

Introduction

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This very first book on supervision of sandplay therapy began for us as an unexpected event when Joy Schaverien invited us to be part of her dream. Her vision was to publish a series of books on supervision in the arts therapies. She wanted us to edit the fifth book of this collection on sandplay supervision.

The initial effect of her dream on us was similar to an unplanned pregnancy. We felt both excited and apprehensive. Eventually, through nurturance and care, the book became our own “divine child,” bringing light and pleasure to us, as if it were our own idea. With this came new levels of consciousness and it expanded our ways of thinking about supervision of sandplay therapy.

What is sandplay?

Sandplay, as developed by Dora Kalff, is a Jungian-oriented, non-verbal form of therapy that facilitates the psyche’s natural capacity for healing. In a “free and protected” space provided by the therapist, a child or adult creates a concrete manifestation of his or her inner imaginal world using sand, water, and miniature objects. Thus, sandplay illuminates the client’s internal symbolic world and provides a place for its expression within a safe container, the sand tray. This sandplay experience provides a balance to the extraverted, verbal, and outer-focused everyday world and leads to a more open, balanced, and integrated way of life.

In 1982, Dora Kalff officially founded the International Society of Sandplay Therapy (ISST). Since that early period, sandplay has spread worldwide with official branches in England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, and the United States. In order to be a certified member, candidates must successfully complete educational requirements, write papers, involve themselves in their own personal sandplay process, and participate in group and individual supervision. To become a certified teaching member, and thus be certified to supervise others, additional requirements must be met, such as co-teaching with a certified teacher and

presenting cases before an evaluative audience. From the outset of this organization, it was understood, and included in the by-laws of the organization, that those who were certified as ISST teaching members could also provide supervision in sandplay.

Implicit in the assumption that any certified sandplay teacher could supervise is the assumption that supervision is merely an extension of didactic teaching and clinical practice. Given this assumption, supervision itself received scant attention from sandplay writers, although supervision was recognized as an essential component in becoming a sandplay practitioner.

Now, with this book on supervision, the situation has changed. Supervisors have taken the opportunity to explore their experiences and insights about supervision with more conscious awareness. This new awareness brings the realization that supervision calls for highly developed abilities that integrate the intuitive and feeling capacities with thinking, cognitive, and verbal skills. The writers of these chapters have successfully assimilated these skills and translated their insights into engaging and sometimes deeply moving accounts of their own supervision experiences.

With this book, sandplay supervision moves through a rite of passage to become a serious field of study.

Historical roots of sandplay supervision

Although clinical supervision has always been an integral part of learning sandplay, the historical roots in the larger psychological profession are quite different. Freud, Jung, and their immediate contemporaries had no supervisors, nor did they officially supervise other's clinical work. However, from time to time, colleagues did consult with Freud and Jung by letter, in personal meetings, and at professional congresses (Weiner, Mizen, & Duckham, 2003).

Jung was the first analyst to propose that trainee analysts should undergo a personal analysis (Mattoon, 1995). And, in their own personal analysis, future analysts received supervision as they discussed their own clients during personal sessions and, subsequently, often modeled their own clinical work on their individual analytic experience. Opportunity for supervision did not formally occur until 1948, when the Jung Institute in Zurich included supervision in its curriculum.

Dora Kalff's approach to supervision appeared to be modeled after C.G. Jung's teaching/therapy supervision style. Kalff taught small groups in a formal didactic style, did extensive sandplay therapy with professionals who traveled from all over the world to work with her, and lectured to large groups both nationally and internationally. She was also frequently videotaped while making public presentations where she spoke about sandplay theory and illustrated her own work with slides from her cases. However,

differing from Jung, who was a prolific writer, Kalff's written contributions were limited to one book and a few journal articles. To represent her work and move it further out into the world, she selected specific people from Europe, Asia, and North and South America whom she had taught personally. These colleagues shared her deep appreciation for the healing powers of sandplay and were respected clinicians in their own right. They not only brought sandplay to their countries, but also became the leading supervisors of many of the current certified sandplay therapists worldwide. Kay Bradway's foreword to this book refers to her own experience of being included in Kalff's early group and her practice as a supervisor.

