

# MSTG MINUTE

## Fundamentals of Sandplay

By Justin D. Kruse

It is with gratitude that I thank teachers Ellen Saul and Juanita McCabe for their presentation, "Fundamentals of Sandplay Therapy: An Introduction to Kalfjian Sandplay Therapy." On the 27th of February this delightful duo with friendly banter, brilliance and compassion welcomed a group of eight participants to the beginnings of Sandplay. With discussion on the evolution of Kalfjian Sandplay Therapy, participants were guided into dialogue interwoven with experiential activity, sensory awareness and rich case examples. While I have attended fundamental Sandplay trainings in the past, I found myself enriched, validated and supported on a deep level. In sitting with a Sandplay case, there was awareness that an arsenal of knowledge was present and that I was privy not only to the participant's observations and empathic responses but also the underlying insight and thinking employed through a Sandplay lens. I wish to thank Ellen for her devotion and commitment to



JUSTIN D. KRUSE (MSTG PRESIDENT) & SON

Sandplay. I admire her vision, humility and courage that materialized the day of the presentation and was reminded of the invisible string that connects souls seen and unseen. I also would like to thank Juanita for her visionary gifts and bold conviction in her presenting on the history of Kalfjian Sandplay Therapy and weaving the strength of connection and healing as seen in her case presentation. Thank you, Ellen and Juanita. With two trainings by this duo scheduled for April 2016, I anticipate continued gifts of knowledge and I look forward to more wonderful presentations.

## UPCOMING TRAININGS



### Circles in Sand: Exploring the Mandala in Sandplay Therapy

Date: April 9, 2016

Location: Mankato, Minnesota

Visit [minnesotasandplay.org](http://minnesotasandplay.org) for more information



### Deepening your Sandplay Practice: Working with the Symbol

Date: April 23, 2016

Location: Mankato, Minnesota

Visit [minnesotasandplay.org](http://minnesotasandplay.org) for more information

If you haven't yet tried out becoming an Associate member of STA, I would encourage you to consider it! For \$75 (within the US) you get the Journal of Sandplay Therapy, a class act production which can enrich your understanding of what's happening in your clients' sand pictures and lives. You also get discounts for STA and regional trainings, and the STA Associates news page. It's a way to be more connected with what's happening on the larger STA stage!

Ellen Saul

## About "The Orphan" by Ellen Saul, MS, LP, CST-T

In March, I attended "The Orphan," a workshop presented by Audrey Punnett and Dyane Sherwood in Oberlin, OH. As participants, we had a chance to step into the archetype of the Orphan, recognizing times in our lives when we felt like outsiders, lonely, abandoned. Through images, stories, and experiences we expanded our understanding of the many ways we are connected to this archetype, far beyond the immediate association we make with a child who has lost his/her parents. We could feel the dark side of this archetype all too well.

In the course of the day, Punnett and Sherwood led us to feel and understand also the light side of this archetype: the potential for the Hero's Journey, for action and growth in pursuit of wholeness, for individuation. We came to a place of awe in witnessing the journeys of clients who experienced transformation. We came to feel that we, too, could tap into that archetypal journey in the places where we knew the Orphan in our own lives.

# MSTG Member Spotlight: Paula Achenbach

**How long have you been practicing Sandplay Therapy?** 15 years

**What drew you to the field of Sandplay Therapy?** My first degree is Early Childhood Education. I have always had small toys with block play. I always had sand in my classroom. Sandplay seemed natural to me.

**What is your primary theoretical orientation and how did you “develop” into that orientation?** My theoretical orientation is a quilt of influences first with child development, especially Piaget, and attachment theory Bowlby and Nessel Bailey and Experiential play therapy. I have done supervision with Clark Moustakes who influenced Byron Norton. Humanist psychology from Virginia Satire, we all affect each other. Jungian perspectives of synchronicity, symbolism and collective consciousness and the belief that the client knows the answers. Spirituality perspectives of the 4 Agreements, Don Miguel Rehes and Byron Katie and Buddhism, Mindfulness, Native American, Nature Base therapy, animal assisted psychotherapy, Trauma and brain science of Bessel Van Der Kolk, Bruce Perry.

**What is one Sandplay miniature that drew you into Sandplay?** Initially all the miniatures were like bright shiny objects. I liked them all. But the blue horse miniatures were a magnet to my soul.

**How did you learn about MSTG?** There was no local Play Therapy training when I graduated. I heard about Sand Play through my mentor Dr. Linda Budd who knew Carol and Larry Greenberg.



**LEARN MORE about PAULA by visiting [www.minnesotasandplay.org](http://www.minnesotasandplay.org)**

## Highlights from the MSTG Board Meeting, March 26, 2016

- The Board has agreed to purchase D & O Insurance since we are moving forward with a Sandplay project at Community of Peace Academy school in which therapists will volunteer 1-2 hours of therapy a week. Details are still being worked out on the school project and it will likely start in the 2016-2017 school year.
- We agreed to shift from a bi-annual newsletter to monthly info blasts to the members.
- MSTG is looking for ways to interface more with MN Association of Play Therapists. As Ellen Saul stated: “We want to give lots of folks a chance to experience this path in the sand of integration, active imagination and expression of our spirit”. Plans made to attend an APT board meeting to discuss possible further opportunities of supporting each other.
- Justin is working on the webpage and would like to include short bios on therapist for people looking on the website for a therapist.
- The Board will be meeting every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month from 10-12.

### 2016 Board of Directors

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