Process of Group Sessions using Psychodramatic Role Playing for Adolescents with High-functioning Pervasive Developmental Disorder: Deepening Understanding of Self and Others

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The aim of this study is to investigate the process of deepening self-understanding, based on comparisons with others and recognition of differences that accompany the process of self-disclosure of one’s own feelings and experiences, deepening awareness of others, and heightening group cohesion through a clinical psychological group session for the adolescents with high-functional pervasive developmental disorders. The subject for this report is Client A, a junior high school boy (first time in group)(FIQ90) who had been diagnosed with pervasive developmental disorder. Group members were 11 adolescents with High-Functional Pervasive Developmental Disorders who have difficulties with interpersonal relations and some staffs. The effect of clinical group session discussed related to involvement in activities (one’s own feelings, self-disclosure, etc.), relationship with other members, understanding self and others and response to self-understanding questions.

The use of psychodramatic role playing is considered to produce the following: 1) awareness of new aspects of the self by expressing feelings that one had not intended by means of acting improvisationally; 2) encountering a self that is not actualized in everyday contexts by being provided with a place where one can express oneself freely and securely in a fictional setting, and 3) objective eyes on the self for the person playing the role from the presence of a number of diverse group members, whose gaze promotes self-observation of the internal aspects of the self and deepens self understanding.

Key words: Pervasive Developmental Disorders, Self-Understanding, Group Support Approach, Psychodramatic Role-Playing

Purpose

For adolescents with high-functioning pervasive developmental disorder, development of the “self” involves facing the disorder that forms one aspect of oneself. The authors (2005) previously

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pointed out that, together with development, such adolescents exhibit various doubts related to their characteristic traits, such as “Why do I become panicked even though I do not want to?” or “Why am I different from others?” While carrying within them the confusion and anxiety that underlie such questions they also desire relations with others that will help them deepen their self-understanding and maintain their self-esteem. We have conducted group sessions using psychodramatic role-playing (PDRP) based on the idea that self-understanding is further deepened by being aware of the self as reflected in other people, and that at the same time self-understanding contributes in the background to a deeper understanding of others (Utena, 2003*).

Because PDRP is done in a group, one can objectivize the self through others, and since the other people are diverse a deeper self understanding through the relative position of the self may be expected (Tanaka; 2005, Takahara; 2002). The aim of this study was to investigate the process of deepening self-understanding, based on comparisons with others and recognition of differences that accompany the process of self-disclosure of one’s own feelings and experiences, deepening awareness of others, and heightening group cohesion through this kind of group session.

**Outline of group sessions**

1. **Group members:** about 10 people including 6 session members and 3–5 staff (director and auxiliary ego) in a closed group.
2. **Period:** May of year X through July of year X+2, at a frequency of once every other week to once a month. Each session was for 90 minutes.
3. **Place:** pediatric clinic outpatient setting (where I work part-time as a clinical psychologist).
4. **Each session had the following basic progression:**

   a) **Warming up:** small talk, structured game that serves to deepen understanding of self and others (for example, “24 Questions”, in which people try to guess things about oneself; self-introduction as another group member; role-play game (RPG) with improvised performances in a give-and-take setting, in which others try to guess the setting).

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* According to Utena (2003), Role-Playing has five benefits, development of communication, advancing creative it, facing reality, getting an idea how to solve problems, and understandings the causes of various problems.

In Psychodramatic Role-Playing, the performer freely selects the role he/she prefers. They do not have to do it “right”. So the role, and how they play it, projects their inner mind: wish, ambivalent, anger, sadness, and so on. This is different from Role-Playing in social skill training (SST). The former is oriented to psychoanalysis, and the latter to behavioral therapy. To develop their social skills, group members play roles. This is effective because their own behavior would not likely fit the role or occasion. For example, speaking out of context regardless of what listeners think and without allowing others a chance to speak. In SST, the therapist sets the goal as the target behavior that should be achieved, and group members as the clients, work at how they can appropriately play the role to achieve that aim. In Psychodramatic Role-Playing, everyone who joins a group does not practice in advance but rather improvises to perform their role. The Role-Playing in counseling produces member catharsis, and expressions are tolerated that would be indecent and lead to restraints in ordinary life. Also, they learn to think about themselves difficulty and learn self acceptance through psychodramatic Role-Playing. In this situation, they feel that their differences from others are due to personal failings instead of being caused by their disorders. Therefore, they need to learn about themselves without feeling such low self-esteem. This is the reason to adopt Psychodramatic Role-Playing(Tanaka and Hirosawa; 2005).
Each session is composed of some games for warming up and some gesture games that will apply to the Psychodramatic Role-Playing. The purpose of the warming up has its main purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of game</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Who am I?”</td>
<td>When the members of the group meet for the first time, I ask them, “What is he/she like?” The aim of this question is to have them think about others’ personalities, internal traits, character, and so on, not just external appearances. The members wrote down their answers, but no one knows which member made which.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Kokontozai”</td>
<td>Members sit down in a circle, and a member stands up and goes to the middle. The member then says something. For example, “People who like apples.” “People who didn’t have breakfast this morning.” All participants who apply to what the member standing has said must move to another chair rapidly. Any member left standing must become the new person in the middle of the circle who then says something new, and the process repeats itself. This game is a little like musical chairs. If staff members become the person in the middle, their theme always focused on not appearance but the others’ mental states, others’ personalities, internal traits, etc. It is important for the children to think about other people’ minds and mental states. For example, “People who enjoy this game now.” “People who were not willing to come to this group session.” “People who think that I am kind.” Because children with autism have understanding deficit about other people (lack understanding, have difficulty in understanding), we staff members always say these types of things to encourage the children to think about others’ emotions and feelings.</td>
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in creating a relaxing setting by acting through physical movement and brainstorming, and to begin thinking about other group members’ intentions and emotions, because they usually feel isolated at the beginning of their classes. For example, the “Who am I?” game, the “Kokontozai” game, the “Nandemo Basket” game, “Takenoko Nyokki” game, and so on. The rules of some of the game are shown in Table 1.

b) PDRP: improvised performance in settings that deal with relations with others and feelings.