The supervisor's role

From our perspective, a thoughtful supervisor is a teacher and a mentor (not a personal analyst or therapist), who is able to establish a collaborative relationship in a free and protected environment. The goal of supervision is to activate the supervisee's own potential and individual connection to the Self, and help facilitate the supervisee's growth as an ethical and effective professional in a manner that best reflects his or her gifts, abilities, temperament, spiritual, and temporal values. At the heart of supervision is a focus on the supervisee's feelings, reactions, thoughts, and fantasies that emerge as a result of his or her relationship to the client and to the entire clinical matrix. The task of the supervisor is to bring all of his or her cognitive knowledge, experience, feeling and intuitive capacities, and communication and relational skills, along with a generosity of spirit, to the supervision sessions.

We, as supervisors, are mindful that supervisees may identify with us and incorporate our supervisory role in their psyche as a reference model. This model or internal guide becomes an essential part of the supervisees' own developing identity and frequently stays with them over their professional career, developing and changing as they grow and change as therapists. Thus, the supervisor is much more than a temporary teacher, who is with a supervisee for only a few months or years. The supervisor, as an archetype, can be a powerful influence, both consciously and unconsciously, throughout a therapist's lifetime.

Jungian theory and supervision

While acknowledging the value of the current literature on supervision, it is time for us to characterize a specific Jungian approach to sandplay training, which requires that we discern the workings of the Self and its archetypal constituents in the process.

In working with a client, a Jungian-oriented therapist is always alert for newly-emerging potentials for future healing and unification of the

personality (e.g., in dreams, sandplays, behaviors, creative impulses, ideas, fantasies) rather than to just looking backward and dwelling on old events and wounds. This is what Jung refers only as a *prospective attitude*. The prospective attitude is a result of Jung's observation that the psyche has a natural tendency to heal itself, given the proper conditions. Similar to how our physical wounds heal under certain conditions, the psyche also has an instinctual wisdom if left free to operate naturally in a safe and protected environment.

According to Jungian theory, the *Self* is located in the unconscious – the place of wisdom – and is the central ordering principle of the entire personality. The conscious part of the psyche is called the *ego*, but it is less than the whole personality. When the ego and Self are in relationship and communication, then the individual is living closest to his or her own most actualized state, thus feeling more balanced and alive. Sandplay can be an effective means of evoking and nurturing the vital bridge between the Self and the ego.

Jungian theory also offers us a language to both observe and identify the movement of the deeper level of the personality. In sandplay, the symbolic use of miniatures, water, and sand are viewed through a Jungian lens. The understanding of these symbols is greatly enriched by exploring their many meanings using myths, alchemy, history, religion, other cultures, animal behavior, etc. It is through understanding symbols that the language of the unconscious comes alive and leads us to an understanding of the archetypal and collective levels.

Supervising sandplay from a Jungian point of view is, in fact, supervision of the unconscious process and the creative imagination. The unfolding of a series of sand creations also allows us to view the vastness and complexity of the unconscious. Through study of sand pictures, we are able to identify the development of the relationship between the ego and the Self, the journey toward individuation, bridging and integration of unresolved issues (i.e., the tension of the opposites), emergence of new creative energies, and movement towards wholeness.

Jungian theory, along with the prospective attitude, enlarges our understanding of the language of the unconscious and provides the largest map available to understand and supervise the workings of the psyche. Also, when the supervisor highlights the supervisee's unique emotional and intuitive responses then the supervisee's own approach emerges. In this safe environment, therapists' individual gifts and talents are validated and allowed to flourish.

Goals of the book

Because of the important role that supervision plays in the teaching of sandplay, many certified sandplay therapists have had wide experience as

both supervisees and as supervisors. Until now, however, their vast knowledge and experience have not been organized into a usable source for others. One of the several goals for this book is to provide a collection of articles written by seasoned sandplay supervisors that describes the state of the art of sandplay supervision. With this volume, supervisors will be better equipped to help their supervisees understand the complexities of this technique and its use in treatment.

This book provides a contemporary Jungian-oriented approach to sandplay supervision that is integrated with the current broader field of clinical supervision. Sandplay calls for a unique supervisory approach, as do the other expressive arts therapies, in which language skills are less necessary. Supervision in this field is supervision of what emerges from the imagination and the symbolic movement of the psyche with a focus on the inner responses of the therapist. This book acknowledges the importance of the dynamics of transference/countertransference not only within the interactive field but also as expressed in the sand creations as well. We hope this book will appeal to readers from various schools who feel the need to create a depth-oriented approach to supervision.

