

Jessica Bleuer, MA., M.Ed., RDT, OPQ



Past two-term NADTA Diversity Chair, Jessica Bleuer, MA., M.Ed., RDT, OPQ (Psychotherapist Permit) is a full-time lecturer & supervisor at Concordia University's MA in Drama Therapy Program. She also works in private practice and has a small cultural equity consulting practice. Her diverse research interests include the impact of exclusion on mental health, the use of forum theatre to explore prejudice and discrimination faced by LGBT2SIQ communities, and finding ways to address the impact of microaggressions in both therapeutic and educational spaces. She also focuses on how drama therapy methods have the potential to deepen common psychodynamic and systemic therapeutic processes.

USING PLAY & CREATIVITY FOR GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVENTIONS IN SCHOOLS

Through the use of storytelling, role-play, and puppets, workshop participants will learn how play and creativity can address clients' social, emotional and behavioural needs. Convergences between traditional psychotherapeutic concepts and drama therapy techniques will be explored (Bleuer & Harnden, 2018). Focusing on individual and group interventions, participants will have the opportunity to learn and practice: 1) The family puppet interview, an assessment tool developed to explore a child's family system and 2) forum theatre, a role-play intervention used to help elementary and high school aged clients engage problem solving, empathy building and self-regulation techniques. The forum theatre technique is also used to address systemic school-based issues such as bullying and discrimination, and it can be used with students but also with teachers and administrative staff to support their role in containing systemic violence.

Learning objectives:

1-To learn creative playful tools that can be used in school based settings to support common psychodynamic processes such as the exploration affect and expression of emotion; exploration of attempts to avoid distressing thoughts and feelings; identifications of recurring themes and patterns; discussion of past experience; focus on interpersonal relationships; and focus on the therapy relationship (Blagys & Hilsenroth, 2000; Shedler, 2010).

2-To learn how to implement the family therapy puppet interview, an assessment tool developed by Psychoanalyst and Drama Therapist Eleanor Irwin used to gain knowledge about our clients' family systems.

3- To better understand how play therapy and drama therapy techniques can be used within Siegel's (1999) window of tolerance model to address emotional dysregulation.