, the idea of recognising yourself and expressing yourself in a truthful manner was often discussed. This was therapeutic for the individuals as they were able to, without judgment, speak freely about their self and their experiences. From the start of the workshops a distinction was made between observation and judgement. In the class we made observations of each other that were not judgements but opinions. Since they were opinions it could be discussed outside of the complexities of judgement. This also allowed the participants to be truthful about their self and encouraged them to have opinions, such as why they think they do certain things or have certain responses. In this way the participants learned that responses and opinions can change by recognising and understanding them. This was an important link for all the shifts that occurred throughout the workshops. The process of discussing their experiences without any fear of judgement helped the participants to gain distance from their actions. This helped the participants to become more objective about their experiences and consequently their own behaviour. By viewing their self objectively instead of subjectively, the dislocation of self would become more apparent. I judge that the entire group came to recognise their *other* and attained *personal catharsis* through this process.

Since the participants were able to observe themselves performing their character of self, attaining *personal catharsis* was not a difficult task. However, the degree of behaviour alteration and the extent to which the *other* became more transparent was different for each individual.

For Participant 2, the repercussion of viewing herself was cathartic, as will be discussed in 4.10. In this way she purged herself of negative emotions which allowed her to create new feelings towards herself and her chosen behaviour. I judge that for the other participants tools were acquired that aided the process of discovery. There is difficulty in

trying to aid someone to a place of *personal catharsis* when the facilitator is not aware of the personal emotional history of that person. In the solo discussed in Chapter 2, a balance had to be reached in conveying information to the audience, and in creating coherency and understanding in order for the journey to take place. In the setting of a workshop, this aspect is also applicable. In order to lead a participant to a place where catharsis can take place, the inner machinations of the participant are needed. This is why, although Participant 1 and 3 had made developments and had recognised their self to varying degrees, they did not have a massive purgation and change of self. Their inability to express and relay information that allows recognition and change hampered their progress. On the other hand, Participant 2 was always articulate and quick to provide information about her experiences and emotions, and in this way she created a 'doorway' of understanding that equipped me to guide her to catharsis and possible change.

The important issue surrounding *personal catharsis* is that the participant has to be open to the experience and willing to choose new behaviour. The more the participant gives in terms of information about their experiences and emotional states, the greater the chance that the participant will be able to recognise his/her behaviour and therefore know how to change it. In addition, the reactive response to the catharsis differs from person to person. For me this was a change in attitude that, though not initially evident, was experienced by those who knew me. This change in attitude directly influenced my behaviour. As I was more conscious of how I was presenting myself and the potential misinterpretation of my intentions, my behaviour was directly influenced by my attitude. I have since then become extremely aware of my own behaviour and have consciously altered it.

The ghost of my *other*, although it is always present, is no longer a 'mask' to hide behind. It also allowed me to let go and allow others to experience things as their own journey and in their own time. Nevertheless, it is not and cannot be known how any single person would react upon attaining *personal catharsis*. Intimate knowledge and understanding of the person is needed in order to map out the experience and the repercussions thereof. Therefore, in the role of the facilitator, the lack of information

concerning the participants makes it difficult to understand how the individual recognises their self or whether *personal catharsis* takes place. The facilitator depends on any information that the participants give during discussions. Although certain changes were recognised in individuals, unless they told me that something had happened, my recognition was only assumption. To try and guide the participant's experience, as well as my own, there was a predetermined 12-week programme which mapped out the intended journey I wanted the participants to experience. An original aim was that by Week 12 *personal catharsis* would have taken place, which would result in the participants gaining confidence and being able to perform their *creative voice of identity*.

4.11 Execution

The final execution of the workshops did not follow for the original set-up of 12 weeks to end with a showing. The outcomes of research within the arts are necessarily unpredictable and therefore the methods cannot be pre-determined (Barrett & Bolt, 2009: 3). This is not to say that the outcomes cannot be pre-determined, it implies that the outcomes will not necessarily be that which was pre-determined. The methods and theory supporting the research can change as the research material changes. This unforeseen result was because of the set-up of the workshops and of performance-based research. The participation and execution of the workshops was influenced by factors such as individuals from different areas holding jobs that had various responsibilities that kept them late at work or attending meetings. It is, I suspect, also a result of the lack of workshop culture in the Northern suburbs of Cape Town, in terms of group dynamics and responsibilities.

Although the workshops had to adapt more dramatically than expected, the individual workshops were a success in relaying information on specific themes. The flow of the session outlines worked within the set-up. Whether the workshops were shorter or over one intense weekend, the results could have differed, but again the results could have differed due to the variables. I speculate that the set-up of each workshop was correct in leading the participants to a state where catharsis could be attained. Giving the

participants time to debrief and discuss what was happening was a vital part of the workshop experience but the participants needed to be willing to express their Self in these sessions for a higher success rate. The executions of the workshops led all participants towards a state of recognition of the *external expressive self*. The choice to go through a conscious process of making the *other* more transparent was an aspect of execution I could not control.

