

Working with Sand Trays in Counselling



Deep Release Online
Professional Training for Counsellors

JUNG AND SAND

Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung got into a fight and broke up. The split so devastated Jung that he retreated to his home in Switzerland, too crushed to do anything but mope.



One day, while walking along the shores of a nearby lake, the famous analyst sat down and started playing in the sand. He felt immensely better.

“Often the hands know how to solve a riddle with which the intellect has wrestled in vain...”

- British Paediatrician
- Inspired by Freud
- Established the Institute of Child Psychology in 1928 (*“Clinic for Nervous and Difficult Children”!*)



- Pioneered sand tray therapy with a ‘wonder box’ of miniatures
- The work became the *‘World Technique’*

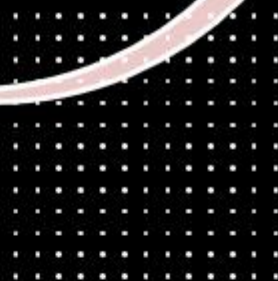




“A free and protected space...”

- **Swiss Jungian Analyst**
- **Introduced to the World Technique at an international conference in 1956 and went to London to study under Lowenfeld**
- **With Lowenfeld’s permission she used the term *Sandplay* and went on to train therapists, using a Jungian approach**





"Sandplay therapy can establish an inner peace which contains the potential for development of the total personality, including its intellectual and spiritual aspects...

It is the role of the therapist to perceive these powers and, like the guardian of a precious treasure, protect them in their development."

Dora Kalff

WHY USE SAND?

- It gives expression to emotions without needing words.
- The experience of touching and manipulating the sand can be therapeutic in itself
- It's a self-directed process, led by the client



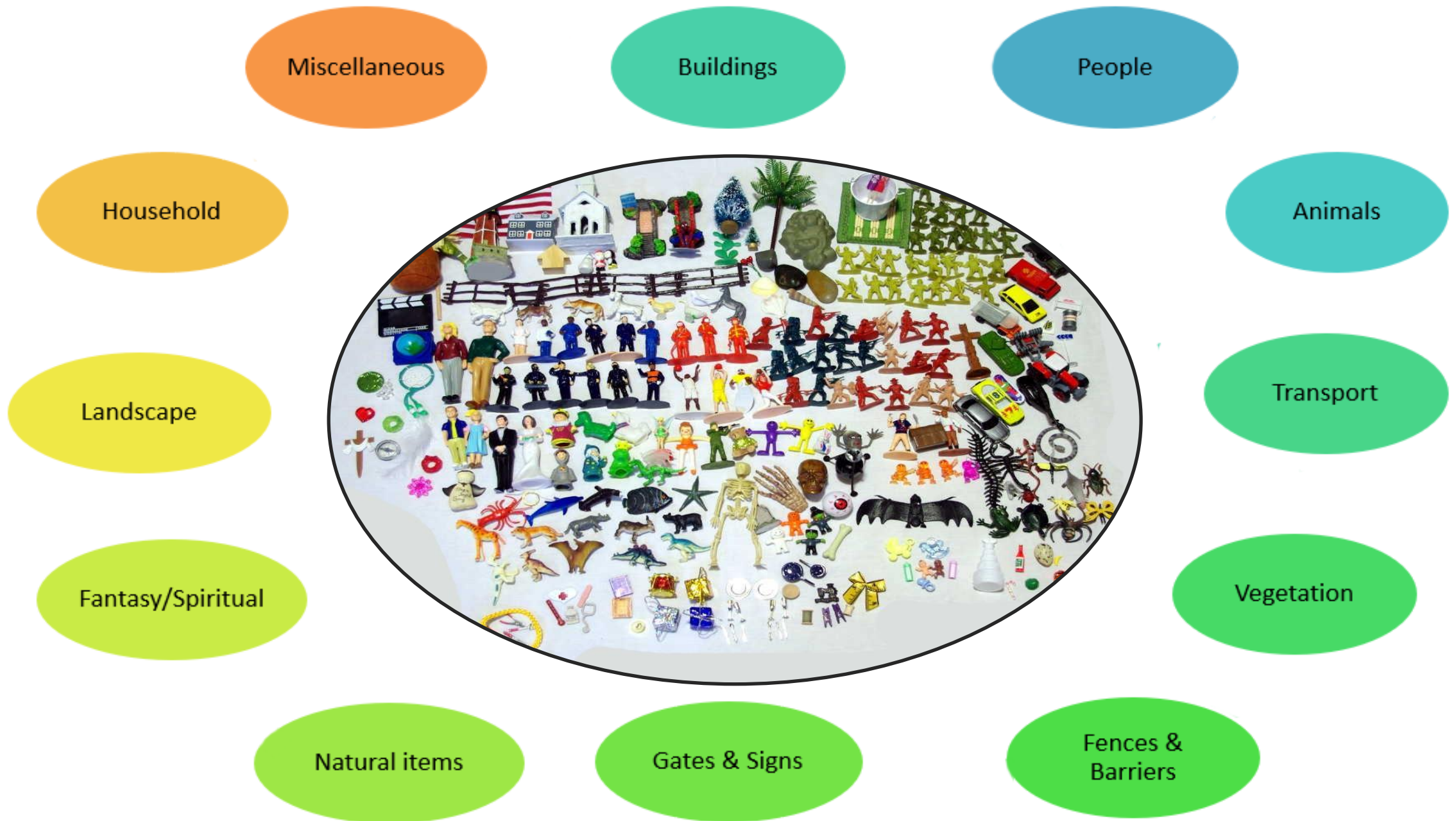
WHY USE MINIATURES?