Gesture games are used as the introduction to Psychodramatic Role-Playing, because most members had resisted playing a role improvisationally. One of the aims of this game is to facilitate verbal and non-verbal communication. Another goal of this activity is to make the children more comfortable with Role-Playing. The children are generally very resistant to Role-Playing situations at the beginning of the session, but enjoy acting in game conditions. Also, this is good preparation for future sessions when the children will be performing in a psychodrama.

In the first half of this game, half of the children and staff members choose topics. The other members gesture and act out the topic while their teammates guess what the topics is. This game is similar to “Charades.” Their topics were shopping, starfish, Ring (movie title), and marriage ceremony, etc. In the latter half of this game, I wrote a word on the white board something that relates to interpersonal relationships. For example, wisecrack, teasing, make an excuse, joke, to be suspected of (to be doubted). With excuses, members need to understand the difference between the real reason, and the given reason. They must understand the connotation, not just the external content (literal meaning). Children with Pervasive Developmental Disorders tend to get others’ intent only from external content (surface meaning, not hidden meaning, not literal meaning). These expressions relate to the “Theory of Mind” approach to Pervasive Developmental Disorders. A “Theory of Mind” is held to be necessary for both social interaction and communication.

c) sharing.

After all programs, each member gives his/her impression, feeling, or sentiment about the entire session, other members, and “here and now.” We have three aims regarding sharing. First, all of the members share the feelings and thinking of one of the members. Second, we expose ourselves by expressing hidden feelings. Third, we find together the new theme for the next session.

Outline of case

The subject for this report is Client A, a junior high school boy (first time in group) who had been diagnosed with pervasive developmental disorder. His FIQ was 90. He lived in a family of
three with his mother and father. In his early developmental history, language was delayed and he did not speak until he was past three years of age, and so his development was followed at a clinical center for children. He was first examined at our clinic in May of his sixth year of elementary school. With regard to theory of mind development, he had passed through both Sally-Ann tasks and Smarty tasks. Because he could not make friends, he had been receiving counseling from a middle school counselor since the sixth year of elementary school.

He likes trains very much and remembers the names of many stations. Usually he frowns and then suddenly laughs at somebody’s joke. He has unnaturally polite speech, especially using the first person pronoun. In Japanese, with age and depending on the relationship, we alter the personal pronoun “I”. We say “Boku” during childhood, “Ore” in adolescence, “Watashi” in adulthood, and usually “Watakushi” in polite situations. But he calls himself “Watakushi” all the time. His usage isn’t wrong, but it is very different from his classmates, and seems very odd.

When the group started, he had the most pronounced characteristics of pervasive developmental disorder of all the members. He was taken as the subject for this report based on the idea that his was a typical case for an investigation of support of people with HPDD, since transformation to a more spontaneous involvement with others was seen in his involvement with others and the way he participated in PDRP. With regard to his motivation for participating in the group, he was asked “What do you think you’d like to do in this group?” to which he responded “I asked my mother and the counselor, but I forgot what they said.”

**Group members**

The participants are six adolescents with Pervasive Developmental Disorders(Table2) and some of the staff members. The adolescents are from the first year of junior high school up to freshmen in high school. They are unaware of their disorders. They attend regular classes and do not receive special educational support. The other members participating with PDD in the group together with A all started at the urging of their counselor in private sessions or their primary physician. When the group started, motivation to participate varied and a fair number of them expressed, using their entire bodies, the attitude of reticence toward the group with a vague anxiety about what it is they would be made to do (for example, some looked down the whole time, kept their eyes closed, or slept). They had strong resistance to doing something in the group without the use of tools, and performing improvised roles (for example, when a role-play started they would move their chair to a corner of the room and enter their own world, or leave the room). At the start of the group, the disabilities of all of the members had not been announced.
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**Table 2  Group Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Client B</td>
<td>He is a first-year high school student. He has been diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome. His intelligence quotient is only 65. But he performed the tasks of the WISC-R so indifferently that this author thinks he is higher. He talks a lot frequently, but is not good at sensing the atmosphere in the group. For example, he suddenly asks a stranger, &quot;Are you a virgin?&quot; He likes the actors and singers who are very popular with his classmates in high school, and he can understand and enjoy the jokes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Client C</td>
<td>He doesn’t like to talk to anybody. He isolates himself in his class. He keeps the rules stubbornly. If somebody acts in violation of the rules, no matter how minor, he becomes angry. His expression doesn’t change, and he withholds his gaze. He doesn’t like to talk to anybody. He isolates himself in his class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client D</td>
<td>He is a third-year student in junior high school and is 15 years old. He is diagnosed with a Pervasive Developmental Disorders. His intelligence quotient is 97. He likes to watch movies and knows very many actors and actresses and information about the release of new movies. He speaks too quickly for us to follow. So the members of our group sometimes do not catch what he says. But he is not aware that we do not understand him. He continues talking about movies for some time, and then finally notices our blank looks. He will stop talking or change the subjects momentarily, but then he resumes talking about movies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client E</td>
<td>He attended a special class until he was in the third year of elementary school, but he now attends regular classes. He feels that he is different from his classmates. He has trouble in his relationships with friends, so he avoids contact with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client F</td>
<td>He is diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome and has trouble in his relationships with friends and often behaves inappropriately. He assumes that he has a mental illness and has high anxiety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client G</td>
<td>He is a first-year student in junior high school. He is diagnosed with Autistic Disorder. He likes to make a cheap joke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client H</td>
<td>He is a first-year student in junior high school. He has a strong motivation for group session.</td>
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**Session process** (Dir: director, AE: auxiliary ego, RP: role play)

