

You Arrive

Performance Description

You Arrive is a performance piece about being in therapy and facilitating therapy. It follows one woman's experience in her therapist's office as she simultaneously unravels the effects of early trauma and illustrates the theories and experiences that guide her therapist's work and interventions.



The clinical case emerges in a dynamic way as four actresses play different parts of the same woman: her child self, her adolescent self, her false self, and her adult self. These selves tell her story from their own perspective, illustrating how parental abuse and neglect can effect emotional development and attachment in relationships. During the piece, these selves become integrated and the woman emerges from the therapy office whole. *You Arrive* is an arresting and engaging play as well as an enlightening, educational experience for therapists, clients, and anyone that has wondered about therapy.

Testimonials

"I have sat through a few parenting lectures in my time and read my share of well-meant books on the subject, but none of them has ever brought its message home with the impact of this presentation." - Susan Meindl, Psychologist

"Every therapist should see this whether they are in training or seasoned. Every parent should see this as it is also a manual for how to raise healthy and sane children who can engage with life." - Brian Greenfield, M.D., Child Psychiatrist

"You Arrive is a transformative experience." - Steffan Apel, Psychologist

Research & Performance Development

You Arrive is an evolving arts-based research project by Bonnie Harnden, a professor at Concordia's drama therapy program in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. This piece emerged from Harnden's work with traumatized children and their families at the Montreal Children's Hospital. It is also based upon her training as a psychoanalyst. Harnden wanted to use her experience as a front-line clinician to educate families and the mental health community about development, attachment, trauma, and intergenerational trauma, but realized that publishing a journal article would limit the potential consumption of this research to knowledge-seeking professionals. In order to make her experience and research accessible to families, such as those she met at the hospital early in her career, and the front-line professionals working with these families, the research needed a different form. This led Harnden to write and produce the performance piece "You Arrive", which tells the collective stories of these families and helps clinicians and parents to understand and recognize developmental theory.



Bonnie Harnden

This innovative research uses a method called Performance Autoethnography, which seeks to illuminate a new understanding in the audience and researcher, and to allow for a deeper kind of learning—one that is visceral as well as cognitive—something that other forms of qualitative research cannot achieve. Through performance, the body, theory and mind are integrated and the viewer can arrive into a profound understanding of the theory and emotional content in the piece.

This project has recently been awarded a grant from the Canadian Institute for Health



Research to create a film for use in training health professionals, further disseminating Harnden's research and making it even more immediate and accessible.