

# A Playful Research Guide for Psychodramatists

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Engaging in psychodrama research can be a spontaneous and creative journey, fostering action and growth. To begin with, every research is, in fact, a psychodramatic exploration where the universe is full of endless opportunities.

As Moreno said, "The universe is infinite creativity. Spontaneity is the constant companion of creativity. It is the existential factor "intervening" for creative processes to be released." Our research is our intervention to find out another "surplus" reality that did not exist to begin with, yet that we dreamt and dared to explore until it became a "cultural conserve": a research finding turning into a publication. In other words, it is another play, and as Einstein said, play is the ultimate form of research. Are you ready to play your research out? Bear in mind that, as psychodramatists, we can gamify everything. So why not do it for research as well?

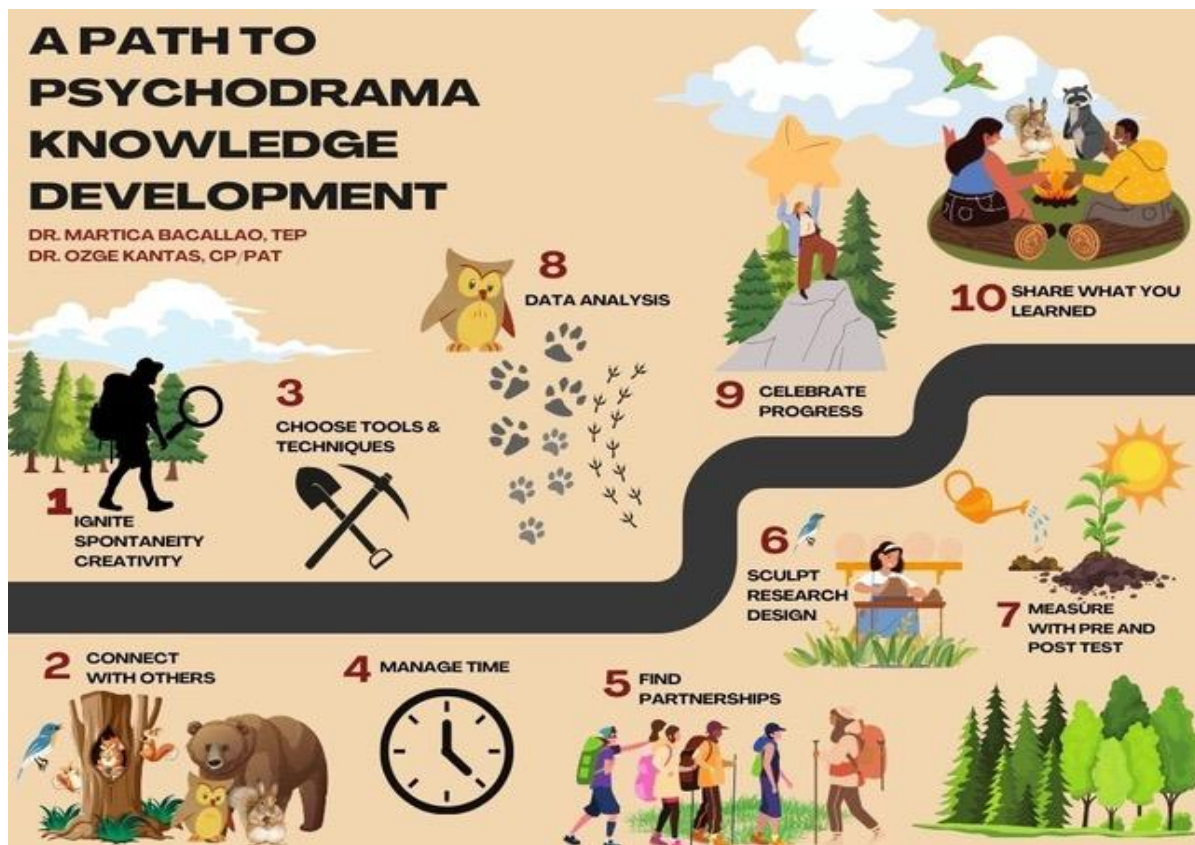


Image by Martica Bacallao

Let's craft a dynamic guide for yourself inspired by the Canon of Creativity. For each step, please note down your actionable goals and strategies for these:

### **1) Ignite Your Spontaneity and Creativity**

Tap into your innate spontaneity and creativity as a practitioner. What sparks of inspiration and curiosity exist within you? Let these guide you as you embark on this creative exploration. Most hesitations and fear of research come from a need for more warm-up. No, you are not resistant to conducting research. Yes, you are not warmed up enough yet!

### **2) Harmonize with ASGPP Research Creativity Nexus (Connect with others!)**

You know how the auxiliary ego works in psychodrama, yes? Let us be your auxiliary. Immerse yourself in the spontaneous and creative energy of the ASGPP Research Committee. Connect with us as creative minds seeking mentorship and support. Let our wisdom and experience fertilize your creative process. At the end of the day, as Moreno said, all is co-creation, including research.

### **3) Craft a Spontaneous Research Palette (Follow your interests!)**

Your spontaneity is needed once again! You will only be into this if your full volution and true self joins you. Pick something really interesting for you. Insider wisdom: every research is, in fact, a me-search. You can only sustain your grit and determination by fully understanding your involvement in that topic. Infuse spontaneity into your research tools. Consider the vibrant hues of qualitative methods like spontaneous interviews or creative focus groups. Psychodrama is full of techniques that are both an intervention and assessment tool. Role diagrams, social networks, spectrograms, locograms.. and many more. Balance this with the structured strokes of quantitative tools, such as the dynamic brush of sociometric measurements. And add a couple of surveys, which are already valid and reliable questionnaires from the literature. Allow your methods to dance with your research question.