**Period I. Sessions #1–#6**

#1, May 31, X  After Client E introduced himself, A asked many questions: “What food do you like?” “What club are you in at school?” and “What subjects are you good at?” When Client A introduced himself, he gave his name and then said to everyone “Do you have any questions?” He responded to these questions in differently, and after he had answered one question he immediately said “any other questions?” Then, “I’ll take two more questions,” “Is there a final question?” and “That’s all.” When asked about his hobbies, he said “Well, I like trains, I guess.” Even in response to questions that other people were asked, he would start talking about himself: “Me, I like vegetables. Except for watermelon, I really like onions.” More than exchanges of feelings with others, he seemed to be having conversations for conversation’s sake. He had high initiative, but much of his behavior was centered on his own interests. When the group started talking about playing “Nandemo Basket” (a variation of the game Fruit Basket, in which players sit in chairs in a circle, with one person in the middle. The person in the middle calls out a description ‘e.g. People who like ice cream,’ and all people to whom that description applies have to move to a different chair. This includes the person in the middle, so that one person is always left standing), he would soon say “Okay, can I be ‘it’” and immediately start moving about. He got
up and moved when someone called out “A person who thinks he is forgetful”

In RP, he closely watched the drama played by B and his auxiliary ego in the setting of inviting a friend to do something, but when urged by the Dir to perform he refused, saying “Well … If I can… But…” D suggested a role-play with the setting in which friends in a special education classes are repeating rumors,” but Client A had no particular interest in it. Finally, when the Dir tried to confirm everyone's intention to continue the group, saying “I would like to continue getting everyone together like this to think about themselves or their friends. Do you want to give it a try?” Client A responded that he would probably come next time, but expressed it as if he were talking about a third person rather than saying he himself wanted to come.

He was a member of the brass band club at school as a percussionist, and every day he was tapping on the desk, practicing.

#5, July 26, X  Client A brought in a Millionaire Game, and he appeared to want to participate in the group. During the initial small talk, he suddenly said “The water level in the Abukuma River is higher than usual…,” but no one paid much attention to him and he did not seem to take notice. When the group was deciding a name for itself, the members offered various suggestions but Client A said only once, as if off the top of his head, the “Saturday Committee.”

When a new staff member was introduced Client A did not say anything unless he was prompted, and his involvement in the group was centered on his own interests. When the group talked about the Jenga block games they had played in the previous session, Client A said “In the last game I was the one who knocked over the blocks,” but rather than expressing feelings or looking back on a shared experience, this seemed to remain with him only as a simple fact. In a game of “Nandemo Basket” Client A did not move when the description was “People who like summer vacation.” When other members said “You didn’t move. Don’t you like summer vacation?” Client A immediately started moving, but then returned to where he was, saying, “It’s okay.” Behavior such as this, in which he responded faithfully to what other people said, was prominent in the case of Client A. In role-play games, perhaps from resistance to playing a role, he was always one of the people guessing without ever trying to play a role himself. As a respondent, he closely watched the RP. To the action of laying out bedding, he called out “Sheets!”

When he was a presenter he gave the topic of “emergency drill.”

#6, August 9, X  Client A showed a strong interest in time, such as by bringing a timer for the role-play game, and suggesting that they set a limit for the time to think about the topic for the “it” in Anything Basket. In a game of “Takenoko nyokki”, Client A apologized with a serious look on his face when he said the answer at the same time as another group member. He gave the impression of someone performing a task rather than enjoying playing a game.

In the RPG, Client A suggested the theme of “marriage”. When members were choosing
who they wanted to be Client A said “I’ll play a role,” and for the first time performed in a role-play. When the topic was a “crane game,” he made a game machine gesture of picking something up. He paid close attention to the time, saying “the remaining time is…” and “only 10 more seconds” while looking at the timer. However, when the Dir said something to him about this, he put the timer aside did not show such a strong interest in time. When they were guessing the setting, the announcer said “Oh, that’s close” to one of Client A’s guesses, but then instead of modifying his answers along the same lines he move gradually farther away from the correct answer. It was difficult for him to make use of the words of other people in his own cognitive activities.