- It can be easier to 'speak' through the miniatures than to find the right language to express pain, anger or fear
- Repressed issues can emerge and be relived, along with the negative emotions that are attached to them

Often the sensory nature of trauma can be best addressed through a sensory intervention



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CHOOSING YOUR MINIATURES



PREPARATION



- Get a tray!
- Officially a sand tray is 28½" long by 19½" wide and 3" deep
- The sides and bottom of the inside of the sand tray are coloured light blue
- By moving the sand aside, the blue can represent areas of water in the sandy landscape

- Prepare the client and the room in advance
- Check that there are no buried items from previous work!
- Sand should be flat and smooth
- If possible, 2 sand trays are good, one dry, one wet sand

SAFETY IN THE BOUNDARIES

Sandtray therapy naturally provides boundaries and limits which promote safety for a client



VALUING THE SANDTRAY



The miniatures
are the
client's words,
the expression
of their
emotional life
and inner self



Encountering Ourselves

“There are myriads of techniques used and advocated in the mental health profession.

Hurting people however are not healed through technique. People experience emotional healing when they encounter someone and when they encounter self. It is an inner process, a relational process, and a heart process...”



“Sandtray Therapy: A Practical Manual”
Linda E. Homeyer and Daniel S. Sweeney

Take your time exploring the miniatures. Use as many or as few as you like – often they will pick you... Find the ones that really 'speak' to you and put them in the sand tray. You can add as many as you like. I will sit here quietly until you are finished, or we can talk. Take your time and let me know when you are done.

INTRODUCING A SANDTRAY SESSION : NON-DIRECTIVE





INTRODUCING A SANDTRAY SESSION : DIRECTIVE

Some clients may be overwhelmed by a free and unstructured experience. Giving a specific task may be easier, for example:

- *“Divide up the sand – on one side make a world that is sad, and on the other, one that is happy.”*
- *“Create a scene which shows how you feel about where you work.”*
- *“Create a sand world showing your childhood family doing something together.”*



CREATING THE SCENE

“In an emotional sense the therapist ‘enters’ the sandtray with the client and participates empathetically in the act of creation, thus establishing a profound and wordless rapport.”

The silent capacity to enter into the creation of their world with the client, can in itself help repair the feeling of isolation with which so many people are afflicted.”

Weinrib, E. (1983) *“Images of Self: The Sandplay Therapy Process”*



CREATING THE SCENE

“To learn to be fully present, maintain the free and protected space, and observe the client’s process while building and creating the product, may take a bit of time and practice.”

