

## **Medical clowning with PTSD- My work as a clown doctor with PTSD**

Throughout the last 6 years (2004-2010), as a clown doctor, I have encountered many people who suffered from PTSD consequent upon the rockets which had fallen in the area around Gaza. The number of people who suffered from PTSD had grown throughout those years and reached its peak throughout the Oferet Yetsuka operation. (Late December 2008-early January 2009). As far as I know, there is no precedent in the world to the function of clown doctors (and their art-work) with PTSD, at a hospital under attack during a war, the way it happened at the Barzilai hospital.

In my lecture, I will describe my interactions with the children who came from Sderot to the children's ward for hospitalization throughout the years, and the special manner of interaction their situations had required. I will describe the recognition and appreciation we earned from the hospital administration about working with PTSD, after a specific occasion of a Qassam rocket that fell near by a children bus in Sderot. (3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2007). And after providing tens of people who suffered from PTSD after a rocket fell on a mall in Ashkelon.

The most intensive work with PTSD was needed during the Oferet Yetsuka operation. I will present the understandings I have gathered from the years of working as a clown doctor, about the essence of the clown doctor's character as a healing artist. His roots integrate the ultimate clown character of all generations, with the character of healers and shamans. This is a special art which strives to heal through humour.

This is an intimate art that is carried out in a room, the Interaction between the clown and the hospitalized person. This is an empathic intimate performance that intensifies the healing process through laughter, diminution of reality and creation of a fantastic alternative reality. I will refer to the working manner of the clown doctor with different participants and becoming an inseparable part of the medical staff.

I will present other aspects of the clown doctor's art as a site specific artist who has a different context to the site, and a different goal.

I'll refer to another aspect in the clown doctor's art, the element of suggestion and rituals, which also characterize the work of the clown doctor as the modern shaman.

In what way do all those elements portray the clown doctor's art?

### About the Author

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Works for the last 6 years as a clown doctor in Barzilai Hospital In Ashkelon.