**Period II. Sessions #7–#14**

**#7, June 26, X+1**  For Client A, every day was brought to a standstill by the incomprehensibility and unreasonableness he felt, and he started to think about the meaning of this. When they were about to begin a game of “24 Questions” (one person chooses a word that the others have to guess. To find the answer, the others ask questions of the presenter, such as “Is it something you can eat?”), Client A immediately raised his hand and wanted to be the person giving the word. His word was “green juice,” and as the game progressed and people got closer to the correct answer he finally said “Okay, everyone together now…” and bring things to a close in a way suited to the setting.

In an RPG, the AE had the role of a person receiving counseling, and said, “I failed my test even though I tried hard, and evening club activities I don’t do well. What should I do?” Client A, in the role of counselor, improvised a response, saying, “Well, let’s see. I suppose you could always take a break from school.” This showed that he was recognizing his own days in which he went to school but stayed in the nurse’s office all day, and the struggle with his feelings of not being able to go into the classroom.

A role play of one classmate reproaching another was conducted. The flow and things said were as follows. 1) Setting of being reproached. Client E: “You’re pretty cocky.” Client A (role of person being reproached): “What? What are you talking about?” Client E (Loudly): “Shut up. It has nothing to do with you.” Client A: “What are you talking about?” In sharing time, Client A said “I don’t talk back like this when I’m at school.” 2) Client After role reversal, Client A, in the role of the person reproaching someone else, said “Sorry, but could you do something for me?” The AE pretended not to hear and said nothing. Client A then said, “Hey, are you listening to me?” In sharing, Client A said “I don’t talk back to others, because I think it might lead to a fight.” 3) Setting in which one person is ostracized. In the role of person being ostracized, Client A said “You should have a good reason when you make a complaint about me…” 4) When Client A had
someone playing the role of his double (someone who stood behind him and said what he was really thinking inside), he said “I don’t know what you mean.” “If you don’t have a reason then what you say doesn’t mean anything.”

The next setting was one in which people who had been reproached are talking to each other. Client A said “I want to know their reason for saying something like that,” and “Something’s strange if they don’t have a reason.” In sharing, Client A said “This helped me learn how to respond when people say things like this to me.” “How do you want to be from now on?” “I want to be kind.” “You want to be kind even when people say things like this?” Client B then said, “No. Actually, I feel sad when someone like this is around. It happened to me lots of times in elementary school,” and everyone started talking about their experiences of being bullied. However, it is not clear whether the emotions shared by the other members reached Client A. Client A’s interest was directed toward stereotypical responses to moral norms, such as “I won’t fight” and “I’ll be kind to others.” (Fig. 1)

Client A shouted at once school in June of X+1. He was taking haloperidol for anxiety.
#9, August 25, X+1  When the group was talking about what they had done on summer vacation, Client A did not say anything without being asked. When the AE asked questions such as “Did you go anywhere, A?” he answered “Recently I went to Naruko Onsen,” but followed by starting to talk about his own experiences that were unrelated to the topic. Changing the flow of conversation like this to center on his own interests was pronounced in Client A. Client B often called Client A “gay,” but Client A did not show any displeasure at this, and his indifference to messages from other people was evident. Only when Client B faced Client A and pointed at him while saying “gay” did Client A ask back for the first time, “Me?” In this and other situations one felt a fledgling relationship with Client B, but A’s comments gave a strong impression of being about a third person rather than about himself. When the group played All About the Yamate Line at the suggestion of Client B, Client A would frantically say “One more time!” to those around him whenever he failed, and his stumbles in the game seemed to remain with him as sense of failure rather than something to laugh about.

With the aim of thinking about the self from the perspective of the gap between the ideal self and the actual self, during RPG we distributed cards for each member to fill out in advance with the kind of personality they wanted to have and the kind they did not want. We then had a role-play using those responses. We used a game format in which others tried to guess the type of personality that a person was performing. Client A wrote that the personality he wanted was to be “a person with a kind heart,” and the kind of person he did not want to be was “a person who is always saying bad things about others.” When we began the RP, Client A said that he wanted to perform. He performed a person who is not very picky and the person who is very picky. He showed a positive attitude toward the RP. Taking the role of the “not very picky” person, Client A’s first line was “Where should we go on our trip?” In response, the AE said “Let’s just get on a train and go somewhere.” A responded, “Okay, I’m the type who’s happy just getting on the train.” Afterward, in the role of a picky person, Client A performed suitably to the role in a scene of preparing for the trip, saying “Let’s make a checklist of things not to forget.” In sharing, he said “If it were me [as for what I am closest to], I think I am more the non-picky type,” indicating recognition of the distance between the character of the role he was given and his own character. He also remarked that it was fun to play the roles.

He showed a strong interest in time, always concerned with it and suddenly announcing the time as “11:14” or announcing the time that the group would finish (“There are three minutes left”).

In August X+1 he watched “Hikari to tomo ni” (a television drama in which the hero is a boy with autism), and in a scene in which the autistic boy held his hands over his ears, he said “I wonder if I’m mildly autistic.”

#12, November 27, X+1  Client A showed empathy by responding “yeah” when Client F said “People who say they enjoy tests are little strange.” From such responses, Client A showed
empathy and interest in other members. When they were talking about sports festivals, B tried
to tease A, saying “Was your team in last place because someone gay was on it?” to which A
responded seriously, “No, no one there was gay.” He did not seem to notice Client B’s teasing.
Client A’s exchanges with other members increased, such as when Client G said, “I bought a
Kiyohara t-shirt” and Client A asked him how much it had cost, or when he replied, in response
to a comment that the personality one of his good friends was a little too bright, “If I put it in
terms of watts for a light bulb, I would say he is about 200 watts.” He also responded emotionally
for the first time at the mention of being “gay,” saying “Hey! Don’t be so rude! Don’t say that
again!” when Client B called him gay.