It is our desire to place this technique firmly within the domains of expressive art therapies, play therapy, EMDR, and the larger arena of contemporary psychotherapy that recognizes the importance of both verbal and non-verbal approaches. All of these non-verbal, expressive therapies also appreciate and incorporate imagination, creativity, fantasy, metaphors, and/or symbols in bringing about the healing process.

Supervision of expressive arts therapies includes similar challenges and rewards. In academic training, verbal cognitive approaches are primarily emphasized; therefore, one of the major challenges is to help therapists appreciate and integrate the non-verbal, more unconscious, right-brain approaches in therapy. Because of the ephemeral and intuitive nature of this work, even experienced therapists sometimes need to reach out to supervisors to help them translate the unconscious processes that guide the therapy.

In the early beginnings of sandplay, most supervision was conducted on a one-to-one basis. Now, with so many more therapists and supervisors, an organized and documented perspective is necessary for us to move forward. We must be able to articulate as well as write about both the questions and the answers that supervisees need to know. Learning the ability to communicate the intuitive experience is an essential component for sandplay supervisors if we are to support, sustain, and disseminate this valuable, non-verbal technique.

With these many goals in mind, we contacted all certified members of Sandplay Therapists of America and other sandplay therapists worldwide with a long history in sandplay supervision. We were surprised and delighted to receive so many papers, including some from Switzerland, China, Brazil, Israel, as well as North America, all with so many different

points of view. From a list of supervision issues, each author was invited to choose a particular aspect of supervision, paying attention to his or her own supervision experiences or training interests. Given that all the authors come from a similar theoretical view, it was an amazing experience for us to see the range of styles and approaches they presented, and we felt it was a testament to the many ways that sandplay can be supervised.

As you read this book, we believe that you will find that the contributors have been able to translate their intuitive, feeling responses to their work into clearly expressed statements of what was actually going on in sandplay supervision. To further clarify and illustrate their work, case studies and real life experiences are often used. Names and identifying information have been changed to protect the identity of their supervisees and clients.

Kay Bradway's Foreword

Kay Bradway was our clear and natural choice to author the foreword. Kay was one of Dora Kalff's earliest supervisees, and had a lifelong, ongoing relationship with her. For many decades now, Kay has been the leader and mother of sandplay in the United States. She facilitated many of Dora Kalff's visits to the United States, inspired the founding of the national organization, Sandplay Therapists of America (STA), with Estelle Weinrib, and sponsored training and supervision in the United States for sandplay clinicians who were unable to go to Switzerland to study with Dora Kalff.

Kay directly supervised many of the current certified sandplay therapists, teachers, and supervisors. Clinicians throughout the western part of the United States regularly attended her monthly supervision groups, and the majority of these fulfilled the certification requirements and became leaders in STA. Gretchen Hegeman's chapter speaks to the unique experience of attending Kay's supervision groups, and in Lauren Cunningham and Kay's article, Kay discusses her thoughts about the organization and group process.

We are so appreciative of Kay's generosity in graciously writing the foreword and reminiscing about her experiences of supervision with Dora, sharing her wisdom, knowledge, and long experience in supervising sandplay. Her foreword adds a sense of the long history of sandplay supervision, placing it in the mainstream with other psychologies that have also stressed the importance of supervision.

Overview of the book

The first part, "Creating original supervision models," moves from Kay Bradway's foreword describing Dora Kalff's historical model of supervision to Lauren Cunningham and Kay Bradway joining together to share their own visionary models of supervision in leading sandplay case consultation

groups in the United States. Gretchen Hegeman writes of her own enriching experience in Kay Bradway's group as a participant for over ten years. Harriet Friedman tells the compelling story of her odyssey in creating and developing her many supervision groups over the past 25 years.

In the second part, "Designing contemporary supervision models," Patricia Dunn-Fierstein explores the primary ingredients necessary for excellence in supervision of sandplay therapy. Mariellen Griffith proposes a collaborative model for supervision of sandplay therapy covering five vital principles. Betty Jackson follows with a creative model, based on Joseph Campbell's hero's journey, for helping supervisees understand the unfolding of sandplay process.

The third part, "Meeting special challenges in supervision," addresses a variety of issues that practicing sandplay therapists may experience in the course of their practice. Gretchen Hegeman discusses significant ethical issues and challenges that certified sandplay therapists face in the relatively small world of sandplay. Kate Amatruda delights us with her dilemma in working with an inexperienced and defensive trainee using sandplay. Denise Ramos reflects on the important issues arising in transference and counter-transference that occur between supervisee and supervisor. Maria Ellen Chiaia focuses on the unique aspects of sandplay therapy that impact the interactive field between supervisor, therapist, and client.

