

Moscow Association for Analytical Psychology



# Jungian Sandplay Therapy

ALMANAC

INDEPENDENT SUBSIDIARY  
OF THE JUNGIAN ANALYSIS JOURNAL



Moscow 2013

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### History of Sandplay

Interview with Dr. Martin Kalff.....7

### Practice of Sandplay

Glennery L. Besson. The Nature of the Sand..... 14

Barbara A. Turner. Work in The Body of Mother Earth:  
The Significance of Shaping  
and Sculpting the Sand in Sandplay .....24

### Study of Symbols

4. Eunice Stagg. The Phoenix .....38

5. Susan Torr. The Elephant .....54

### Personal Experience

6. Barbara A. Turner. My Journey with Sandplay Therapy .....68

7. Laura C. Strom. Accessible Sandplay .....74

### Reading Books on Sandplay

8. Barbara A. Turner. How Sandplay Impacts Neurology .....80

## THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NEXT ISSUE

see the website:

[www.sandplay-jungian.com](http://www.sandplay-jungian.com)

Laura C. Strom

## ACCESSIBLE SANDPLAY

**L**aura C. Strom- MS, LMFT, LPCC, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor, Sandplay therapist who works with disabled people in their homes and traumatized children in schools.

The assignment was simple. Go into the garden and pick 5-10 objects. Come back to your partner, place them into a small tray of rice, and tell a story about your family. Within moments of placing three heart-shaped clovers into the tray, my eyes were filled with tears as I told my fellow student an intimate tale about my family. We were taking a class in Advanced Jungian Sandplay. When it was her turn, the objects in the tray, a pebble, flower and piece of wood, magically transformed into a deeply moving story.

This simple exercise lit a fire in my soul. I would find a way to make sandplay accessible to those clients who could not walk into a psychotherapy office with its neat shelves organized with hundreds of sandplay figures. In that moment, the idea of a "mobile sandplay kit" was born.

Starting with my internships as a counseling Masters degree student, I had clients who could never make it into a psychotherapy office. I worked in schools in low-income, high crime neighborhoods. Most parents did not even own cars, and many worked long hours with night shifts. I also worked in Adult Day Health Centers (ADHC) with clients

who had mobility issues. They depended on specialized busses to transport them in their wheelchairs. Our ADHC had a small number of clients who were young, but had been disabled by accidents, strokes, or other unusual means. In my private practice, I specialized in home visits with people who could not easily come into my office, or if they had, might not be able to reach things on shelves.

Nothing breakable, nothing too big, everything lightweight — became my mantra as I embarked on creating my mobile sandplay kit. I wanted a full sandplay kit which covered all categories, but could also be easily transported by me. I envisioned using it in schools, homes and with a person laying in a hospital bed. And lastly, I was determined it would not cost me a fortune.

This dream began by purchasing a large clear plastic under-the-bed storage bin with a separate blue lid. This is the sandbox. I place the blue lid underneath while in use to represent water.

I also purchased some very sturdy clear plastic Snapware boxes with removable handle lids that clamp on securely. The largest size box is easily held in a person's lap. I love watching facial expressions as clients explore the delight and wonder of these treasure boxes. There are two sizes of box and the foot print is the same in each; the smaller ones are simply one-half the height of the larger. They stack on top of each other beautifully. All the boxes are stored in two large sturdy plastic shopping bags.



Pic. 46

There is a large piece of aqua colored vinyl fabric to protect the wood of a dining room or coffee table (or any other surface), and lend to the watery blue color at the bottom of the sand tray box. A little bag containing a sink strainer for sifting sand, and a miniature dustpan and broom completes it. Moving it is a cinch with a small, wheeled folding cart with bungee cords; it is rolled easily with the sand tray on the bottom, and the bags stacked on top. **Picture 47**

Now I can offer the beauty of sandplay therapy to clients anywhere. I simply set up the sandplay kit where they will be seated (a kitchen table works well), and place the lids underneath each box. If room permits, I empty the General People box and stand/lay the figures out, setting the empty container aside. I place the lids under the rest of the boxes and explain what each box contains, loosening all the silk pouches into an open position. Total set up time is about five minutes.

