

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...”

MARGARET LOWENFELD (1890 – 1973)

- British Paediatrician, inspired by Freud
- In 1928 she established the “*Clinic for Nervous and Difficult Children*”!
- She encouraged children to express themselves non-verbally through play, using 2 trays of wet and dry sand and a selection of miniature toys



- She pioneered Sand Tray therapy using her ‘wonder box’ of miniatures
- This became known as the Lowenfeld World Technique





- Swiss Jungian Analyst
- She was 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

“A free and protected space...”



“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



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



CHOOSING YOUR SAND TRAY AND THE SAND



- 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

Artisandtrays.co.uk

- Prepare the client and the room in advance
- Check that there are no buried items from previous work!
- If possible, 2 sand trays are good: one with rough sand, one with smooth sand
- Can be good to have one tray with dry sand and one with wet sand
- The sand should be flat and smooth, ready for the client’s work

CHOOSING YOUR SAND TRAY AND THE SAND



- Play Sand
- Builders' Sand
- Kinetic Sand
- Tesco, B&Q, Amazon +++
- Google!

DIY Kinetic Sand!

https://youtu.be/i7nd2_eUoxw



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



CHOOSING YOUR MINIATURES

Miscellaneous

Buildings

People

Animals

Transport

Vegetation

Fences &
Barriers

Gates & Signs

Natural items

Fantasy/Spiritual

Landscape

Household



Choosing your Miniatures

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video to help
improve the film
quality*



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



Share in Buddy Groups

- Your experience of using sand trays as a counsellor
- Your experience of being a client working with sand trays
- What do you like about the idea?
- What do you find / would you find challenging?

15 minutes





MINI-BREAK – 10 MINS

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS



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.”*



BEING 'FULLY PRESENT' WITH THE CLIENT

“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/>

Regina's Journey

Please stop your video to help improve the film quality



DISCUSSING THE SANDTRAY

- **Visually observe** the completed sandtray – value, honour and respect the client's work
- **Emotionally observe** the sandtray – how do you feel as you look at what the client has done? - check in with your own responses
- **Be curious** about how the client has organised the sandtray



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”*



Hazel's Space

*Please stop your
video to help
improve the film
quality*



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- *How does the client feel about different parts of the sand tray?*
- *Which bits do they like best?*
- *Explore different feelings*

NB: DON'T TOUCH THE MINIATURES IN THE SAND TRAY WITHOUT PERMISSION!



Recreating the Sand Trays

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video to help
improve the film
quality*





Hazel's dream
space came true!



Hazel's New Space

Please stop your video to help improve the film quality





Here is Regina at the airport on arrival, welcomed by her mum and sister - a scene she included in her sand tray.

She wrote to us:

7th April 2022

Greetings from sunny Zimbabwe.

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to be part of the sand tray training. It has helped me heaps while being in Zim. I have been able to process and reflect, and I am enjoying time with family.

(Struggling with the heat !)

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?

Share in Buddy Groups

- Discuss Regina's and Hazel's videos
- How are you feeling about what you would enjoy, what would be a challenge?
- Thoughts on 'clearing away'?