### **4) Navigate Time/Support Constraints with Creative Rhythms (Be realistic with your time)**

Recognize the rhythm of time and support constraints. Break down your research into spontaneous and manageable actions. Remember, it is not a one-and-done journey. Set the stage, freeze, and change, then replay the scene, maybe multiple times. Create a unique tempo and seek harmonies with colleagues, mentors, and fellow practitioners. The synergy of collaborative creativity can be your guiding melody.

## **5) Partner with a Local University - IRB as a Creative Catalyst**

Seek a local university as a canvas for your research. The IRB process becomes a creative catalyst. You need to get permission to collect data from human subjects. That university contact person can be your co-author, if not co-therapist. This person is not necessarily a psychodramatist but is someone with methodological rigor to craft ethical permission from IRB. Let the university's support and structure blend seamlessly with your spontaneous approach. This partnership is a canvas for community-based research artistry. This is similar to how, in our groups, we have everything we need. You yourself might not be able to do it by yourself, by another group member can double you, mirror you, or role reverse with you. Eventually, you will be role-trained for this task as well, but you will always be able to find someone in your community who can play this role as the IRB bridge person.

## **6) Sculpt Methodological Rigor as a Creative Form (Use your creativity to guide how you collect information from participants)**

Mold methodological rigor into a creative form. The center of the Canon of Creativity is the maternal center that is ever-nourishing, where the circle around it is spontaneity as the ever-moving masculine fertilizer. Conserve is the product and synthesis of their interaction. Embrace this structure to enhance your methodology. This would not be rocket science once you understand that, indeed, as a psychodramatist, you are a life designer as well. You help people to activate their autonomous healing centers to design a better life. Therapist, analyst, and director are your roles as leaders. Have you noticed the designer component in each? Ensure your research design is a spontaneous masterpiece, resonating with the standards set by the psychodrama community.

## **7) Choreograph Data Collection: A Dance of Pre-Post Tests (Use tools available to collect information from participants)**

Remember, every psychodrama session starts with a sociometric assessment and ends likewise. Let data collection be a partially spontaneous dance and a partially choreographed one. Utilize survey format pre-post tests as the predetermined choreography, capturing the cultural conserve before your intervention starts and after your intervention ends. Utilize sociometric tools, capturing the fluidity of psychodrama's dynamic nature within the session(s). Each step measures the impact of your interventions, creating a symphony of change over time. This is the same rationale in psychodrama research—asses before and after the process.

## **8) Compose Accessible Data Analysis Melodies (Make sense of what your group members are saying)**

Compose data analysis melodies that resonate with your research question. Choose user-friendly spreadsheets, a statistical software duet, or a harmonious collaboration with statisticians in your network. Jamovi is a free statistical software with tremendous YouTube tutorials that range from very simple to very complex research questions. Translate your findings into a creative narrative, telling the story of your research journey.

### **9) Applaud Small Acts of Creation; Share Your Creative Sonata (Celebrate the progress and learn from the unexpected)**

Not finding desired results? Research is failing forward. Applaud the small acts of creation along your journey. Share your creative sonata with the psychodrama community, fostering a culture of support and learning. Your spontaneous symphony can inspire others, turning hesitations into harmonious actions. Share it, write about it, publish it!

### **10) Disseminate Your Colors Further (share what you learned with others!)**

All social science research has its own opportunities and threats and is far from perfect. Working with human subjects, flawless research, and fully controlled lab trials are not what we seek. Instead, trust the process. Remember, your research journey is a spontaneous canvas waiting to be painted with the vivid colors of creativity to disseminate further. Enjoy the collaborative dance, and let your unique creative perspective shine in the psychodrama landscape along with other colleagues.

*Essential non-research skills and attributes for psychodrama research: Curiosity, Conceptual thinking, Creative thinking, Practicality, Problem-solving, Communication, Collaborating, Organizing, and timeframe*

The chaos of life brings unpredictability and uncontrollability. Yet, the canon of creativity in psychodrama brings a flow that can endure the imperfections of research with the emphasis on strengths over limitations for your findings.

Happy researching!

## TEN steps visual ideas:

1. **Ignite Your Spontaneity:** Use a spark or a lightbulb icon to symbolize inspiration.
2. **Harmonize with ASGPP:** Represent this with connecting lines or network icons to show collaboration.
3. **Craft a Spontaneous Research Palette:** Use colorful swatches or brush strokes.
4. **Navigate Time:** Include a clock or flowing rhythm lines to represent creative time management.
5. **Partner with a University:** Show a university icon connected to a research document or partnership symbol.
6. **Sculpt Methodological Rigor:** Use a hammer or chisel next to a research paper to show structure.
7. **Choreograph Data Collection:** Show dance figures or arrows moving in rhythm with pre- and post-tests.
8. **Compose Accessible Data Analysis:** Use pie charts or statistical graphs as musical notes.
9. **Applaud Small Acts:** Show applause icons or smaller research results.
10. **Disseminate Findings:** Illustrate with an open book, social media icons, or a megaphone.