

What really gets worked out in the sandtray?

July 2011 Practitioner's Assembly



Elizabeth Sawyer Danowski M.S.W., APT-S, CPT-S,
Theresa Fraser, C.Y.W., M.A, C.P.T.,
Trauma and Loss Clinical Specialist



Goals for today's workshop

- 1. How the sandtray can be utilized to externalize the trauma experienced.
- 2. How individuals can adapt this intervention for use with individuals, groups or families.
- 3. How sandtray can be used in conjunction with other trauma interventions such as SITCAT, EMDR, Narrative work.
- 4. To provide participants with theory and practice using sandtray tools.

“Sand, images and the sandtray help create a safe and protected space for the builder. As a witness to the builder’s journey we are commissioned to hold the experience. When the builder is ready he will transfer his experience into his life journey of play, growth, change and resiliency. This psychodynamic process can be part of a nondirective or directive experience”

Theresa Fraser



Who are the presenters?

Elizabeth Danowski owns and operates Play. Build. Grow. PLC and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She trained and practiced in Los Angeles and Detroit before spending 2 years in Oxford, England where she served as the Executive Director at an Infant Mental Health Organization. She has almost 15 years of experience working with children and families.

She is part of a small group of professionals in Michigan that are Registered at the Supervisor level as Play Therapists. She has over 200 hours of specialized training in sandtray and play therapy.

She offers a range of therapy for adults, children and families in addition to services for other professionals including supervision, consultation and training.

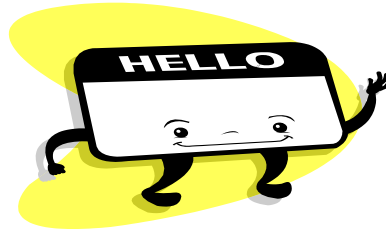
Who are the presenters?

Theresa is currently the Owner/Lead Therapist at Changing Steps is a Canadian Agency that provides Play Therapy, Therapeutic Groups, Behavioural Assessments, Staff Training, Trauma Assessments and Trauma Debriefing.

Theresa has been blessed to work with Dr. Gisela Schubach De Domenico as a Sandplay Worldplay Intern and uses this expressive modality in her work with children, teens, families and also in staff training. She is a certified Canadian Play Therapist and President of the Canadian Association for Child and Play Therapy

www.changing-steps.com

Lets get to know each other



Please pick an image that you feel
jumps out
at you

or,

introduce the image that you
brought that speaks to your work
with children, youth or families.

Goals for this workshop

- (1) For participants to see examples of how sandtray can be utilized in educational settings
- (2) For participants to see how sandtray was utilized for children/teens who experienced 9/11
- (3) For participants to personally experience sand, images and the sandtray
- (4) For participants to have the opportunity to discuss how they could utilize sandtray in their area of practice
- (5) For participants to leave the workshop wanting more information and experience in sandtray



Who we are and what area of
practice we work in:

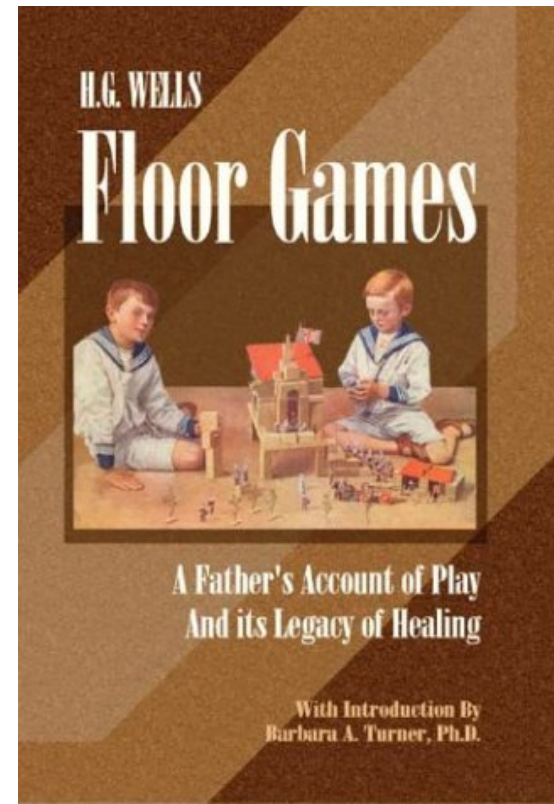
I chose this image because:

I registered for this workshop because:

I hope to walk away with:

H.G. Wells –Floor Games

Children working with “worlds” was documented in the early 1900’s with the publication of H.G. Wells book, Floor Games.



The Origins of Sandplay Worldplay

Paediatrician Margaret Lowenfeld continued with this method.