Sandtray Therapy, Homeyer & Sweeney



- How does the client interact with the sand?
- How do they choose the objects, handle them and position them?
- Note where they are hesitant, confident, plan, experiment...

Image: <https://www.calmsage.com/sand-tray-therapy-what-is-it-how-it-helps-heal-trauma/>

CLEARING UP

- Give appropriate warning of the end of the session
- Allow for reflective time following the work
- Can the sandtray be kept for the next session, or does it need to be dismantled?
- Take a photograph of the sandtray – with permission

Allow the client to leave with the image of the sandtray still in their mind

Dismantle the tray after the client has left?



CLEARING UP

Pros and Cons of Clearing up after a creative session

What difference does it make...

- If the Client does it
 - If the Counsellor does it
- ?

Should the client be left with the image of their work intact?

Is the client 'owning their stuff' or wanting to run away from it?

What part of themselves is the client asking the counsellor to clear up?

Can clearing up be a shared activity between counsellor & client?

RECREATING THE SAND TRAYS



THERAPEUTIC SANDSCAPES

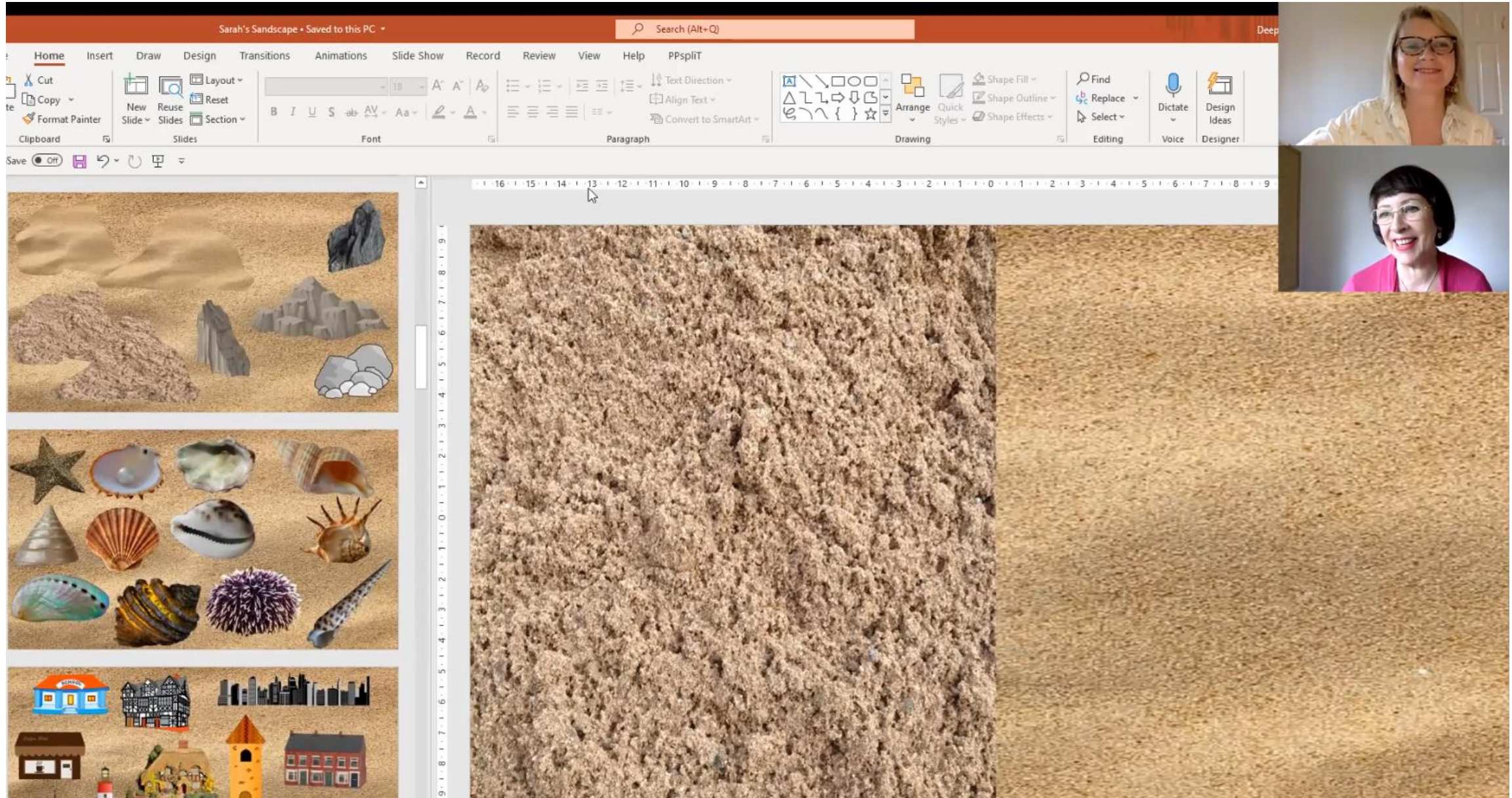
Sarah's Sandscapes • Saved to this PC

Search (Alt+Q)

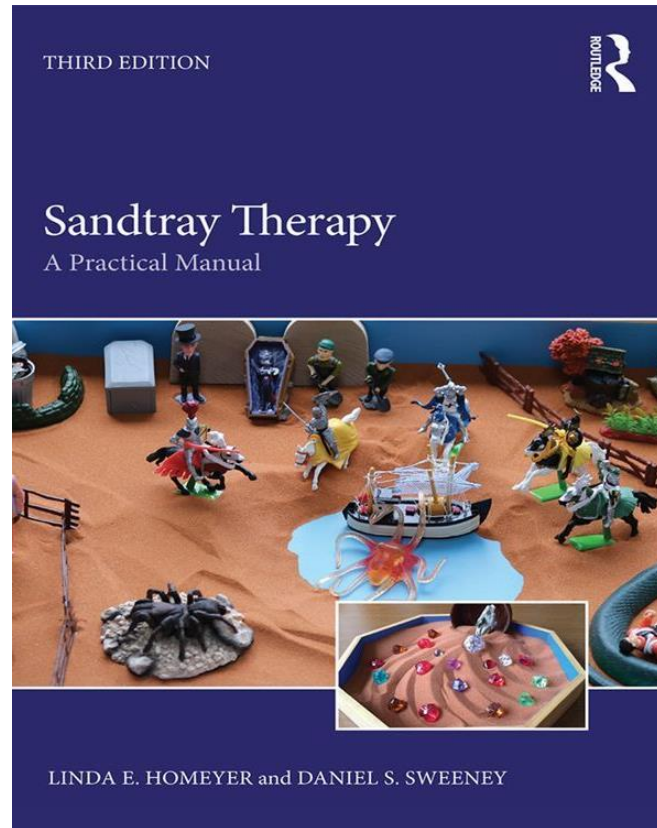
Home Insert Draw Design Transitions Animations Slide Show Record Review View Help PPSplit

Cut Copy Format Painter New Slide Reuse Slides Layout Reset Section Clipboard Slides Font Paragraph Drawing Editing Voice Designer

Save Off



RECOMMENDED READING



<https://m.facebook.com/ArtisandTrays/>

If you're short of space:

<https://southernsandtray.com/5-tips-for-the-space-deprived-sandtray-therapist/>



Resources



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Working Creatively with Nesting Dolls in Counselling – Training Video

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Working with Gestalt in the Counselling Room – Training Video