4.12 Results and conclusion

The workshops were a medium to induce change and personal recognition by means of attaining *personal catharsis*. The degree to which this was achieved was different for each participant but directly proportional to the extent to which the participant participated and was expressive during the sessions. *Personal catharsis* was attainable through the workshops, but because *personal catharsis* is personal, I was not always able to recognise the repercussions of *personal catharsis* within an individual. The structure of the individual sessions worked well but the workshops as a 12-week assessment was not as successful as anticipated and needs reassessing. If the workshops were to be analysed purely in reference to attaining *personal catharsis* then it could be viewed as a success. The workshops were a success as a medium with which to build confidence, for finding a creative expressive voice of identity and as a channel to self-awareness. The *creative voice of identity* formed part of *personal catharsis* - it is the expression of the *internal expressive form*.

Even though arts-based research methodology was being used that supports the emotional connection with the data, there was not enough of a scientific approach to the data. If another series of workshops was to be held, I speculate that having an observer to record the sessions would be vital for correct data collection, although it can be argued that an observer would influence the behaviour and performances of the participants. The exercises and events that have been discussed in this chapter have been highlighted from the series of workshops as a whole and do not follow a week-by-week development. The motivation for this is that often I would notice a change in

confidence or presentation of the self within a participant through a single exercise. The participants were focused on as individuals within the workshops and their journey's. It was also noted that all the participants tended to be quite reserved in expressing an internal shift while still in the class. Another reason for highlighting specific areas is that I was viewing a private journey, and so the inner mechanics of each participant was unknown to me, which is something that I could have rectified by reading the journals. An additional observer might also have viewed this data in a different manner to the way in which I had viewed the data. Therefore any internal shifts that were noticed were the ones that were mirrored externally which resonated with me as the observer.

In retrospect, keeping the homework as a private work was an incorrect assumption. The homework should have been checked and recorded as part of the data collection. The auto-ethnographical writing that emerged would have formed an important inspection into the development towards *personal catharsis* and whether or not using performance was the key form in this development. The original reason for my decision was that I was interested in the outcomes presented in the class. The information in the books that was generated through the parameters of the homework could have greatly influenced the outcomes. Instead of creating a trust with the participants through keeping their writing private and not as an auto-ethnographical 'performance', I judge that it created a possibility of non-commitment to the homework which possibly influenced the sessions and debriefings.

One of the problems with the workshops lay in the fact that catharsis is a personal process and each person has a subjective journey and reality, therefore the paths leading to catharsis differ on dramatic levels. Another problem is the construction of the autobiographical character, the truthfulness of the self and the recognition of the *other*. All of these issues are specific to an individual and will determine their willingness to become aware of the self, to change and to commit to the changes. Another aspect that also became evident during the workshops was that *personal catharsis* cannot be seen as a specific moment of realisation. There is no single 'light bulb' moment. *Personal catharsis* can be seen as a process of realisation and the different exercises that focus

on different elements of personality and the individual as a system that helps to create *personal catharsis*.

A main concern was that my skills as a facilitator and researcher using performance-based research methodologies had not developed to a satisfactory level. The work in this particular workshop helped to develop the skills needed to sharpen my facilitatory functions and to recognise the problems that could result from inadequate documentation of the workshops process. Although it was an experimental workshop, I was ill-equipped for collecting data. My personal interests influenced the collection of the research material. If the workshops structure were to be used again, I acknowledge that an observer and a trained psychologist are needed as part of the facilitation group. A problem that repeatedly came forward was my lack of emotional understanding of the individual. It is in this area that a trained psychologist is needed so that the individual can be assessed and helped with dealing with the *other* once *personal catharsis* has taken place. From my experience I consider this workshops structure a tool useful for psychological treatment, although a 12-week workshop series would not necessarily give a psychologist the necessary time to evaluate and understand the various emotional aspects that might arise with an individual during the workshops process.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Construction of Catharsis – a summary

Since participating in the process of an autobiographical performance, I have discovered specific personal repercussions from the journey. These include recognition of the *internal* and *external expressive forms* which gave rise to *personal catharsis*, and the rediscovery of my *creative voice of identity*. The research question generated by these repercussions was a lack of knowledge about when and how the process of *personal catharsis* took place, or how to define it. Because it was undefined, there was a lack of evidence as to whether *personal catharsis* could be referred to as a concept that could be generalised. These problems prompted the study of identity construction and the *other*, as well as a comparative study as to how *personal catharsis* is connected to and differs from catharsis as a traditionally understood concept.

In the process of deconstructing the autobiographical performance process, certain issues were identified such as behaviour, identity, narrative and the construction of the *other* or the *external expressive form*, which were integral aspects in identifying *personal catharsis*. To understand the creation of identity, in reference to behaviour and narrative, the principles philosophical foundations of empiricism and dualism were discussed. From the perspective of these two philosophical frameworks, narrative is considered (amongst other variables) the producer and product of experience specific to each person and an important aspect in the creation and performance of identity. This suggests that the construction of the *other*, or the *external expressive form* is specific to each person. The reason for the dislocation between the *internal expressive form* and the *external expressive form* was proposed by dualism, with reference to the mind and body being considered separate but co-dependent entities. This suggested further that the experience and expression of each form could also be separate even though they are co-dependent. This suggested a dislocation between the self and *external expressive form* that is the *other*.