In RPG, he watched another member perform “a role as a person who is indecisive”, and
stated, “Actually, I’m like that. Sometimes I get confused about whether I should be patient with
something or give it up.”

In RP, to play the role of “a person who is thought to be a little strange by his or her
friends,” Client A came to the front saying “Okay! Okay! Let’s go!” while pumping his fist. He was
active in the RP. When other members gave various reasons for a person being strange and
Client A was playing the role of the person being called strange, he would include motion and
express anger in his lines, cutting off the other person and saying “Isn’t it about time you
understood me? Who do you think you are to say something like that?” In sharing, when the
group was talking about their experiences of being called a “strange” by friends, Client A
commented on external things, saying “Well, I can’t really say…Uh, but someone told me I
shaved my eyebrows.” He did not make any statements that showed interest in internal aspects.

He showed a strong interest in time, closely watching the time and saying, “About 50
minutes left,” and “15 minutes more.”

* When his clinical psychologist told him in a counseling the name of the condition that the
diagnosed with, Client A said, “Really… So being loud is also a characteristic of autism,” and “So
that’s why I’ve been coming to the hospital!” When he was told that all the members of the group
have autism, he looked impressed and said “Is that right?” When he was looking for high schools
to go to, he saw an introductory pamphlet from one school that said the school provided
counseling, and stated “This school is just right for me.”

#13, December 25, X+1 A new staff member joined the group and the members were
giving self introductions of other members. Client A played the role of Client E, but inadvertently
began talking about himself. However, he noticed this in itself and said “I better watch it! I’m
starting to talk about myself.” He was confused, putting himself in the fictitious self (other
members perform the role of oneself) that he was performing for others. Perhaps because of that,
he left the room midway saying he had to go use the restroom. In a game of Nandemo Basket
with the topic of looking back on the year, Client A gave the task of “A person who has received a Christmas present and is happy.” Client A mentioned both the fact of receiving a present and the feeling of happiness. He also moved when the note picked out of the basket was “A person who enjoys this group” and “A person who looks back on this year and sees he has changed.”

With the aim of seeing one’s current self from the perspective of oneself in the future, the members performed a role play of themselves 3 and 10 years in the future. In the setting of performing the person that he would be in 10 years, Client A’s lines expressed anxiety about the future and awareness of his characteristic of being irresolute. He said “I’m 24 years old, but haven’t yet found a regular job,” “I don’t have any more places to look for a job,” and “I can’t focus on one thing.” In a setting in which he remembers his current private session counselor after 10 years, he expressed the sense of security and relaxation he felt when he was with his counselor, saying “In my first and second years of junior high school, my counselor did a lot for me.”

His mother reported that being called gay in both the group and at school did not seem to bother him at all, that he shouted out at school and once came home depressed, and that if he does not understand his lessons he does not seem to care what others think and takes a nap without any concern.

**Period III, Sessions #14–#20**

#14, January 22, X+2 In a game of Who Am I?, he showed exchanges with other group members. When G was getting close to guessing the answer, Client A placed his hand on Client G’s shoulder and said “That was really good.”

With the aim of getting members to think about the gap between the actual self and the ideal self, they were first given cards on which to write about other people in the group “The things I like about (name of person in the group) / That person’s future”. We then played a game of “Who Is This Person?” which group members guessed who the cards were written about. When other people wrote “open,” “a kind person,” and “a person who reacts to what other people say” about Client A, he said about all of them only “I think that fits,” or “I think so.” However, when asked the reason why he thought so he could not verbalize it. He responded negatively to “a person who listens to others,” saying “that doesn’t fit me.” In comparing these with his inner self, he was deepening his self-understanding. When asked his impressions of the game, he said, “I am curious about what people say when asked about my personality. More than I thought, people have things they like and things they don’t like so much about the same person, and some things that are the same.” These comments on how other people saw him helped Client A to relativize the self and deepened his awareness of the many aspects of himself by realizing the diversity seen in the members.
Members played themselves in an RP setting in which they had gathered in this room after one year. Client A made unprompted statements such as “I'll be taking entrance examinations in another two months,” and “I feel like I'm doing pretty well.” He also said, as if reading from someone else’s script, “I feel like the year has gone by so quickly, but also that it was a long time.” Playing a role of himself after two years, he expressed an image of himself as a success, saying to Client G “Oh, G, you're taking engines exams now, aren’t you?” “Studying for the entrance exams is really tough, because you have to study every single day. But that’s how I finally got accepted at a school.”

Client A was trying to act as if he did not care about time, and said “I forgot my watch.” A staff member then asked “Don’t you mind not knowing for sure that the session is going to end on time?” and Client A responded “No.” This session was the first one in which his interest in time had diminished.

In January X+2, although he had started the third term and things had settled down, he expressed a feeling of concern: “I wonder what my friends think about me.” He had told his parents that he liked playing with children younger than himself, but that children of the same age were frightening.