15 minutes





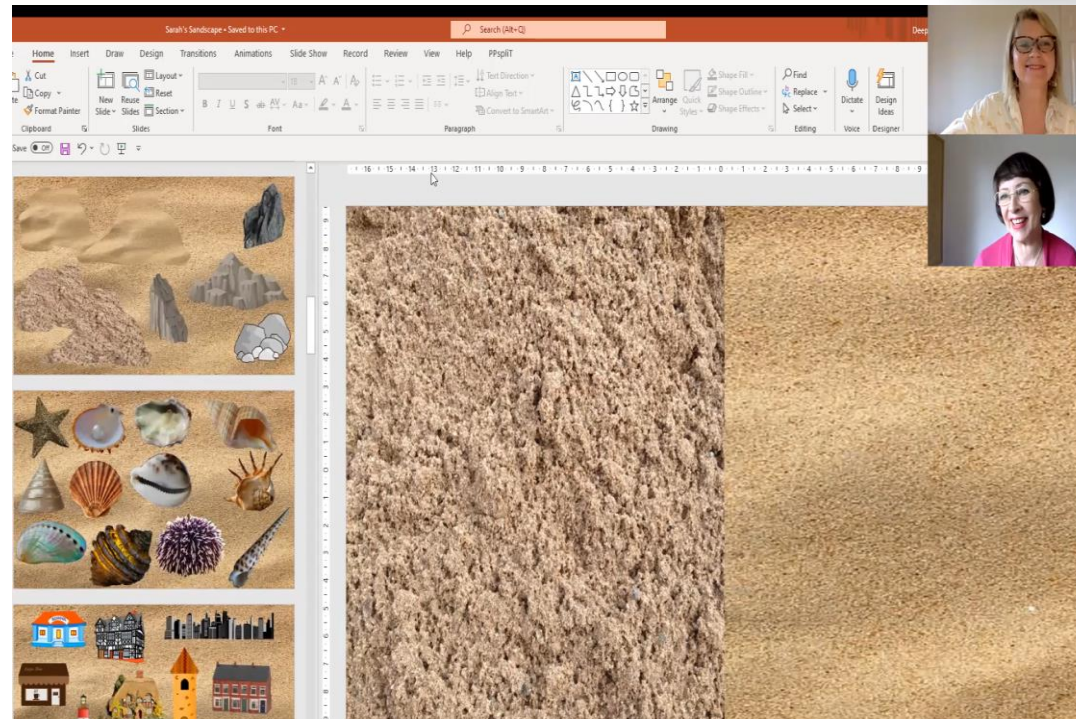
MINI-BREAK – 10 MINS

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS



Therapeutic Sandscapes

*Please stop your
video to help
improve the film
quality*



Share in Buddy Groups

- Discuss Regina's and Hazel's videos
- How are you feeling about what you would enjoy, what would be a challenge?
- Thoughts on 'clearing away'?

15 minutes





MINI-BREAK – 5 MINS

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS



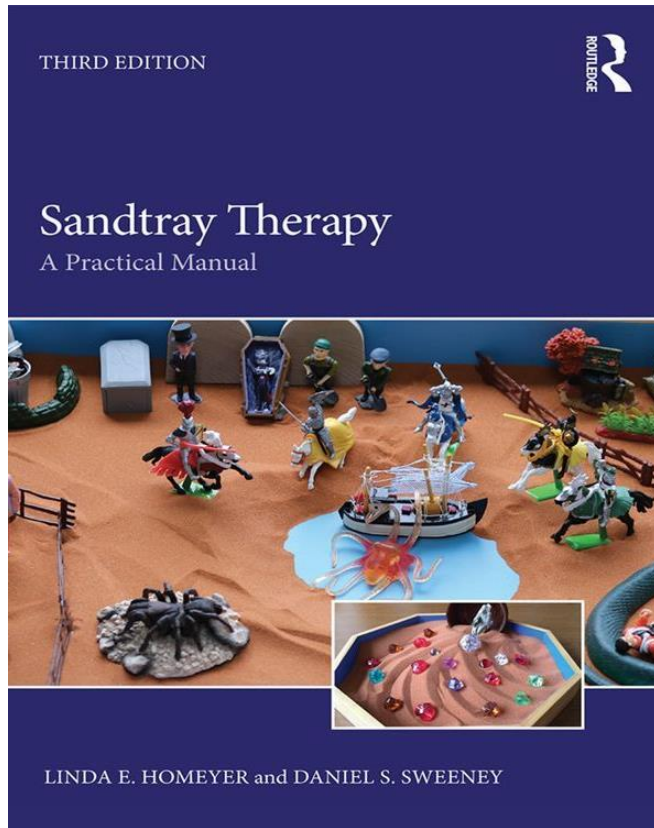
Share in Buddy Groups

- Final Buddy Group to say goodbye and exchange details if you wish.

5 minutes



RECOMMENDED READING



If you're short of space:

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



Resources



PACT LTD

Original & Creative Counselling Resources

www.pact-resources.co.uk



Erikson's Life Stages



Wheel of Life



Working with Animal
Figures Online Pack



Therapeutic Sandscapes™
Online Pack



Therapeutic Sandscapes™
Online Pack

**SPECIAL OFFER AS A THANK YOU
FOR ATTENDING THIS COURSE!**

Use the code SANDSCAPE20

**to get a reduction of 20% on the
Therapeutic Sandscapes package**



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£28.50 + P&P

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Using TA Creatively in Counselling – Training Video
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Working Creatively with the Inner Child in Counselling Training Video
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3 videos for the price of 2!



Working Creatively with Blocked Anger – Training Video
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Working Creatively with Nesting Dolls in Counselling – Training Video
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Narcissism and Echoism – Training Video
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Clients – Training Video

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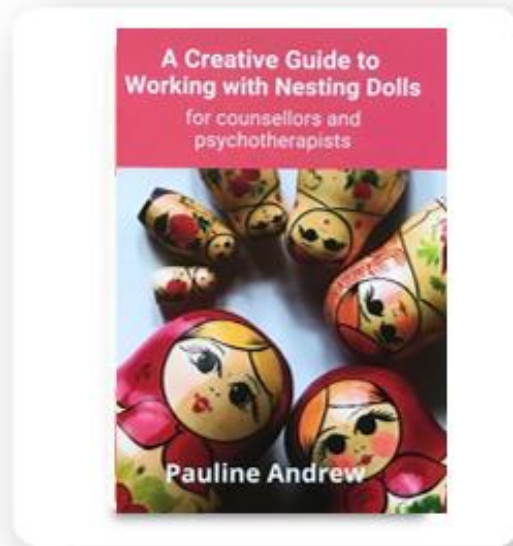
Taming the Inner Critic –
Training Video