In the fourth part, "Moving into the cross-cultural world," Ruth Ammann speaks of her travels in Europe, the United States, Australia, and Asia including many of the developing nations, where she has both supervised as well as taught sandplay therapy. She thoughtfully shares her special adventures and reflections about her experiences. Sachiko Taki Reece vividly describes how she uses the sand tray as a supervision tool to help supervisees better understand their ethnically diverse, low socioeconomic clients. Gao Lan describes her ground-breaking approach of supervising and using sandplay in residential preschools and kindergartens in China in order to create a free and protected space in the schools themselves.

In the first chapter of the fifth part, "Supervising special groups," Rie Rogers Mitchell addresses the unique topic of mentoring supervisors and helping them deal with problems that sometime arise in supervision. Then we are immediately drawn into post 9/11 New York City schools, where Rosalind Winter both teaches and supervises counselors in using sand tray as they work with traumatized children and adults. Next, Heyong Shen and Gao Lan write about their bridging of the western and eastern experience when training and supervising Chinese graduate students. What often manifests is a unique Chinese meaning of sandplay that encompasses the archetypal and symbolic meanings in the *I Ching* and other Chinese philosophies. Then, Judy Zappacosta invites the beginning clinician to develop and refine the ability to observe, listen, and relate to young children in a meaningful way.

The final part, "Making connections with other expressive therapies," begins with Gita Morena exploring the distinctive advantages of using sandplay therapy and other expressive arts for the supervision of clinical material. Lenore Steinhardt discusses her approach to sandplay supervision using the lens of two diverse and valid approaches: sandplay informed by Jungian theory and, secondly, the connection between an art therapy based approach and sandplay.

Readers may choose to start at the beginning of the book and progress to the end, or may select chapters that attract their particular interest. Although some chapters overlap in what interests the writer, each discusses the subject in his or her own unique way.

About our terms

We would like to add a clarification regarding the word *supervision*, as used in this book. In the world of psychotherapy, supervision has evolved from its historical meaning of overseeing and controlling the supervisee into a cooperative activity between supervisor and supervising therapist. Another development is that supervision now encompasses two activities: supervision and consultation. *Supervision* applies to the relationship between a licensed therapist/supervisor and a pre-licensed trainee or intern who is working under the license of that supervisor. Or, a therapist who is in a system that requires evaluation of therapists even though they are licensed. *Consultation* applies to a relationship between two licensed individuals in which a licensed individual chooses to consult with a more experienced therapist. However, for the purpose of this book, we use the word *supervision* in a generic way that encompasses both supervision and consultation. For the sake of consistency, we have asked all authors to refer to the people with whom they supervise as *supervisees*, regardless of their developmental stage (i.e., student, pre-licensed, or licensed).

The term *cotransference*, developed by Kay Bradway, is often used in this book. Cotransference refers to the relationship between therapist and client that embraces a "feeling with (*co*), rather than a feeling against (*counter*). I use the term co-transference to designate the therapeutic feeling relationship between therapist and patient. These inter-feelings seem to take place almost simultaneously, rather than sequentially as the composite term transference-countertransference suggests" (Bradway & McCoard, 1997, p. 34).

The term *sandplay* therapy refers to a Jungian/Kalffian approach in which a tray, sand, and miniatures are used. As a non-directive, depth approach, sandplay accesses and activates the internal healing energies of the individual psyche.

The term *sand tray* refers to any other use of tray, sand, and miniatures; for example, using it with groups, couples, and families or as a research or assessment instrument, or if the play is directed by the therapist.

Sand play is uniquely different from sand tray as it emphasizes the importance of using and understanding the symbolic language of the unconscious as well as the value of silence.

Conclusion

This book provides a specifically Jungian approach to supervision, written by experienced teachers and supervisors worldwide, using their own voices from the depth of their experience. Our desire is that this book will provide information about the current state of the art in sandplay supervision for psychotherapists, practitioners, counselors, Jungian analysts, supervisors, researchers, teachers of supervisors in various settings, and sandplayers around the world. We hope that the many voices speaking together in this book will enhance your professional skills, stimulate your imagination about supervision, enrich your own sandplay work, and open doors to new consciousness.

References

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