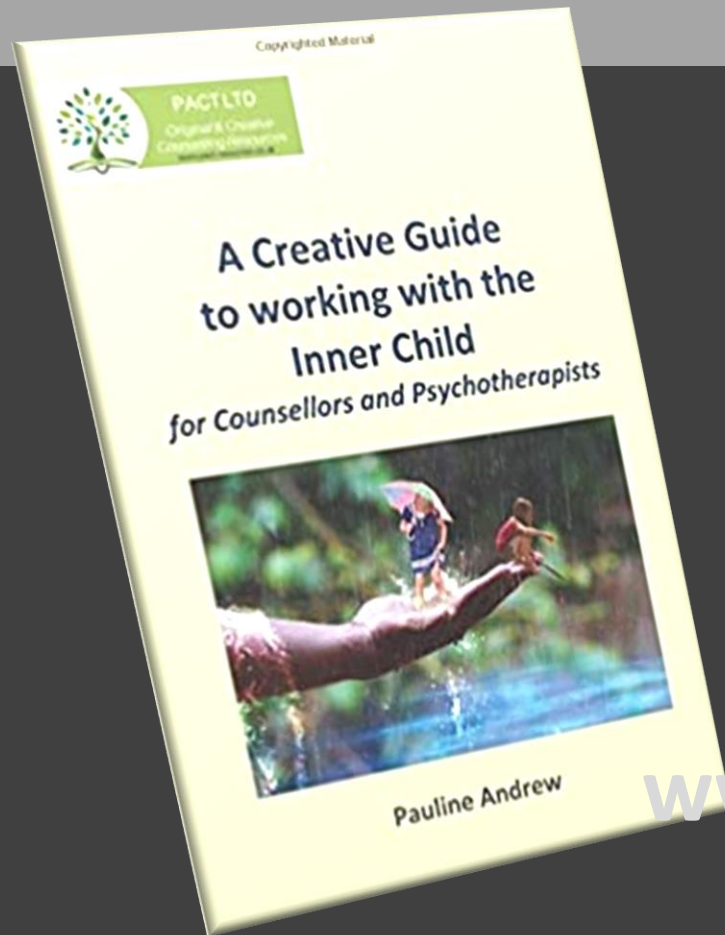
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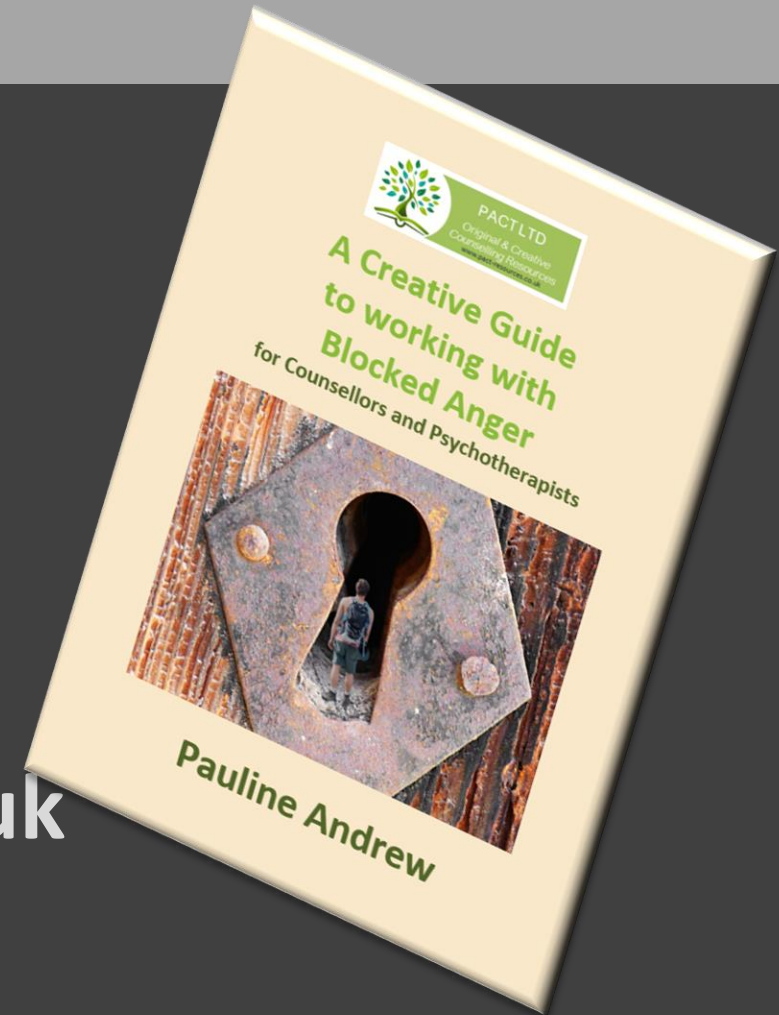
Attachment Behaviour in the Counselling Room – Training Video