**#15, February 26, X+2** Client A showed positive feedback to others, saying to Client E, who had been accepted by a number of high schools, “That's great! It means you can choose which one you want to go to, right?” In a game of Who Is This Person?, Client A’s personality and future were written down by another member and the others were trying to guess who it was (no one knew it was Client A). In response to the query statements of others, Client A said “That fits” to *He is well-mannered and organized*, “That fits so-so” and “I am one of the quieter ones in this group” to *He is a little quiet*. Client A was thinking about his own diverse characteristics. With regard to the characteristic of being “polite,” Client Client A thought not about whether that characteristic fit himself but asked the AE if he(or she) thought it fit him(or her), showing interest in the inner aspects of others. With regard to whether “Staying true to one’s own feelings” fit him or not, Client A said “It’s important to have a feeling of thanks…” But apologizing “… Sometimes I don’t want to apologize.” He was becoming aware of the gap between his own feelings and behavior, and this was made the topic of an RP.

Client A suggested a scene that he had actually experienced as a specific RP setting. It was a scene in which he had exchanges with a friend when he dropped a humidifier in a classroom at school. 1) Scene in which the humidifier is dropped and water splashes on a friend’s bag: Client H in role of friend: “Ahh! My bag is all wet!” AE in role of friend: “What should we do!” Client E in role of friend: “That bag is brand-new.” All blame Client A in turn. A drops to the floor with his hands out in front of him and does not move. He does not say anything. 2) He sees himself silently
there in a mirror. He has splashed water on someone, but says that in his heart “Even if I apologize I am thinking in my head ‘Don’t apologize.’” 3) Client A plays the role of someone feeling he will not apologize, and the AE plays the role of someone who wants the other person to apologize. The setting is the dialogue between them. AE: “If you just apologize, that will be the end of it.” To which Client A responds: “I feel sorry about what happened but… I really feel that I don’t want to apologize.” 4) In a role reversal, A is the one who wants the other person to apologize: “I was in reflection about it…” “I spilled the water by mistake.” 5) We repeated the same scene as in 1), and Client A said “Oh, look what I did!” H: “Ahh, my bag!” “You didn’t do it on purpose, did you?” Client E: “He just bought it yesterday.” Client A: “I’m sorry!” In sharing, the AE asked, “Do you feel you don’t want to apologize because you didn’t do it on purpose?” to which A responded, “Yes! Yes! Exactly!” By playing the roles, one at a time, of the feelings that occurred simultaneously Client y in him, A could think about the multiple aspects within him. (Fig. 2)

Client A suddenly said, “By the way, I forgot my watch,” but then continued, “I don’t really mind.” He was showing that he was moving away from being so concerned with time, and that he felt a sense of ease with himself in that.

#17, (A has entered third year of middle school) April 23, X+2 During the warm-up talk, Client A suddenly stood up and said “There is something I really want to report to you.” While

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showing the others a travel diary he had written, he gave a long and very detailed explanation of his travel: “Actually, in March I took a trip to Tokyo. I arrived in Tokyo at 10:50. Then, when I went to the platform, a 300 series Hikari Shinkansen was stopped there…” At the end, all the members applauded him, and it became an experience in which his behavior that was centered on his own interests was accepted by the other members. He showed consideration for other members, such as by saying to those who did not talk about their recent experiences, “There’s something you really want to talk about, isn’t there? You should say it. I guess I should have let H talk first.”

With the aim of deepening self-understanding from the gap between the ideal self and the actual self, we played a game of “Who Is This?” with the theme “The person I want to be one year from now.” A said he wanted to “live a life free from the bullying that had continued for eight years.” Various members responded to this statement. D: “That must be really tough. Eight years…” G: “I want to know how people bullied you.” E: “You should stand up to the bullying. If people think they can get away with it, it will continue forever.” A responded to these comments matter-of-factly: “It has continued for eight years since I changed schools. I want to be free from all that.” “I don’t stand up to them, and I don’t try to get back at them.” “I feel that would just make my relationship with them worse.” When the talk had turned to one member’s experience of being bullied (a bone was broken), A said “That’s terrible,” but G asked A if he had ever had a bone broken. A responded “The bullying I receive is not so serious,” and explained the differences in the kinds of bullying. Rather than sharing what he felt when being bullied, he had a strong tendency to simply describe the facts.

* With regard to going to high school, he said “I haven’t learned the basics, so I’m going to go to a high school where they teach the basics.” When asked about special classes, he said “If I think about it now, it would have been better to be in a special class.” When he started middle school he said he wanted to be in the same class with everyone else, but his feelings seem to have changed, perhaps from the effect of being informed that he has autism. On the other hand, his parents thought that it may be a problem that he was not concerned by the fact that he has autism.

#18, May 28, X+2  A showed interest in others, asking the AE “Where was your house, again?” or asking another member about someone who was absent “Did you hear why he is absent?” Based on the various opinions of members about what to do when one is bullied, A said, “I can’t really talk back to them,” “I can’t convince them to stop, either,” “I can always run away from the place,” and “Doing other things doesn’t take my mind off of it.” While comparing the thoughts of others with his own in this way, he deepened his self understanding. In RP settings in which one could and could not tell a close friend about being bullied, A was a spectator and
showed very active interest, moving his chair so that he can more easily see the RP. Midway through, however, he temporarily left the room. In sharing, he said “It would be better to be a person who could say something to the bully,” but when the AE asked which he was closer to now, he replied “a person who cannot say anything.” When the AE asked if he wanted to become a person who could say something, Client A responded “Yes.” Thus, from the overlap of his experience of performer and himself from the standpoint of spectator, Client A thought about himself by thinking about the distance between himself and the roles performed by other members. He seemed to notice the difference between sharing experiences and facts and sharing feelings (even when having the same experience, people will differ in their manner and feelings toward the experience).