Through selective readings of the works of Schechner (1969; 1973; 1988; 1990; 1997; 1999; 2003), Carlson (1996) and Grotowski (1969), I was able to apply the concept of performance outside of theatre and as a concept of everyday life. The justification for this was the autobiographical aspect of performance that takes everyday experience and presents it within a theatre, in the same manner that the creation of the autobiographical content is the performance creation. A comparative analysis was drawn between the actor on stage and the performer of everyday identity. It was through this comparison that an application of the gained experience during the performance process could be applied to everyday experience; the *other* could become a character of self that is performed in the everyday. In the study of Grotowski (Menneb, 1975; Schechner, 1997, 1999; Slowiak, 2007), the concept of the actor/spectator became a major factor in identifying the *other* and was the beginning of the process of reconnecting the *external* and *internal expressive forms* through the means of *personal catharsis*.

In order to understand the concept of the *other* in everyday life as a dislocated form of the self, some issues raised by Butler (1988, 2001, 2005) and Levinas (1987) were discussed. Some of these complications were that the *internal expressive form* and the *other* experience the same phenomena but interpret the events differently. The *other* is what the self is not, and is influenced by the sub-conscious. The *other* needs to be recognised in order for change to occur and the forms of self to be reconnected. It is through the narrative of the self that the *other* is able to be recognised as dislocated from the *internal expressive form*. In reference to the nature of time and experience, the dislocation between the self and the *other* became a plausible theory if it is accepted that they have separate but co-dependent experiences. The internal and external forms of self are experienced differently, which could result in the *internal expressive form* becoming separated from the *other* and its reference to the subconscious and suppressed images of identity. Consequently, the repercussions of the actions of the *other* become misunderstood by the *internal expressive form*. According to Butler (2001: 23), it is the realisation of the repercussions of the actions of the *other* that starts the process in which the *other* is identified. When the self experiences the *other* and identifies the repercussions of the behaviour of the *other*, a change in behaviour is

possible. The self needs to experience the external behaviour through the character of the *other* to be able to reconnect the *internal expressive form* and *the external expressive form* and so undergo transformation. It is through this recognition of behaviour that *personal catharsis* takes place.

The theories of catharsis under discussion all acknowledged that attaining catharsis involves a relationship between the actor and spectator, which results in emotional purgation or purification. In *personal catharsis*, the individual is simultaneously the actor and the spectator, and by experiencing their self as the *other*, they are able to recognise the multidimensional aspects of self and are then able to consciously release their emotional connection to the *other* through either a purgation or a purification of those particular emotions that caused the dislocation between the self and the *other*. The ideas surrounding the process of attaining *personal catharsis* and the experience of attaining that catharsis are based on my personal experience. A series of workshops was therefore created to explore the possibilities of *personal catharsis* as a generalized concept where other individuals are led to a state of *personal catharsis*.

5.2 The workshop – a final analysis

The aims, structure and outcomes of the series of workshops was on confidence building and attaining *the creative voice of identity* through the means of *personal catharsis*. The structure of the workshops, in reference to the duration and auto-ethnographic content, still needs to be developed and explored further. Based on written and verbal feedback received from the five original participants (addendum J, K, L), Participant 1 acknowledged a change in the way she viewed herself and consciously chose to alter her behaviour. Changes in attitudes and body language motivated my belief that the other participants all attained *personal catharsis* to certain degrees. *Personal catharsis* takes place upon recognition of the *other* as part of the self, but the change of behaviour is a chosen process. This is the area on which these types of workshops could focus, that is, the process of behaviour change after attaining *personal catharsis*. If *personal catharsis* is realised, the individual has to go through a process

of making the *other* more transparent. This process is a constant recognition of the *internal expressive form*.

With reference to the aims of this study, it can be argued that *personal catharsis* was identified and defined. *Personal catharsis* takes place through the recognition and acknowledgement of the *other* as being dislocated from the *internal expressive form*. Through this action the self is changed and reconnected to the *external expressive form*. Once the *other* is recognised, the individual can start to 'ghost' the *other* through his/her choices, leading to the re-emergence of the *internal expressive form* as the dominant behaviour. 'Ghosting' implies that the *external expressive form* can never disappear. The ghosting of the *external expressive form* also implies that the dislocation between the *internal expressive form* and the *external expressive form* is no longer present, or that there is a movement towards monist ontology in body behaviour. The exact placement and process of *personal catharsis* is still not known, as it is specific to each person and it can therefore not be generalized. If this state is not accepted or attained, it is still possible to build up a person's confidence and rediscover their *creative expressive voice of identity*. This takes place through a process in which a person is guided to create a character of their ideal *internal expressive form* and to hold it in comparison, through performance, to their *external expressive form*.

The identification of the dislocation of the *internal* and *external expressive forms* can take place, but not necessarily acknowledgement and acceptance thereof, which is vital to attaining *personal catharsis*. In answer to the research question, it can finally be strongly suggested that performance of the truthful self, in a process of comparison to performance of the *other*, can be considered a means of attaining *personal catharsis* and developing self confidence.