The boxes are divided into categories.

- General People
- Small Sets of People — by theme (pirates, ancient Egyptians, zombies/dead things, soldiers)
- Animals
- Household Items
- Nature/Riches (jewels, coins, gold)
- Mythical/Prehistoric Creatures/Birds
- Divine Figures/Archetypes



Pic. 47



Pic. 48

— Buildings/Trees/Fences

I found some plastic freezer boxes at a dollar store which perfectly fit inside the largest box. I was able to place two rows of boxes, six on the bottom, and six on top in the large storage bin. I used these to separate the animals into categories: **Picture 48**

farm mammals, farm birds, insects, horses, African, North American, Australian, Arctic, ocean mammals, reptiles/amphibians, fish and pets. I originally experimented with plastic ziplock bags for each category, and had friends give it a try. They did not like reaching their hands into the bags, so I was delighted when I discovered the freezer box solution. I also used the freezer boxes inside the storage bin containing pirates, soldiers, etc.

See-through silk, draw-string bags were my solution for sorting the Nature/Riches. They feel pleasant to the touch, make the enclosed items seem special, and it is easy to

see the objects within the bag. **Picture 49**

They contain the following:

- Stones- many with words written on one side (Faith, Strength, Love, Spirit, Surrender, etc.)
- Gold/Silver plastic beads
- Coins — gold plastic, ancient, and toy paper money
- Multi-colored glass stones
- Jewels — multiple plastic sizes
- Shells
- Mirrors — ranging from very small to a size that fits in the palm of the hand
- Clay impressions of leaves
- Sticks
- Pearl beads
- Feathers

The Household Items box contains a full set of plastic doll house furniture. Smaller items and food are stored in silk pouches.



Pic. 49

There are small plastic figure sets sold in tubes, called "TOOBS" made by Safari Ltd. I bought a number for my kit. I purchased TOOBS in these categories: animals, pirates, transportation, famous buildings, explorers, ancient Egyptians, trees, fairies, mythological creatures and babies.

The Disney company makes sets of plastic figures from their movies many of which depict classic archetypal tales, such as maiden Snow White and the Witch holding out her apple. I purchased sets with classic villains. I also bought one set of plastic therapy family dolls which included grandparents. I went to some of the Playmobil plastic play figures where I found a police man/robber, a doctor/child in a wheelchair, and a little baby in an incubator. An art store provided two small pose able wooden figures. A Tyrannosaurus Rex dinosaur serves nicely as a monster when needed, along with a larger dragon.



Pic. 50

Sculpey clay and acrylic paints can be used to create anything not readily found inexpensively. The clay stays pliable at room temperature and can be baked in the oven. Afterwards objects can be painted and a finish applied to make them water resistant. I created a tower with a ladder **picture 50**,



Pic. 51

brick walls, cake, plates of food, rainbow, coffin, tombstones, cauldron, trap door, castle, volcano with removable fire explosion, campfire, and torii gates among many others.

I also sculpted a number of faceless archetypal figures, such as a Divine Mother and Father, Death/Mystery, figure holding a baby, sleeping figure, and an angel to name a few. One does not need to be good at sculpting to create very meaningful, powerful objects; less detail is often best. Sculptures simply need to create the idea or suggestion of the concept desired. For example, my Death/Mystery figure can be a sorcerer, druid, Angel of Death, witch, etc. **Picture 51**

A silky black pouch contains my golden sacred sexuality kit — small gold replicas of breasts, penis, buttocks and a vulva which are perfect for helping clients who are struggling with issues of rape, incest or sexual abuse.

