A SAND TRAY EXPERIENCE

Carol Hinman, PhD, LMHC, CCMHC, RPT-S
LET'S PLAY
LET'S PROCESS
WHERE DID THAT “PULL” COME FROM?

- Lowenfeld
- Jungian perspective
- Many perspectives or theories are being used with sandtray
BASICS

- Sandtray
  + Traditionally rectangular 24” X 30” and 3”- 4” deep, made of wood or plastic, painted blue on the inside

- Why?
  + the eye can easily visualize the entire sandtray, blue on the bottom can be seen as water, blue on the sides can be seen as sky
However, Sandtrays can be found in many sizes, shapes, and colors.
BASICS

- **Sand**
  - Traditionally, the sand used is a small grain, white sand that has been baked to kill allergens, microscopic life forms, etc. (available at ToysRUs)

- **Why?**
  - The white sand provides a clean slate upon which the client can project their preconscious content
However,
+ The sand that is used is widely varied in texture, color, moisture content, etc.
BASICS

- Sandtray miniatures arrangement
  + displayed on narrow shelves, typically only one miniature deep

- Why?
  + Each miniature is equally available to the client, taking away the arrangement of the miniatures being part of the reason a client selects a particular miniature
THE BASICS

- However miniatures are held:
  + In baskets
  + In piles on shelves
  + In cupboards
  + In plastic containers
  + Under sandtrays, over sand trays, in open areas, in locked cupboards, and combinations of any and all of the above.
LET'S PLAY
CREATION OF A SANDTRAY

- **Client Instructions**
  + Hold an event, a feeling, and/or a thought in your head or your heart while
  + Walking through the tables and looking at the miniatures.
  + Pick up any miniatures that seem to speak to you or strike a chord with your thoughts or feelings and when you have as many as you need or want
  + Return to the sand tray and place them in (on) it.
CREATION OF A SANDTRAY

- Counselor Instructions:
  + The most important thing you do while your client is building their sand tray is: BE PRESENT
  + After your “client’s” sandtray is built, turn over one of the papers that has questions on the back.
  + Because this is intended to be a simple experience, I am asking that you use only use the questions on this page and simple, reflecting statements to
  + 1) provide a safe environment for your “client” and
  + 2) help your client explore their interpretation of their sandtray.
LET’S PROCESS
LET'S PLAY
CREATION OF A SANDTRAY

- Client Instructions
  - Hold an event, a feeling, and/or a thought in your head or your heart while
  - Walking through the tables and looking at the miniatures.
  - Pick up any miniatures that seem to speak to you or strike a chord with your thoughts or feelings and when you have as many as you need or want
  - Return to the sand tray and place them in (on) it.
CREATION OF A SANDTRAY

- Counselor Instructions:
  - The most important thing you do while your client is building their sand tray is: **BE PRESENT**
  - After your “client’s” sandtray is built, turn over one of the papers that has questions on the back.
  - Because this is intended to be a simple experience, I am asking that you use only use the questions on this page and simple, reflecting statements to
    - 1) provide a safe environment for your “client” and
    - 2) help your client explore their interpretation of their sandtray.
LET’S PROCESS
STEPS (HOMEYER & SWEENEY, 2011)

- 1. room preparation;
- 2. introduction to client;
- 3. creation of the sand tray;
- 4. post-creation processing;
- 5. sand tray cleanup;
- 6. documenting the session.
THOUGHTS?

QUESTIONS?
REFERENCES & RESOURCES FOR FUTURE EXPLORATIONS


- Sandplay Therapists of America
  + http://www.sandplay.org/