* Client A’s parents saw that Client A also shared part of the blame in his troubles with friends at school. When trouble occurred at school he would go to his teacher crying, and complain “Maybe I should go [to a special class], too.” The school counselor was of the opinion that Client A had become more aware of his surroundings.

**#19, June 25, X+2**  Client A raised his hand to be the presenter in a game of 24 Questions. The answer was “Suica,” but this was the prepaid card for trains called “SUICA.” However, the Dir started the game thinking it was “suika” (watermelon). Because of this, as the game progressed, the things that the Dir said and the things that Client A said did not match up. Regardless, Client A paid no attention to the Dir’s misconception and went ahead in his own world. The situation was difficult for the other people to understand.

In an RP with a guidance counseling setting, Client A, in the role of student going for counseling, said “I am studying regularly, but my list of candidate schools is too big and I can’t decide which one to go to.” Afterward, in a role reversal, when Client A was playing the role of counselor, he was a sympathetic listener and said in response to the student “Is that right?” and “Oh, I see,” but then pushed his own thoughts, saying “First of all, why don’t you go visit the schools?” In sharing, he commented “I was nervous. I didn’t know what to say. Then I remembered what my mother had told me, and tried to tell the student what to do,” and “I thought that I had to understand the student’s feelings [when playing the role of counselor].”

At the end of the session there was little time for RP. Client A expressed concern for the other members, saying “24 Questions used up too much time. I’m really sorry.”

* In private sessions with the clinical psychologist, Client A said about the members of the group, “I thought so. I thought they were autistic.” Recently when he had seen his parents reading books on autism or looking at websites he thought “They’re looking at things about autism,” and showed interest in it himself. He learned about the childhood of Kuromiyagi Tetsuko (a well-known celebrity who published an autobiography in which she wrote that in elementary
school she could not adapt to school life and was made to transfer to another school), and looked back on his own past, saying that standing up and walking around during classes was “something that I did too when I was small. She was like me.”

In a conversation about future group activities around the time the group was being reorganized, Client A responded “Of course I want to continue in the group. I’m looking forward to the friends I’ll make,” and “I like RP, and I think being patient with something I like helps me gain the ability to be patient.”

**Self understanding questions (Damon & Hart:1988)**

**May, X (at the start of the new group)**

Item 1: Self-definition. *What kind of person do you think you are?* I’m smart / I like to study / I play “sugoroku” and other games.

Item 2: Self-evaluation. *What are you proud of about yourself?* I start studying at home the day before test / Souvenirs / I can complete an endurance race / I listen closely to the teacher during lessons. *What are you not good at? What things do you dislike?* I’m not good at gymnastics and track events / I’m often bullied by friends.

Item 3: Self in past and future. *What will have changed about you in five years?* Break time at school will be about five minutes. *What has changed from five years ago?* I didn’t used to be bullied.

Item 4: Self-interest. *What kind of person do you want to become?* I want to be someone cool, like a train station worker. *What are three wishes that you have?* To have savings of more than 10,000 yen / If there was such a thing as a machine to turn back time, I would want one because I get confused and start to cry when the scheduled time has passed / A new computer.

Item 5: Continuity. *How have you changed since the past or the year before last?* When I was in the fifth grade we cleaned the pool and other places, but now we don’t.

Item 6: Agency. *How did you become the person you are today?* I was in a traffic accident.

Item 7: Distinctness. *Do you think there’s another person just like you somewhere?* Probably not, because I’m a person who does embarrassing things / I would be kind to that person.

**August 4, X+2**

Item 1: Self-definition. *What kind of person are you?* I soon forget things even if they are important / I’m doing my summer homework just like I should.

Item 2: Self-evaluation. *What are your good points?* I’m good at using the computer / I have friends / I’m popular among people younger than me. *Bad points?* I don’t have a very good memory / I’m not good at writing or essays.
Item 3: Self in past and future. *Compared with five years ago, how have you changed?* I used to cry a lot / I used to be careless and fall down / There are more fun things now. *What if you compare yourself five years in the future with yourself now?* My dream is to go on and get a job, receive a salary and save money, and ride a train farther than I ever have / I’ll be able to live by myself.

Item 4: Self-interest. *What kind of person you want to become?* A company employee / Someone who can give good advice to younger people. *What if you had three wishes that would come true?* I want to go many places by train / I want more friends / I want to get a driver’s license and go many places by car.

Item 5: Continuity. *What will not change about you even as you get older?* I will be kind / I will be a railway fan / I will be positive about my work.

Item 6: Agency. *What kind of things influence you now?* My parents belong to a group of parents of children with pervasive developmental disorder / I met a boy who was like a rival, and it had a bad influence on my study / I developed a passion for railways.

Item 7: Distinctness. *What is different about you from others?* I’m not good at learning / Physical activities are hard for me / I think the feeling of wanting to work is special about me.

**Discussion**

**Involvement in activities (one’s own feelings, self-disclosure, etc.):**

In Period I, Client A showed high initiative in speaking, but his comments were centered on himself and he developed conversation for conversation’s sake rather than to exchange feelings with others. In PDRP, he resisted taking a role, and did not voluntarily try to play a role. Meanwhile, he showed a strong interest in time, and his goal in activities was to complete them within the given time. Rather than enjoying things in a game sense, his approach seemed to be to carry out the game rules as a task.