Initially, I tried using green Moon Sand in the kit. It has the advantage of being able to be shaped/molded without water, and does not stick to any of the figures. Unfor-

tunately, it also has an unpleasant chemical scent. I switched to traditional sand which makes the box heavier. I allow clients to use a small amount of water with the sand, but not to flood the tray. At the recent Sandplay Therapists of America conference I was introduced to a lightweight corn husk by-product called Knot Sand that feels lovely to the touch. It would be a great alternative if no water is used.

The individual boxes in the mobile sandplay kit can be stored on a small set of shelves in an office, if desired. This allows the flexibility of offering sandplay therapy in a small office. My experience is clients enjoy looking through the boxes and removing desired objects. If I am working with a client with limited mobility, I can be the one sorting through the box and showing objects while they tell me which ones they would like to use.

Some older clients feel uncomfortable with the idea of going to see a therapist, but do not mind a “visitor” calling at their home. Offering home visits can help with the stigma attached to the field of psychotherapy.

The mobile sandplay kit allows me to do both — see clients in an office, or go directly to them. I strongly believe that home assessment, whenever possible, is best because safety concerns can be quickly identified.

Within our lifetime, someone we love will be come temporarily or permanently disabled. It is important that we, as counselors and mental health advocates, keep accessibility in mind with all we do. Bringing sandplay out into the larger community is a way to increase its visibility and impact. I think Dora Kalff and Carl Jung would approve.

Resource list of products referenced for creating your own mobile sandplay kit in order of appearance in this article.

35 qt. Sterilite Latch box (sandplay tray): <http://www.sterilite.com/SelectProduct.html?id=77&ProductCategory=180>

Large Snapware storage boxes: <http://www.snapware.com/products/smart-store-storage-container-1098600>

Small Snapware storage boxes: <http://www.snapware.com/products/smart-store-storage-container-1098599>

Aqua vinyl fabric — 1 yard (just cut, does not need to be hemmed, cost about \$15 US): [http://www.joann.com/home-decor-fabric-sta-kleen-vinyl-conroy-aqua/zprd\\_11706652a/](http://www.joann.com/home-decor-fabric-sta-kleen-vinyl-conroy-aqua/zprd_11706652a/)

Luggage cart (150 pound capacity): <http://www.sears.com/stebco-150-lb-capacity-three-way-luggage-dolly-cart/p-05029226000P>

TOOBS: <http://www.shopatron.com/products/category-740.0.1.1.1007763.0.0.0.0>

Safari Ltd.: <http://www.safariltd.com/>

Disney Snow White playset: <http://www.disneystore.com/snow-white-and-the-seven-dwarfs-snow-white-and-the-seven-dwarfs-figure-play-set-8-pc/mp/1310413/1000050/> There are other good ones including Sleeping Beauty, Aladdin, Little Mermaid, Villains, Princesses, etc.

Playmobil figures: <http://www.playmobil.com>

Police/Thief Playmobil set: [http://store.playmobilusa.com/on/demandware.store/Sites-US-Site/en\\_US/Product-Show?pid=4269&cgid=](http://store.playmobilusa.com/on/demandware.store/Sites-US-Site/en_US/Product-Show?pid=4269&cgid=)

Child with Wheelchair Playmobil set: [http://store.playmobilusa.com/on/demandware.store/Sites-US-Site/en\\_US/Product-Show?pid=4407&cgid=](http://store.playmobilusa.com/on/demandware.store/Sites-US-Site/en_US/Product-Show?pid=4407&cgid=)

Marvel Education Pretend Play Families: <http://www.marveltoys.biz/catalog/PDF/Page%2028.pdf>

Plastic dollhouse furniture by Calico Corners: <http://international-playthings.shptron.com/products/category/Furniture/224.0.1.1.11161.2173.0.0.0>

Super Sculpey Clay: <http://www.sculpey.com/products/clays/super-sculpey>

Sacred Sexuality Set: <http://sculpture-made4u.com/sacred-sexuality1.html>

Knot Sand: <http://www.jurassicsand.com/sands.html> ■