

The Earth Song

An invitation to protect The Climate; with the help of Extinction Rebellion and Sociodrama.

Introduction

Knowing the complexity and difficulties of these times of mass change and global action this is my call to seek those who want to stem these tides that are coming towards us. I hope that it will impact you as a citizen, and as a creative agent for the future.

I will describe how I became involved with

- Extinction Rebellion, its philosophy and action;
- Sociodrama and its philosophy and practice;
- Finally I will then describe how Sociodrama assists the action of Extinction Rebellion.

Extinction rebellion

As I started to become aware of the terror of what the climate crisis meant I realized I had not understood that at best we may be able to slow down the heating of the planet but it cannot be stopped. Our children and grandchildren will suffer the most. There now are many young people saying that they will not bring children into this world. They doubt their natural instinct to create the next generation in these times to build a future.

The increasing focus on the climate crisis has this year been superseded by the crisis of Covid-19. The restriction of movement and travel and the enforced closure of many places has lead to cleaner air, skies and more creatures of nature. It has also added to the isolation of Lockdown. The mental health of many has deteriorated through the need for community. To answer this, computer platforms, such as Whatsapp, Face Time, and Zoom, *have created a network of connection unprecedented in earlier times of suffering.* It has created a new kind of intimacy. Ironically this crisis has forced change that Extinction Rebellion aimed for. It has also demonstrated that, as a species, we can change how we behave and therefore we can slow the crisis of our planet, for our young ones.

Over a very long time there have been scientists and naturalists who have drawn attention to the climate crisis, but they have not been able to touch hearts. This has partly been due to the control that politics and finance have had over some of them, resulting in many contradictions.

It was just over a year ago when two important events happened that catapulted attention towards the climate crisis. Although they infuriated and angered many they also touched hearts. They are Greta Thunberg and Extinction Rebellion.

Greta Thunberg

Greta Thunberg sparked the imagination not only of children but also of many people: mothers, fathers, grandparents and relatives. Greta, a girl, then 16, from Sweden, took to demonstrating in the streets on Friday mornings raising awareness that ‘nothing but words’ were being used to combat the climate crisis. Meanwhile Extinction Rebellion was also becoming active about the climate crisis.

If these concerns are terrifying you and you don’t know what to do you are already a member of Extinction Rebellion. You are needed, badly needed.

Extinction Rebellion has one goal: to *save the planet*.

Its attention is focused on the tasks needed to disturb the status quo and to bring about change to humankind’s management of the globe. The title Extinction Rebellion represents the action that is being taken to protect our earth. If we do not rise up we will become extinct sooner rather than later like so many animals. That is the real story.

Understand, Extinction Rebellion is a discipline of *nonviolent action*.

It requires three demands in order to reduce carbon emissions by 2025

-To tell the truth,

-To act now

-To create ‘*Citizen’s assemblies*’ to oversee necessary changes that are not governed by politics. (These assemblies are reached in the same way that juries are drawn together.)

-Black Lives Matter is bringing the fourth demand already established in the US for social Justice.

Make no mistake; being a ‘rebel’ is not easy. We would rather live in peace. But we must listen. Our children are leading the way.

Extinction Rebellion has a regenerative culture, challenging and caring for itself as well as for others. It creates groups to keep the urgent wellbeing of the planet as imperative. The Rebellion aims to make a safer future. This is its purpose.

Sociodrama

I will now turn to Sociodrama. I was inspired by Sociodrama in ‘*Who shall Survive*’ (1934) by Jacob Levy Moreno (1889-1974). Moreno set out his ecological understanding of mankind in the universe. He created methods with which he aimed to change society. These methods can be used in all his work and are as relevant to Extinction Rebellion as they were at the time of their invention.

Inspired by Moreno I meant to run public sessions and create a travelling socio drama circus. To do this I had to gain a mental health training. I lost my dream. I was fascinated by another of Moreno’s inventions, *Psychodrama*.

Psychodrama stands for the drama of the individual’s internal world, and the experience of relationships from the individual’s point of view. The aim is to modify the understanding of the individual.

Sociodrama explores the relationships of the external world, be it within or between organisations, community, groups, family, or nature. The aim is to understand and modify the group dynamics.

Sociodrama and Psychodrama can be interlinked, and they use some or all of the strategies employed by Moreno here described:

Sociometry: The mapping of patterns in or between groups.
Sociogram: Making a map of an individual's view of the patterns of a group.
Doubling: Taking on the role of another or being doubled by another.
Mirroring: Watching one's own behaviour and the behaviour of others.
Soliloquy: Speaking an aside to magnify private reflections, as in the theatre.
Role reversal: Role reversal was noticed by Moreno to be a spontaneous invention of play and problem solving by small children. It is key to the understanding of all relationships in life

What can the Action Methods of Sociodrama contribute to Extinction Rebellion?

The principles of Extinction Rebellion relate to Sociodramatic practice. Extinction Rebellion is Sociodrama on the streets. But Extinction Rebellion is *not* a rehearsal. It intends to act. Extinction Rebellion therefore takes much preparation and reflection, so being part of a group is imperative for the resilience of the participants. It requires discipline and stamina to rebel seriously but non-violently. There are those who also choose to sacrifice themselves by being arrested. Thus all these events intend to be carefully and peacefully managed. Sociodrama can contribute to the endeavour of Extinction Rebellion, with the help of role theory and training and the strategies described above:

- It can help understand how others respond.
- It can help recover from violent feelings generated in the response of others.
- It can help understand projections onto others.
- It can help understand personal feelings.
- It can practice meeting the public in a non-aggressive but genuine way.
- It can magnify the understanding of equal roles in a group with the public.
- It can be part of the regenerative dimension of Extinction Rebellion.
- It can role-play situations that are going to be or have been confronted.
- It can prepare how to create dialogue in different contexts.
- It can help organisations to understand their own roles and the roles of others.

Thus Sociodrama can support and strengthen the backbone of Extinction Rebellion.

Closure

www.sociodrama.co.uk

For those interested in learning how to use action methods; SCAN, known as 'Sociodrama and Creative Action Network', offers training, workshops and conferences that can be found on line.

In Solidarity

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