Elixir Mime Workshops held at 3 venues in Budapest, Hungary Nagaland India

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Working with the community

This month we did 10 hours of **pantomime and story telling workshops** in Budapest, Hungary in cooperation with 3 NGO's who operate in the region. These organizations help needy children and the physically and mentally challenged.
Healing Hearts Balkans   see: **www.healingheartsbalkans.org**
Nem Adom Fel   see: **www.nemadomfel.hu**
and Love is the Answer Association   see:
szeretetavalasz.wordpress.com

These workshops were an **introduction to these NGO's** to discover the possibilities of using pantomime in storytelling to improve **communication and creativity skills.**
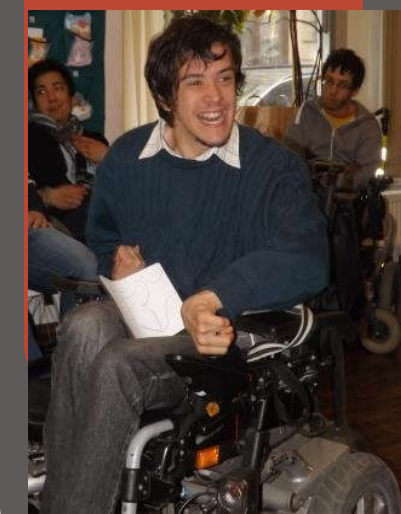The workshops were enthusiastically received among a wide variety of participants who greatly enjoyed the dramatic arts activities. All 3 NGO's that we worked with invited us back again and want to continue to develop this program with us in the future. With Budapest a bus ride away from Dresden, Germany, such cooperation is feasible.

This was the first time we worked with a **mixed group** of physically and mentally challenged participants. **It was a learning experience for us to adapt the training to fit their abilities.** We were pleasantly surprised at how well each one of them adapted to the activity. For example, we wondered how the 3 blind participants could benefit from the video clips we were showing as examples of how pantomime can be used. A **translator** gave a running commentary in Hungarian on the clip as he saw it. They laughed as the video clip of Charlie Chaplin eating his shoe was described in detail. For learning facial expressions, they had to feel the face as the expression was made and then replicate it themselves. The 3 participants who were bound to wheelchairs did various activities to learn principles of working together with fellow actors using push, pull, and pressure. Normally, we do this exercise with long sticks, but with those in wheelchairs we used elastic bands held in our teeth and bouncing balloons back and forth using our heads and available limbs. They told me that this was the first time that they had done such activities. Using props, hats, and cloth the participants did an excellent job of creating and **performing their own stories acted out with lots of enthusiasm and humor.**

We also did workshops with a group of volunteers from various countries who want to use the skills they learned in the various social organizations where they work. The children's group consisted of those with birth defects and other children. We found them to be natural actors and enthusiastic story tellers without inhibitions as the photos on the next page attest.

Mime facilitator Peter van Gorder teaching story method and meaning with the assistance of our Hungarian translator

We did an intro mime & story workshop for volunteers who work at various social organizations in 10 different countries.

(Left) To get a feel for actions we use various exercises such as colliding into a real ball & then miming the action.

(Right) We acted out various stories in mime with sound effects. On Easter Day two participants acted out the story of Peter and John discovering the empty tomb and the remaining burial cloth for Easter. Stories can be an effective way to celebrate special events or holidays.

In conjunction with the Hungarian NGO Nem Adom Fel, we did a two day workshop at a center with participants who had mixed disabilities. It was a learning experience for us and expanded the range of participation.

Working together with the Hungarian NGO Love is the Answer, we did mime activities with children born with various birth defects and other children. Hungary uses an integration system of combining the disabled and those who are not . *(Left)* Warm up exercises *(Center)* Facial expressions on the phone *(Right)* miming cooking