£30.00

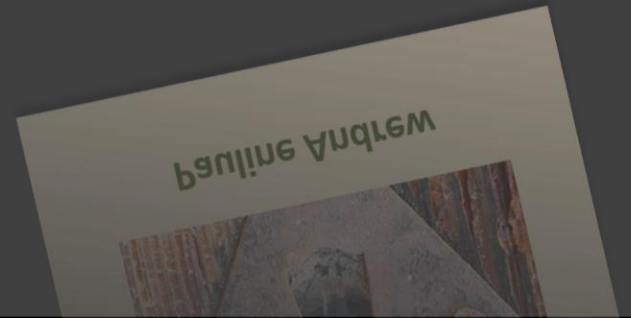
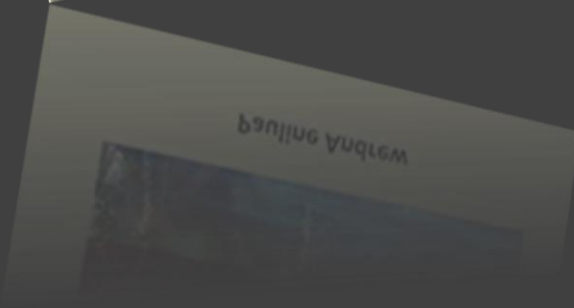
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****Coming Soon!****
**A Creative Guide to
working with Nesting
Dolls in Counselling**



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YOUTUBE CHANNEL

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- Videos on Life, the Brain and Relationships
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Coming up...

Coaching 2 with Dr Chris

Tues Mar 22
10.30am – 3.15pm

deeprelease.org.uk



Coming next!

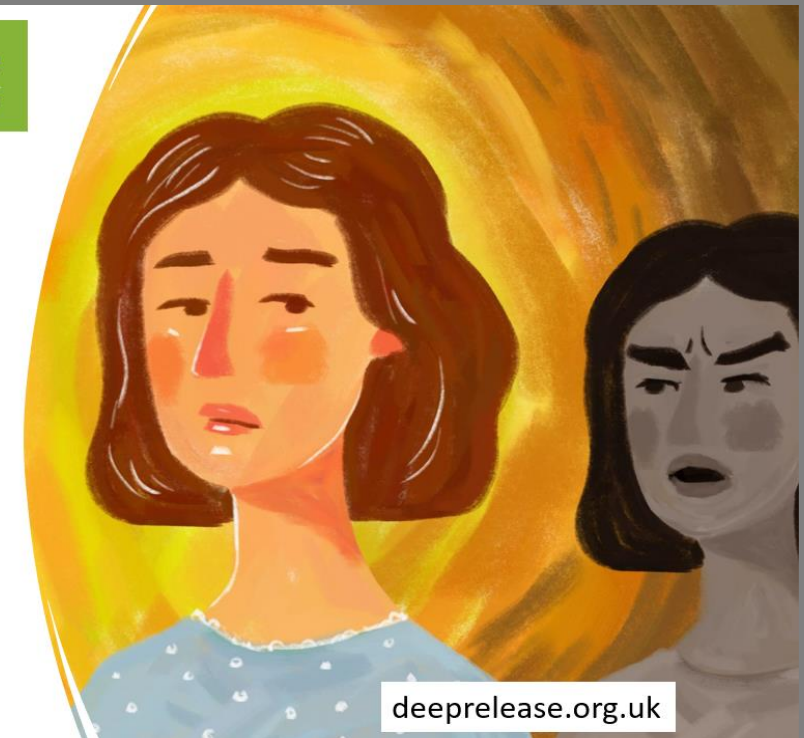
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Coming up...

Taming the Inner Critic

Sat Mar 26 or
Tues Mar 29

10.30am – 3.15pm



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Please send us
your feedback!



Thank you

info@deeprelease.org.uk

<https://www.info@deeprelease.org.uk>

<https://www.pact-resources.co.uk>