5.3 Conclusion and possible further research

A significant limitation of this study was that many of the concepts dealt with, or identified, did not have relevant terminology or theory to support the individual concepts. Research into definitions for specific terms resulted in findings that appeared vague and

general. For example, with regard to the concept of the *other*, in psychological and sociological contexts was applied to something separate from an individual. For the purposes of this study, the term was adapted to signify the external self that is separated from the self. This *other* forms part of the *external expressive form* that is separated through behaviour from the *internal expressive form*. Although the application of terms such as this one within the context of performance has been argued, the study needed to explore contexts other than performance theory: many of the original motivations for this study were dependent on tacit knowledge. I needed to explore certain concepts from philosophy and psychology to understand the original interpretations of the autobiographical solo.

The concept of *personal catharsis* is something that is placed outside of a theatrical context and is applicable to the performance of the everyday self. This is not to say that it cannot be utilised within theatre. The studio-based research which in the case of this particular study was the series of workshops that was offered, placed the participants into the role of actor/spectator within a rehearsal process. During this process the participants explored character of self using techniques of performer training. One of the outcomes of the series of workshops was a final presentation of the participants chosen solo's. This could not be achieved due to lack of participation and time constraints. As a result it could not be ascertained whether performing themselves within a theatrical context would be as effective for all the participants as it was for me. The process I underwent was very personal and unique. This suggests that the journey any other individual would experience towards attaining catharsis would be equally specific. Using the framework of a series of workshops to explore this concept is a effective framework, but not necessarily a definite method due to the personalised journeys of the individuals. The *other* expressed by each individual is a construct that they need to be explored in their own way. Since the individual can be considered responsible for having constructed the *other*, only he/she will be able to navigate the *external expressive form* and find their own dislocation. The role of a facilitator within this process is simply to guide the participant towards self-recognition.

An individual utilising techniques aimed at attaining *personal catharsis* for themselves or guiding another towards this, should understand the concept of the *other* as being dependent but dislocated from the self. This suggests that any external behaviour must be viewed as immoral as it is not the original intended behaviour of the truthful *internal expressive form*. A distinction needs to be made between the internal behaviour and external behaviour. This needs to take place in conjunction with chosen behaviour resulting from *personal catharsis*, otherwise the *other* will re-emerge as the dominant expresser. This research into the after-world of *personal catharsis* needs to be further developed. The after-world refers to the new behaviour and insight into that behaviour after *personal catharsis* has been attained.

The series of workshops aimed at attaining *personal catharsis* are working applications that can be utilised in small informal groups where confidence through playmaking and exploration can be attained. A limitation of the workshops was that identity and personality are being dealt with and the subjective emotional processes of each individual are not always able to be processed by that individual. If the techniques discussed in this study were to be applied to larger groups, there would be a definite need for a psychologist to be present to assist in dealing with any serious emotional issues that might arise. To use performance of the self and the *other* to attain *personal catharsis* could be a potential tool for psychologists in a therapeutic set-up. This is not to place this study within the context of drama therapy, but rather performance for the purpose of change. I am using this title because I am not a trained psychologist nor I am I trained for drama therapy. My intended use of the material was for personal development as well as to explore the attainment of *personal catharsis*. My interest is in the personal development through self realisation and recognition. This process was created as a tool, not as an answer. This tool helps an individual to realise themselves, but drama therapy or psychology could further this exploration beyond a workshop situation. Other fields of study that open up is the potential for using these types of workshops with individuals and not in a group situation, where the participant would not necessarily be limited by their fear of exposure or criticism by the group. This approach might be even more efficient, since the process that led me to my catharsis, was a very

private process that was influenced by specific people (such as my facilitator) during the creation of the autobiographical solo.

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Addendum A

The sky just after the sun has popped over the hills

It's dying.

It's a flush a pale pink or peach or dusty red-

Not red,

It has used up its red.

The clouds look dirty and drained

Sapping all colour from the land

Slight touches of electric.

Also dying.

It's that colour of a glow stick that has faded

Still evident of its previous glory

But faded like scorched grass.

Slowly the sky glows again:

Slowly so slowly,

Like it is taking the blood gushing from its aorta

Using its death to paint back life

A drained hand forced to perform.

But it is dying.

Defy me, defy the death.

Just try - You would look better dead.

Addendum B

Mother Nature

Thickly painted in vibrant oils,
Fading to water paint as the day dissipates.

The cardboard printed mountain,
Too perfect to be true.

Blinking away the light
Blinking in the night.
Too fast for me to be part of it

Silent fissures erupt to warm me,
Soon overtaken and swallowed by the lands silence,
As she turns her cold back to me.

I build tall monuments to reflect her.
But she moves to break them.
Burnt offerings cloud her skies in praise,
She responds by raining down poison to suffocate me.
The ground is lined with her fruit,

Ploughed perfection.

Yet she drains all moisture to kill it.

She is drawing away from me,

Making her presence less and less.

Why are you fading?

As I paint a picture of humanity,

Expanding in her glory.

She faces away,

Sending her silent armies to destroy me.

Addendum C

Religion

The darkness of caverns;

As with the darkness of fears.

It is the deception of illusion

Which scares you to tears.

Yet we have this need of confusion-

To justify hate;

Which sends our emotions

Towards the spiral of fate.

Countless devotees to sell all the praise.