She encouraged children to create worlds in the sand within trays that were set at the child's waist-high level.

The Origins of Sandplay Worldplay

In the 1930's, Hanna Bratt created the Erica Method utilising miniatures and sand.

In the 1950's, Charlotte Buehler, a Developmental Psychologist, created the World test using miniatures on tabletops or floor space.

The Origins of Sandplay Worldplay

Dr. Lowenfeld felt that worlds should be interpreted for children by treatment end.

Dora Kalff felt that interpretation should be delayed. This then gave the child the opportunity to undergo unconscious transformation.

The Origins of Sandplay Worldplay

Kalff was a student of Carl Jung and later Dr. Lowenfeld.

The Jungian approach to sandtray relies heavily on the belief of the collective unconscious and archetypal language.

Jungian Therapists believe that:

The images chosen are the representation of our unconscious - communicating what our experience and relationship with the world is.

Therefore it is accepted that the client knows what is going on in the tray at least at the unconscious level.

The Origins of Sandplay Worldplay

Dr. Gisela Schubach De Domenico accredits her learning to Dr. Lowenfeld, John Hood Williams (predecessor to Dora Kalff) and Dora Kalff. Gisela trained with both Dora Kalff and John Hood Williams.

Her Sandplay/Worldplay theory is based on the belief that only the “builder” can interpret their tray or tell the story of what has “shown up” in the tray.

This intervention utilizes sand, water, trays, and miniature objects.

What is Classroom Sandtray/ Storytelling?

- An application of sandplay in the school setting
- Improving language skills
- Improving listening skills
- Improving classroom behaviour
- Improving social skills

How does Classroom Sandtray/ Storyelling work?

- Each student has a tub of sand (12 quart) but size can vary based on space constraints
- Each student has a gallon bag of miniature toys
- An Infocus projector connected to a 20-25ft. Video S-Cable and a camcorder without film projects onto a large screen
- As each child tells their story, the image is projected to the front of the classroom for all to see

Types of Sand

- Fine grained white sand works very well
- Jurassic Sands, Sandtastik Sands are examples of good sources for sand
- Periodically check tubs for “stray toys”
- There will be some spillage—relax and know that it cleans up easily

Toy Selection

- Coloured popsicle sticks
- Marbles/coloured stones
- Plastic Jewels
- Plastic Animals, Insects, Dinosaurs, Birds, etc.
- Plastic people (Lakeshore Learning counters)
- Feathers
- Greenery

Toy Selection (cont-d)

- Flowers
- Cars or other moving transportation
- Shells
- Pom poms
- Soldiers, police, flags
- Little babies and baby bottles
- Any items important to the culture of the school

Good Sources for Toys

- Cake decorating shops
- Craft stores
- Dollar stores
- Large discount stores-toy department
- Goodwill/thrift stores
- Garage sales
- Ebay

How does Classroom Sandtray/ Storytelling work? (cont-d)

- Students may work alone or in pairs
- Counselor may collaborate with teacher who may wish to have an instructional focus with the group
- Counselor can use the class to reinforce empathy, anger management, impulse control, and friendship/social skills

Where are Sandtray/Storytelling Classes being done?

- Started with grants through the PNM Foundation, Rio Rancho Education Foundation
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary (Rio Rancho, NM)
- Used with grades K-5
- Began in 2004 with 4th Grade classes, a special education class (4th & 5th Grade), Kindergarten, and 2nd Grade classes.

Time and Space Requirements

- Sandtrays may be stored on a three-storey cart on wheels (Rubbermaid-type utility cart)
- Cart can carry 18-21 sandtrays which can be wheeled to the classroom
- Sandtrays fit on desktops
- If counselor has a large room, sandtrays can be placed around the room on the floor
- Don't forget to recharge camcorder after each use!

Time and Space Requirements (cont-d)

- Class lasts an hour which includes cleanup
- About 25 minutes for building the world
- Remaining 25 minutes for storytelling
- When the story is over, the children return their toys to the plastic bags
- Cleanup as you go, pausing to put several trays back, then move to the next student
- Each story should take about 2-3 minutes
- If a student goes long, say “Tell me one more thing about your world.” or “How does your story end?”

Key Concepts about Listening

- **Important**—while students are sharing stories, students will want to have their hands in the sand and be playing...they are still listening, but the hands are doing the work. As long as they are not disrupting others, let them play.
- Some “old school” teachers may want strict silence and may not be comfortable with this way of listening.