In Period II, his comments continued to be focused on himself, but he developed so that he was gradually adjusting himself with his surroundings. He had less resistance to RP, and was even involved actively in some cases. However, his strong interest in time was still seen, and he did not seem to relax and enjoy himself when participating in activities, but rather to be carrying out a given task.

Then, in Period III, his strong interest in time decreased. Other members accepted his habit of changing the conversation to his own interests, and the experience of being accepted led to statements showing consideration for his surroundings. He lost almost all his resistance to RP, and he developed the conversation more freely in RP and talked more about the self.
**Relationship with other members:** In Period I, Client A made almost no empathetic comments toward others or asked questions to deepen his understanding of others. His behavior indicated almost no interest in approaches from others. In Period II, he began to express emotional exchanges with others, including speech and behavior showing empathy with and interest in other members, jokes at his own failures, and open confrontation with unpleasantness. However, the weakness of his interest in the internal aspects of others was also seen. In Period III, he made more positive comments toward others, and more of his statements showed active interest, involvement to draw out statements from others, and concern with moving the scene forward. In RP as well, he tried to get roles that had sympathetic involvement with others. However, he mostly shared facts, and was in the stage of just starting to share feelings.

**Understanding of self and others:** In Period I, Client A’s expressions about himself centered on his tastes, interests, and concerns, and his emotional self-understanding was centered on negative content. He made no statements about understanding of others. In Period II, his emotions were hidden behind responses based on moral norms, and he did not often face his own emotions. When playing roles, however, he sometimes showed anger, but no deepening of interest in internal aspects was seen. However, through thinking about the distance between the role and himself (for example, when he took on the role of an impatient person, he thought about how strong the impatient aspect within himself was), he seemed to think about his own characteristics from questions about the self and anxiety about the future. In Period III, he began to compare the roles and himself, and to show interest in the commonalities and differences from that distance. From the various opinions of other members, he noticed the existence of others in whom he was reflected in various ways. He seemed to become aware of the gap between his feelings and behavior, and of the various feelings existing within himself.

**Responses to self-understanding questions:** When the group started, all but 1 of Client A’s 15 comments about the objective self were in the “behavior style” category, centering on his activities, his behavior including evaluation of abilities, and his tastes, interests, and concerns. Then, in X+2, comments on the self related to his personality characteristics increased. (Table 3) Many of his personality characteristics were “separateness vs. attachment.” In his behavior style,

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he no longer talked about things to be careful about and interests. Self references based on how other people responded to him is increased (for example, “My mother often says that I am kind, and so I think I have a kind personality”).

With the transformation process taken from the above 4 perspectives, the use of psychodramatic role playing is thought to produce the following: 1) awareness of new aspects of the self by expressing feelings that one had not intended through acting improvisationally; 2) encountering a self that is not actualized in everyday contexts by being provided with an atmosphere in which to express oneself freely and securely in a fictional setting, and 3) objective awareness of the self for the person playing the role from the presence of a number of diverse group members, whose gaze promotes self-observation of the internal aspects of the self and deepens self understanding. An issue for the future is to focus on the changes in A’s relationship with group members in RP; specifically, how Client A perceives the group members and how he interacts with them, and at the same time how much his interest deepens in the internal aspects of the self, which his focus has begun to turn to, by analyzing the transformation process of how the people around Client A perceive himself.

References

Acknowledgement
I wish to thank all of the members of the group and their parents who generously helped us complete this study. I am grateful to many sources of assistance and support during the course of this investigation. Kimiya Kon and Motoko Kawamura assisted with the clinical activation. Mitsuyuki Hirosawa, Sayoko Ochi, Michika Takiyoshi and Ayano Komaki also collaborated with me in every phase of data collection and analysis.
東北大学大学院教育学研究科研究年報 第57集・第1号 (2008年)

高機能広汎性発達障害青年を対象とした
心理劇的ロールプレイングを用いた集団面接過程

田 中 真 理

本研究では、高機能広汎性発達障害者を対象として、心理劇的ロールプレイを用いた集団心理面接において、自分自身の感情や経験を自己開示していく過程や、他者理解が深まりグループの凝集性の高まりに伴い、他者との比較や相違への気づきによる自己理解の深まりの過程について検討することを目的とした。対象事例は中学1年生の男児A君（グループ開始時の年齢）（全IQ90）で、事例Aが参加したグループメンバーは、広汎性発達障害のある中学生～高校生とスタッフの11名で構成されていた。セッションのプロセスは、1）活動への関与（自分自身の感情や自己開示など）、2）自己理解・他者理解について、3）他メンバーとの関係性について、4）自己理解質問の回答内容について、の4点から考察された。その結果、①即興的にロールプレイを行うことで、自分でも意図しなかった自分の気持ちを表現することによって新たな自己の側面に気づくこと、②架空の場面設定のなかで自由に安心して自己表現できる場が提供されることによって日常の文脈では顕在化しない自己に出会うこと、③複数の多様な他メンバーの存在は、ロールを演じる者にとっては自己に対する客観的な眼となり、その眼差しが自己の内面に対する自己観察を促し自己理解を深めること、という点から、心理劇的ロールプレイングの有効性について論じられた。

キーワード：広汎性発達障害、自己理解、心理劇的ロールプレイ、集団心理療法