Endless devotions

Fill needless days.

You save lost souls

Before they fall apart.

But what about the contents-

Of your own heart?

Addendum D

D.1 The sleeping hand, the start of the phantom limb.



D.2 The attacking hand, the phantom limb starts to smother the face.



Addendum E

E.1 Walking to the Lounge, hiding from the potential danger.



E.2 Gaining confidence returning from the lounge.



Addendum F

F.1 The world view gets reversed. The blanket originally opens the world but protects the body from it. The blanket then changes and opens the body to the world, but the mind and view become private.



Addendum G

G.1 Filling the body. As the actions become grotesque and self serving, the body is filled as it accommodates it needs to release the emptiness.

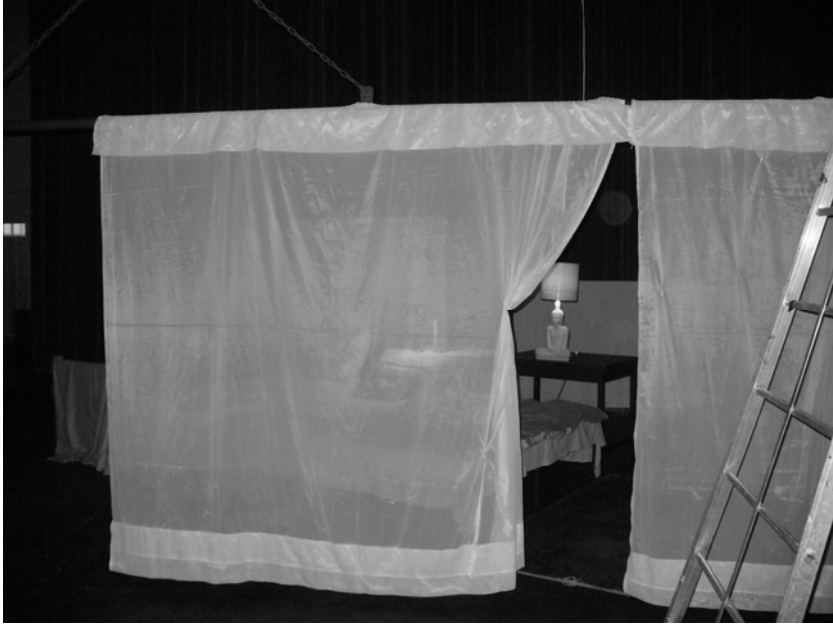


G.2 The body is filled. The moment before collapse, the body has been pushed to its furthest and is struggling to stay in a solid state of forced tension.



Addendum H

H.1 The set as seen from the auditorium.



Addendum I

My name is Teri. (soft)

My name is Teri.(louder)

No, my name is Teresa but everyone calls me Teri.

My bedroom is mine, it is private, it is separate.

What I do there is what I do.

I do not have to pretend to act to what others call me, I pretend to what I call myself.

I do not have to pretend.

There is something under my bed or in my closet, I have not decided which one yet. Do not look down towards the lounge, for then you will see it too.

I am lonely in the crowd. I am alone in my bed

I hate headboards

My bedroom is mine, it is private, it is separate. What I do there is what I do. I do not have to pretend to act to what others call me, I can pretend to what I call myself. I do not have to pretend. What I do there is what I do

Come and watch me in my room. Just do not enter or make a noise because I will retaliate.

Addendum J

Participant 1 Questionnaire

Workshop 2009

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Marital Status:

1. How did you find out about the workshop? Was fun, learnt a lot and was stretched.
2. What made you contact the facilitators? Desire for self development and outcomes matched my needs.
3. What was your choice medium for contact? (Phone, e-mail...) Email
4. Why did you choose to attend the workshops and what did you hope to accomplish? Wanted to learn to express myself and be more honest about how I felt.
5. In the time leading up to the workshop, what emotions were present? Nervousness and excitement.
6. On the day on the first workshop, did you at any time not want to attend the session? No
7. On arrival at the venue on the first day, what emotions could you identify? Nervousness and fearful of meeting new people and concern.
8. Did this initial feeling change over the weeks? Yes
9. At the final session you attended, what was your emotional state? Thankful, sad and slightly frustrated.
10. How did you find the setup of the workshops? I enjoyed the variety of the exercises and the atmosphere created by the trainers.
11. Which session stood out for you? The Moira's box – hehe (was really relaxed)
12. Which exercise stood out for you? Shouting quotes from Shakespeare.