Examples of Classroom Sandtray/ Storytelling Classes

- Teacher wishes to help 4th Grade students with writing stories—they are discussing inventions in social studies.
- Counselor sees bullying/aggressive behaviours with the students in the class.
- “Build a world where you invented something to stop bullies and write a story about your invention”
- Benefits: creativity; experiential learning; and communication skills

Examples of Classroom Sandtray/ Storytelling Classes (cont-d)

- Teacher wishes to reinforce a social studies lesson where students were doing reports about a State in the USA.
- “Build a world that shows your classmates about the state you are studying.”
- Benefit: self-esteem building; reinforces learning; listening skills

Examples of Classroom Sandtray/ Storytelling (cont-d)

- A 2nd Grade Teacher has concerns about students being mean to each other and tattling.
- Counselor asks students to “build a world that shows how you treat your friends and how you like to be treated.”
- Benefits: reinforces positive behaviours; students model the way they would like to be treated; internalize and practice bx' s.

Why Classroom/Sandtray Storytelling?

- All students benefit—more effective than a “one size fits all” counseling presentation
- Teachers support the counselor’s classroom presence because they see the benefits to their students
- Students say “it makes learning fun”
- Provides a safe space to share feelings and experiences—belief that the child has the ability to self-heal

Why Classroom Sandtray/ Storytelling? (cont-d)

- Brain research shows that storytelling uses both hemispheres of the brain
- Our language is image-based...we don't think in words but in images
- Using toys as the images (words) children can communicate on a non-verbal level
- Helpful for all students—those with strong verbal skills and those who are ELL (English Language Learners) or students in special education with expressive/receptive language disabilities

Why Classroom Sandtray/Storytelling?

(cont-d)

- Teachers are under increasing pressure to show results in standardized testing.
- With NCLB, school counselors need to collaborate with teachers to make counseling programs support classroom management and learning objectives.
- The result: counselor is seen as a team player—students are happy; teachers are happy; parents are happy; administration is happy.

Self-Care

- Have a consistent exercise regime—you will need your strength and stamina to implement this program.
- Ask for help—don't be afraid to plan ahead if you need assistance bringing equipment to the classroom. Students love to assist.
- Use your classroom teacher as a partner in moving sandtrays back to the cart and collecting bags of toys...don't do it all!

Enhancements to Sandtray/ Storytelling Classes

- Cordless microphone so that students can be heard more clearly.
- Transcription recording machine which translates voice into text (80% accuracy).
- Digital camera with docking station and direct print capability to make storybooks from the classroom storytelling.

Future Enhancements?

- IMAC digital editing equipment.
- Counselor/Teacher uses film in a digital camcorder and edits stories together by student.
- End Product: Each Student will have a DVD of their stories for the year.

Future Enhancements?

- Toy Bags with themes to support different issues
- Different colours of sand
- Small trays of sand (glad storage containers) and sandwich bags of toys for recess groups
- Wet trays vs. dry trays

Challenge to all Professionals working with School-Based Populations

- More hard data is needed to show benefits
- Gather before and after test scores from NWEA, DRA, Star Reader and other sources
- Compare scores of participating classes with those not participating

Long-term Goals for Classroom Sandtray/Storytelling

- Let's make classroom sandtray/storytelling an accepted science-based intervention for our Student Assistance Teams (Student Support Teams) in our schools.
- It works—now we need a nation-wide and/or worldwide effort to gather data to substantiate and validate this program.

What is Trauma?

“A trauma is a psychologically distressing event that is outside the range of usual human experience. Trauma often involves a sense of intense fear, terror, and helplessness.

Trauma should not be confused with stress. As we will learn later, stress is an inevitable component of everyone's life. Trauma is an experience that induces an abnormally intense and prolonged stress response”

Bruce Perry

How do Non-verbal interventions address Trauma?

Please See handout from Diane Kukulis
Presentation
2007 TLC Assembly



Frontiers in Psychotherapy is a Cable television show that was produced by New York Therapist Therese Bimka. Therese has given her consent for the following clip on Symbol formation to be shared with participants of this workshop given the relevancy to trauma work and sandtray.