£30.00



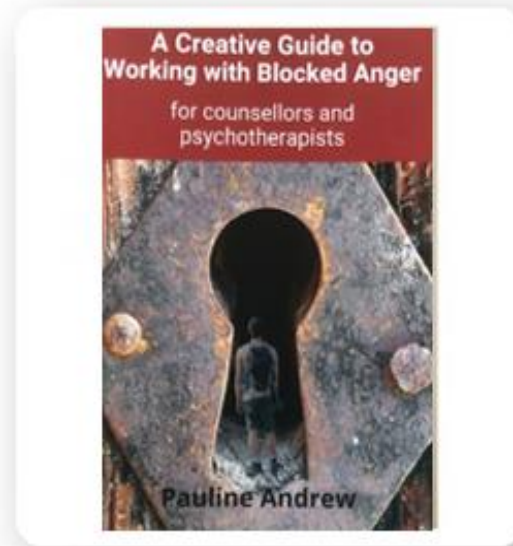
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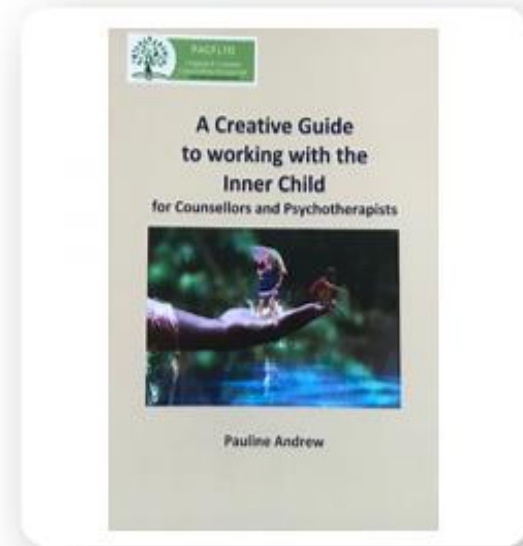
A Creative Guide to
Working with Nesting
Dolls

£11.50



A Creative Guide to
Working with
Blocked Anger

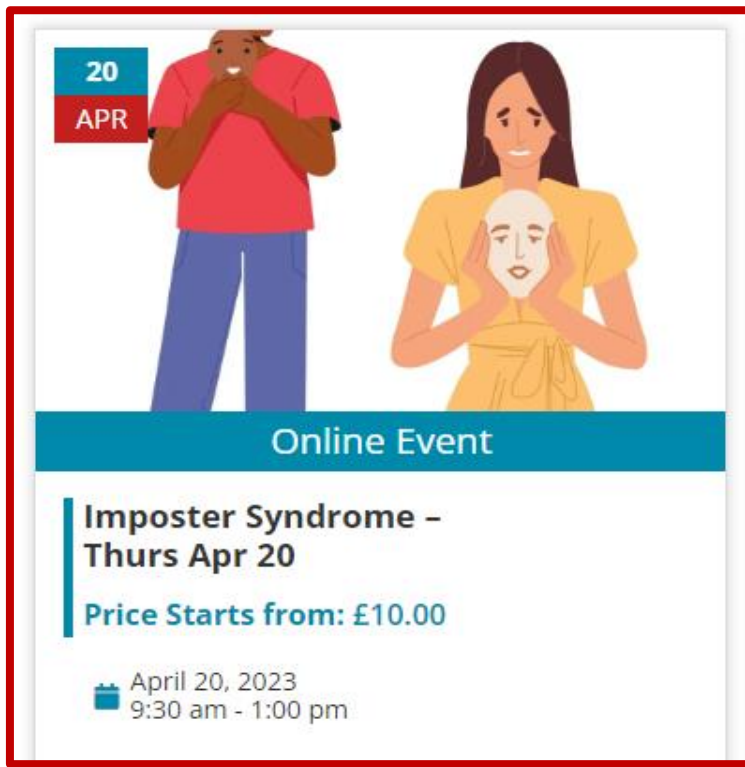
£11.50



A Creative Guide to
Working with the
Inner Child

£11.50

**Also available on Kindle and
as a
Paperback from
[Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)**



Sat 20 May
Wed 31 May
Sat June 10
Thurs June 29
Tuesday 4 July
Sat Jul 15

Building and Breaking Boundaries
Using Erikson's Life Stages in Counselling
Neuroscience in a Nutshell for Counsellors
The Conception to Birth Journey
Aspects of Self
Childhood Sexual Abuse

28

APR



Waiting
list

Creative Confidence Weekend
Fri Apr 28 – Sun Apr 30, 2023

Moor Hall Hotel & Conference Centre Cookham, nr Maidenhead

deeprelease.org.uk

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JUN



Working Creatively with the Inner
Child – one day course

Price: £129.00

Location:

📍 Moor Hall Hotel & Conference Centre,
Maidenhead

📅 June 24, 2023
9:00 am - 5:00 pm

15

SEP



Waiting
list

2023 Deep Release Counsellors
Conference



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FACEBOOK GROUP

Search: Deep Release Ltd – Counselling & Training



- A closed group for counsellors & trainee counsellors
- Please answer the joining questions!



Deep Release Ltd - Counselling & Training

🔒 Private group 1.6K members



+ Invite

CONNECT WITH US!

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- Lots of videos on working creatively
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Or visit:

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YOUTUBE CHANNEL

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