13. Why? What the outcomes of this exercise for you? I see shouting as a negative action, but it was good.
14. How did you experience performing yourself? Sometimes really good, sometimes self conscious.
15. At any stage, did you feel a disconnection between what you felt and what you expressed? Definitely the Murder game where I managed to “convincably” lie.
16. How do you feel people view you? Tried not to think about it much because did not want to feel controlled by others reactions. Trainers were always encouraging and gave positive feedback.
17. Is this different form how you view or would like to view yourself? Would like to get hold of the mirror that you saw me through.
18. During the workshop, did this issue arise at any time? Elaborate. Yes, I always got positive feedback.
19. During the physical warm-ups, what was your initial response to any physical touch? I was ok with it.
20. Has your personal feelings about physical touch changed? I think that I am more comfortable with it.
21. Do you feel that you have gained confidence over the past weeks? Yes
22. Elaborate. Through actively participating.
23. At any stage did you feel a catharsis (release or purging of emotions)? Don’t know if counts, but after the class I felt that I was on a high and was more positive and talkative.
24. If so, was this during or after an exercise? After
25. Did you feel challenged by the workshops? Definitely
26. Do you feel like you should challenge yourself after the workshops? Yes
27. Did you keep the journal? I did some writing, but not an ongoing journal.
28. What was your experience of writing? Mostly good.
29. Did you find this therapeutic release? Yes, it felt good to put the thoughts on paper.
30. Is this something that you feel you will continue in the future? Sporadically

31. Has your work experience changed during the run and after the workshops? Only really now – has been a process.
32. Has your personal relationships changed? Yes
33. Have you changed? Yes
34. If so, please elaborate. I am more open and honest with how I am feeling.
35. Do you feel like you have addressed, even on a superficial level, your personal issues? Feel it was another step on the journey.
36. Do you think it is important, time to time, to face yourself and to step out of yourself in order to see how you are portraying yourself to the world? Yes, but it also helps to have people that are honest with you.
37. Do you sometimes surprise yourself by your actions and reactions, or are you not aware of this? I am becoming more aware and am trying to make better choices about how I react to things.
38. When 'playing' in the exercises, at any stage did your actions surprise you? Yes
39. If so, mention the exercise and the repercussions. The Moira box and the Murder game.
40. Do you feel like you are a product of your childhood and circumstances? Definitely have been for too long, but things are changing.
41. Do you feel like your opinion is not taken seriously? Yes
42. Do you feel like you have control over your life? I have always felt that, just have struggled to act it out.
43. What would you change about yourself? Take more risks, stop procrastinating and being lazy. See things through.
44. What, do you believe, others would like to change about you? Being quiet.
45. Do you think that a person can change themselves, or is their personality constant? Yes I believe we have the choice, but sometimes it's easier to make excuses and not make the effort.
46. Do you feel separated from your body? Yes, definitely, yip, did I say yes.
47. What you want most from life? To live out my purpose and live life to the full.
48. What do you feel should be changed in your life? The way I see myself, my job (find my passion) and how I interact with others.

49. How do you feel treated by other people? Depending on the person – ignored by people in high authority, well by friends, casually by strangers.
50. Do you feel like you need to be constantly on defence around others? Not defensive, just over-sensitive.
51. Where can you apply principles you discovered during the workshop to your everyday life? With my social interactions and at work.
52. Have you tried to alter your everyday character? Yes
53. How did you do this and what was the results? I am trying to be more positive, less sensitive and to talk more. The response has been positive.
54. Even if you were not able to increase your confidence, were you able to identify exactly where you were lacking it?
55. Does this affect your interactions with people? Yes, people smile and talk to me more.
56. What changes have come into your life, chosen and applied, since starting the workshop? To be more aware, to make better choices, to be more positive.
57. Do feel these changes are permanent? Yes please, thanks.
58. Is there a particular discussion that challenged and changed you? I think it was that mirror that was held up in front of me (not that I could see the reflection being spoken about).
59. Do you feel that you have not gained anything out of the workshops? No
60. Has your confidence increased and do you feel like you understand yourself better after the workshops? Yes, it has been another step on the journey.
61. How has benefitted your life? I am becoming the person I was created to be.
62. IF there are any additional comments you would like to add, feel free to do so.

Addendum K

E-mail 14 April 2009 participant 2

Hi [REDACTED],

Hope you had a great Easter weekend?

I have some sad news - I won't be able to attend the rest of the drama sessions. I am moving to [REDACTED] and it's going to be crazy travelling on that side of the world.

I do wish you everything of the best, and it's been awesome meeting you :) Thanks for the sessions I've attended so far, it has really helped me to become more independent... for one: I am finally moving out!

Good luck guys, and stay in touch... just in case you decide to run a class in Muizenberg, I'll be there like a bear :)

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Addendum L

Participant 2 Questionnaire

Workshop 2009

Name: [REDACTED]

Age: 26

Occupation: Multimedia Developer/ Designer/ Singer/ Songwriter

Marital Status: Single

1. How did you find out about the workshop?

I Googled "adult drama classes" and found the ad on Gumtree.

2. What made you contact the facilitators?

The fact that I was looking for drama classes in the Northern Suburbs area and the course fee was reasonable and within my budget.

3. What was your choice medium for contact? (Phone, e-mail...)

Definitely e-mail, because I am always at my desk and can respond immediately.

4. Why did you choose to attend the workshops and what did you hope to accomplish?

I am an upcoming singer/ songwriter and I perform on stage a lot, but never felt like I owned the stage. I needed a medium to find myself, come out of my shell and gain confidence. I wanted to learn how to be comfortable in my own skin and develop a stage presence.

5. In the time leading up to the workshop, what emotions were present?

I was anxious-excited and couldn't wait for the workshop to start.

6. On the day on the first workshop, did you at any time not want to attend the session?

Not at all! I did a 3-year drama course when I was a teenager, so I had some idea of what to expect and I knew it'd be fun.