Two half hour shows on Symbol formation can be viewed online in their entirety @

<http://www.frontiers.tv/Archives.htm>

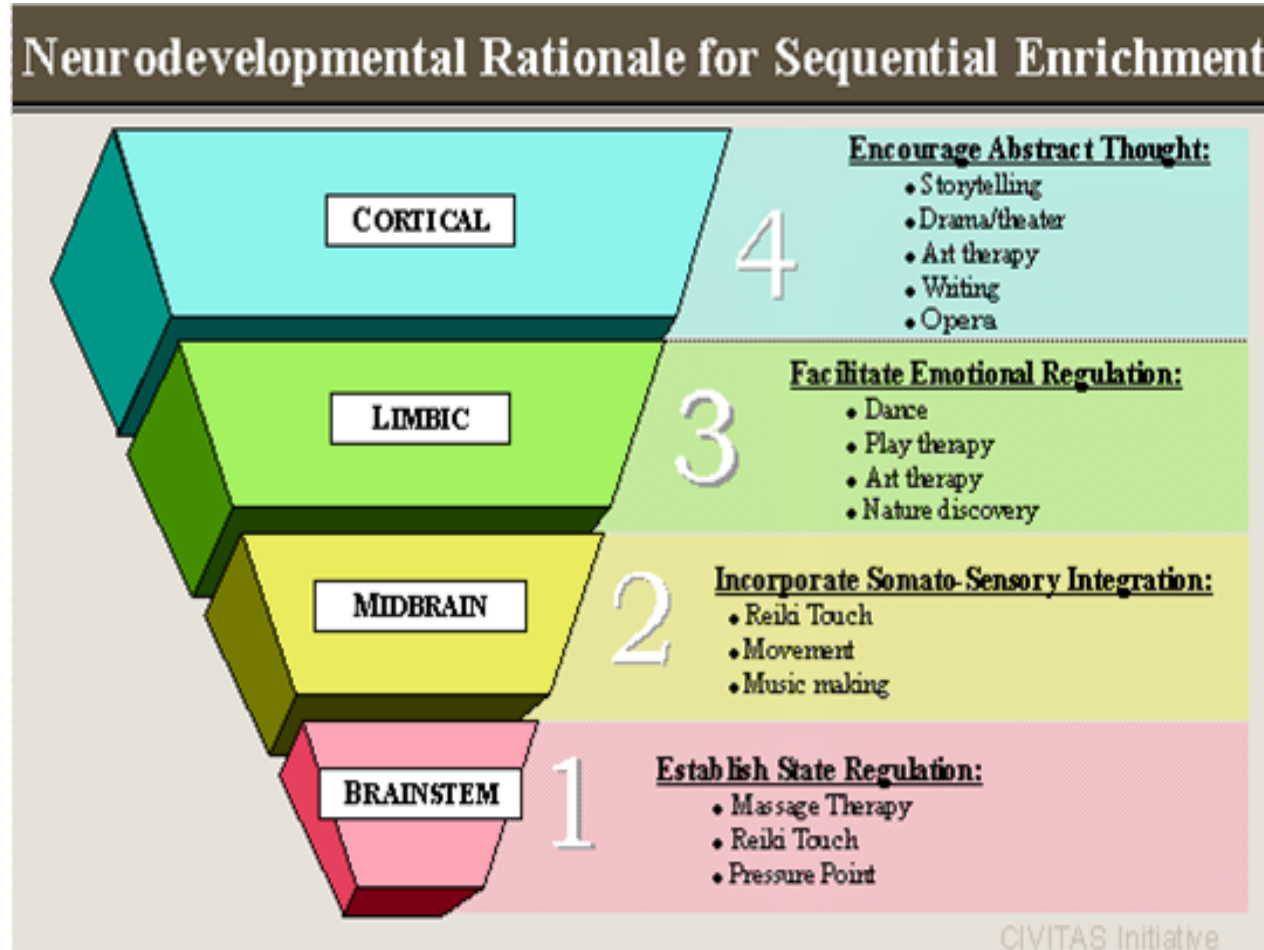
Symbol formation is very similar to Sandtray Worldplay

<http://www.vision-quest.us/vqisr/index.htm>

Trauma in the world

Various therapists perceive the clients process as being completed in stages.

Neurodevelopmental Rationale for Sequential Enrichment by Dr. Bruce Perry



Some possible stages of the process

- Trust with the therapist
- Exploration of the tools and world
- Testing limits of the milieu
- Feeling safe and ready to risk
- Exploring the traumatic experience
- Grief and loss
- Feeling strong
- Integration
- Separation and termination of the process

adapted from Carol Purdy's work at KidPower

Individuals can adapt this intervention for use with individuals, groups or families.

Sandtray can be used directly or in a client centred manner.

Case Examples:

Sandtray can be used in conjunction with other trauma interventions such as SITCAT, EMDR, Narrative work.

Let's brainstorm ways how.

To provide participants with theory and practice using
sandtray tools.

We will play!

Gisela Schubach de Domenico

The Sandtray Worldplay Method :

<http://vision-quest.us/vqisr/The%20Sandtray-Worldplay%20Method%20of%20Sandplay.pdf>

Sandplay/Worldplay training dates see her website at:

<http://vision-quest.us/vqisr/index.htm>



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Helping Families Heal.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to present this
information during the

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