

## **In search of the 'good enough mother':**

### **A case study of drama therapy with a group of unemployed mothers in South Africa**

#### **ABSTRACT**

This case study discusses an 8-week drama therapy process with a group of unemployed mothers in Johannesburg, South Africa at a church hall wherein an Employment Bureau is situated. In this study I explore how I used drama therapy in response to the needs of the participant. I begin this study with a contextual framework which helps us to understand the aspects of the participants' lives which needed attention in the therapeutic process. Thereafter I explore how Winnicott's (1971) concept of the 'good enough' mother was linked to the questions which my study was grappling with. The main chapter of this study (CHAPTER FOUR) discusses the drama therapy process and how it became a 'good enough' holding environment for the participants in which they could explore the 'good enough' parts of themselves. I extract four core principles commonly used in drama therapy: Containment, Ritual, Play, and Role and discuss how these were used for self-development with this client-group. Throughout this study I refer to drama therapy in its application in a South African context in order to discover how its core principles can be used and adapted in order to offer a form of therapy which honours the specifics of local culture, history, and values. I pay attention to my role as a young, white, and English-speaking therapist/researcher and the impact this had on my engagement with the participants. Drama therapy is thus explored as a potential vehicle for interpersonal connection between groups and individuals from different cultural, language, and socio-economic backgrounds. In my conclusion I hope to justify the significance of a group-based model of drama therapy for this client-group in South Africa and imagine into its future possibilities.