7. On arrival at the venue on the first day, what emotions could you identify?

I was a bit nervous, but very excited to be part of it!

8. Did this initial feeling change over the weeks?

Yes, as I got to know [REDACTED], and my fellow class mates, I felt more comfortable each week.

9. At the final session you attended, what was your emotional state?

I felt happy and at ease – comfortable in my own skin.

10. How did you find the setup of the workshops?

If you're referring to the venue – I loved doing the workshop outside. The environment was so calm and really helped me see things in a new light. If you're referring to the actual workshop – apart from running out of time for most weeks, I enjoyed each session thoroughly. I didn't want the sessions to end most of the time because it was like I was in another world/ a safe space and I just didn't want to go back to reality.

11. Which session stood out for you?

The very first session – especially the exercise where we had to lead/ guide our partners with eyes closed. I realized in this session that I would love to be lead, but tend to be the one leading most of the time – even though I just want someone to look after me so that I can let go and just be. And I noticed that when I led someone, I didn't like dragging them along with me as opposed to me just guiding them on their own time. I discovered my lack of patience then and there, and this was quite a turning point for me. That's when I knew the workshop would do me good.

12. Which exercise stood out for you?

The one where [REDACTED] had to act out the 3 words that made me feel – I cannot remember exactly – a certain way.

13. Why? What the outcomes of this exercise for you?

I remember feeling utterly emotional at how they perceived my words/ the way I felt. Whenever I feel insecure today, I just imagine myself running with a big wall around me, with really fat thighs. The thought makes me giggle and now I know how ridiculous and unnecessary my thoughts really were.

14. How did you experience performing yourself?

I loved every minute of it! I came face to face with my ego, and as the weeks went by I felt the walls breaking down, and I started to accept me as I am. And more I accepted myself, the more at ease I felt to let myself go and just say what I want.

15. At any stage, did you feel a disconnection between what you felt and what you expressed?

Probably the time we shouted those – was it Shakespeare? - words across the field to each other. At the time I thought the exercise was pointless, but only until recently, I realized I had learnt how to project myself – it helped me say what's on my mind louder than I ever had before, and it got to point where I don't really care what anyone thinks! Which is a major improvement for me.

16. How do you feel people view you?

Initially, I reckon they thought I was a very bubbly, naive character. And at times I have the feeling they can see the wall around me. But as time went by I felt like I was taken more seriously – probably because I learnt how to listen, and be patient.

17. Is this different from how you view or would like to view yourself?

Yes, I don't think I'm bubbly, but naïve, yes. I definitely prefer to be taken seriously and want people to look up to me.

18. During the workshop, did this issue arise at any time? Elaborate.

That time when the class stood in one long line on the side and we had to walk past everyone and they had to look at every inch of us. I felt like my wall was ten times bigger than ever and I knew everyone could see it and I hated the fact that I couldn't hide it.

19. During the physical warm-ups, what was your initial response to any physical touch?

My first thought was “Oh God, my fiancé is going to kill me!”. I felt very uncomfortable initially.

20. Has your personal feelings about physical touch changed?

I think it's mostly because I was concerned of what the other person was thinking. As time went by, I grew used to it and it allowed me to open my physical being up to anybody, and let them in no matter who they are.

21. Do you feel that you have gained confidence over the past weeks?

Definitely!

22. Elaborate.

I first noticed it when my colleagues were dumbfounded and pleasantly shocked at my sudden blatant honesty, and the fact that I suddenly started taking part in group conversations where previously I would never have gotten involved. I learnt to voice my opinions and am not concerned about what anyone thinks of it and I reckon it's very refreshing. My colleagues told me I'm so much more hard-core now and that's a great achievement for me.

23. At any stage did you feel a catharsis (release or purging of emotions)?

Yes.

24. If so, was this during or after an exercise?

A lot of the exercises, actually. But the one that stood out for me was that exercise we did where we lay down on the floor and you imagine white bubbles travelling through your body and removing all the bad spots, cleansing you inside. I still do this exercise up to this day - it's become part of my yoga routine :)

25. Did you feel challenged by the workshops?

Yes, and I learned a lot about myself through those challenges.

26. Do you feel like you should challenge yourself after the workshops?

Definitely! That's the only way we can grow and develop as a person.

27. Did you keep the journal?

I must admit, I stopped writing every day. I do still write – my songs and blog posts, twitter, facebook notes – I guess I am using technology because it's right there. I do, however, feel I should keep a regular journal. And I need to make time for it like everything else in my life. Maybe I should write in my journal after a yoga session?

28. What was your experience of writing?

I loved the fact that we could just write whatever was in our heads at the time. Usually when I write in my journal, I tend to think of subject matter and facts and I always want to record every detail... which is so pointless, really. I learnt that writing should be about how you feel at that particular moment in time.

29. Did you find this therapeutic release?

Most definitely.

30. Is this something that you feel you will continue in the future?

See 27. I'd like to incorporate the writing process after my yoga routine. That should be a great release of thoughts/ emotions.

31. Has your work experience changed during the run and after the workshops?

Ah, definitely! See 21 and 22. I think people actually like me now... and I noticed that I am more “noticed” now – I cannot hide anymore!

32. Has your personal relationships changed?

My fiance thinks my new-found confidence is refreshing! And it's nice to be able to be honest with someone and also be able to accept criticism maturely.

33. Have you changed?

Yes, I'd like to think I am more of a “ball-buster” now. Only joking! But you know what I mean :)

34. If so, please elaborate.

These days I am not afraid to say what's on my mind, and for me that's a major improvement... no more wall!

35. Do you feel like you have addressed, even on a superficial level, your personal issues?

Yes. I have learned to love and accept myself as I am. Would you believe I love my “fat thighs” now, they're the cutest thing! Since I've accepted myself, I noticed it's easier for others to accept me too, and that's very important.

36. Do you think it is important, time to time, to face yourself and to step out of yourself in order to see how you are portraying yourself to the world?

Yes, I try to do this while I'm doing my yoga.

37. Do you sometimes surprise yourself by your actions and reactions, or are you not aware of this?

I have always been a very careful person, but lately I've been more of a risk taker (a calculated risk-taker) in order to challenge myself and believe things will work out, and most of the time I end up surprising myself. For one, I was always scared to tackle an Avril Livigne song in my gigs because she sings so high. But I am doing it and I can reach those high notes! Obviously time and practice plays an important part but it's that initial step, of taking that risk, that makes things happen and the thought excites me. Who knows what I will take on next!

38. When ‘playing’ in the exercises, at any stage did your actions surprise you?

Yes.

39. If so, mention the exercise and the repercussions.

The listening exercise – when we first sat outside and then sit inside – the difference in sounds I heard was amazing... depends of course where you take your attention at the time. I was surprised that I could hear such faraway sounds, like that gong in the distance, and also when I felt I could hear my own blood streaming through my veins.

40. Do you feel like you are a product of your childhood and circumstances?

I do, there's no denying it. But I make the best of what I've got.

41. Do you feel like your opinion is not taken seriously?

Before yes, but now, I think people take me more seriously than ever before. I think I finally gained that respect I've been longing for.

42. Do you feel like you have control over your life?

I do. And I am finally moving out of my parent's house! Anyone who knows me well, will tell you that is the biggest step I've ever taken in my whole life. Lately I've been managing my time really well, trying to do what I can when I can and not to make myself tired. I try to make time for little things, like doing my yoga routine everyday, and taking that lunch break – even if it's just for ten minutes.

43. What would you change about yourself?

I'd like to dissolve my ego completely, but it's work in progress and I know I need to be patient.

44. What, do you believe, others would like to change about you?

The fact that I tend to hold myself back a lot.

45. Do you think that a person can change themselves, or is their personality constant?

I think your personality is your personality, but you can change your habits and make it part of who you are in time.

46. Do you feel separated from your body?

No. I actually feel a stronger connection with my body since I started yoga. When I meditate, that's when I feel a sort of separation, but it's more spiritual than anything else.

47. What you want most from life?

To be close to my family. Independence. Success. To be comfortable.

48. What do you feel should be changed in your life?

My relationship with my father. I think once I move out it will be much better. I also need to take more risks and rise to the challenges in life.

49. How do you feel treated by other people?

I feel respected. I finally feel noticed.

50. Do you feel like you need to be constantly on defence around others?

No. I have learnt to let things go. I am so proud to say that! :)

51. Where can you apply principles you discovered during the workshop to your everyday life?

Where do I start?! Enough said.

52. Have you tried to alter your everyday character?

Yes.

53. How did you do this and what were the results?

When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do is smile and stretch, and tell myself it's going to be a good day. That gets me off to a good start and when things go wrong, I let it go, I brush it off, because upsetting myself for nothing isn't going to do me any good. I've been applying this everyday and it's become a part of my character. And my day generally feels fuller. That makes me sleep better at night, all the more better to wake up in the morning and be grateful for yet another beautiful day to do things, to learn more, to grow.

54. Even if you were not able to increase your confidence, were you able to identify exactly where you were lacking it?

Yes.

55. Does this affect your interactions with people?

Yes, it certainly does. Before, I was more insecure, and I went unnoticed and generally felt uninvited. But now I feel noticed.

56. What changes have come into your life, chosen and applied, since starting the workshop?

The biggest one: I am moving out of my parent's house. I finally found the confidence to take that step, and I am so excited about it!

57. Do you feel these changes are permanent?

Yes! Yes! Yes!

58. Is there a particular discussion that challenged and changed you?

When we had to sit on the chair and answer questions from all the classmates – that was pretty scary for me. I hated having people's attention focused on me – and so many of them! Now I feel confident enough to look into people's eyes, acknowledge them and also let them know I am HERE now.

59. Do you feel that you have not gained anything out of the workshops?

No, it's obvious I gained a lot.

60. Has your confidence increased and do you feel like you understand yourself better after the workshops?

Yes.

61. How has benefitted your life?

Being able to say what I am thinking and not care what anyone thinks of me.

62. IF there are any additional comments you would like to add, feel free to do so.

Thank you [REDACTED], for an amazing workshop – even though I didn't complete the full course, I definitely gained a lot from it. Keep up the good work and all the best with your future! Please keep in touch :)