

SANDSPIEL

Newsletter of the Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group

Volume III, Number 3

September 1991

Lucia Chambers to Present Oct. 4 on 'In-Turning Spiral'

Lucia Chambers, psychotherapist and sandplay therapist of San Jose, California, will present a one-day workshop Oct. 4 at the Maryhill Retreat Center in St. Paul entitled "The In-Turning Spiral, Path to the Healing of the Feminine." Cost is \$50 for members, \$65 non-members, and \$40 students. Final registration deadline is Sept. 27th.

Lucia studied sandplay therapy with Dora Kalff in Switzerland and considers sandplay an essential part of her work with children and adults. She runs several supervision groups, teaches at John F. Kennedy University and Santa Clara University, and supervises interns in sandplay. She is a member of the International Society for Sandplay Therapy and serves on the Council for the Sandplay Therapists of America.

In her workshop, Lucia will explore themes which reveal the development of the feminine. In the morning presentation, "The In-Turning Spiral," she will discuss the image of the counter-clockwise spiral in sandplay pictures, and its particular meaning for women. This spiral signals the beginning of the journey toward the darkest inner reaches of ourselves: a movement downward from the masculine experiences of consciousness and order to the essentially feminine experience of chaos and the unconscious.

In the afternoon presentation, "The Archetypal Path of the Feminine," Lucia will continue her exploration of the transformational journey of the feminine. In this segment she will demonstrate how this journey has been remarkably similar over time, from the 4000 year old myth of Inanna and the frescoes from the Villa of Mysteries to the present day work of women in their sandplay process. The journey winds along an archetypal path, playing out a symbolic death-rebirth experience.

In an article that appeared in the Fall, 1990 issue of the Northern California Sandplay Newsletter, Lucia said, "For countless generations children have come into a world whose principles are based on logos and whose value systems exclude recognition of the qualities of the feminine. This prolonged polarization has left both men and women handicapped in the development of their own psychological totality and restricted even in the paths or modes which could help facilitate connection with the lost feminine. Sandplay is one of the few therapies that involves direct access to the feminine. That is, it by-passes the intellect's ability to analyze and interpret away the true essence, and provides an experience of Self. This 'experience' or intuitive knowing is one of the primary characteristics of being in relationship to the feminine. At this time in our earth-planet history, the



Lucia Chambers

opportunity which sandplay provides for accessing the feminine makes it of enormous significance and value."

She continues: "The spiral has two aspects, as seen in double spirals. The expanding spiral that moves up into manifestation and the contracting spiral which moves in and down into dissolution—the choice of traveling with or against the sun. The counter-clockwise spiral is the unwinding of order into chaos, or from the masculine to the feminine. The counter-clockwise, or in-turning spiral, perhaps shows a path into the deepest levels of the unconscious where the essential nature of the feminine lies.

"One of the first indications of this inward turning might be a sense of emptiness or barrenness in the sand picture. Dead branches and twigs or rocks might be scattered around. Perhaps there might be jewels around an empty center. This emptiness tells of the meaninglessness that is experienced when a woman cannot connect with the feminine within. Relatedness, which is the guiding principle of the feminine, is not being experienced in its true essence—with Her Self. The descent into her own unconscious, to the goddess Within, is a path into darkness, into the chthonic and chaotic world of the archetypal feminine.

"There is great pain and suffering involved when a woman descends into the darkness to reclaim her totality. The conscious ego, defensively formed, but now actually separating her from Herself, must die. The old values and perspectives must be sacrificed before there can be rebirth...."

MSTG Developing 3-Year Educational Program

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MSTG's Education Committee, consisting of chairperson Barbara Weller, Carol Kindschi, Regina Driscoll, Alice Wagstaff and Larry Greenberg, has begun to develop educational experiences for Sandplay candidates-in-training. The three-year educational program will consist of formally structured courses, supervised clinical experiences, and elective workshops designed to provide the necessary knowledge and experiential bases for a Sandplay therapist to obtain certification from the International Society for Sandplay Therapy.

We plan to develop and evaluate the basic curriculum over the next three years, beginning this fall with two formal courses:

1. *Beginning Sandplay Practice* - Eight 2 1/2 hour sessions, first or second Tuesday evening each month from October to May. Topics include: Sandplay in context, Researching a symbol, Elements of Sandplay, Assessment of client, When to use Sandplay, The initial session, Record keeping, The Sandplay process, and Termination. Each participant will research, prepare and present a paper on a particular symbol of his or her own choice.

Prerequisites include completion of personal Sandplay process and permission of the instructor, Barbara Weller (724-0854). Recommended prerequisite is Introduction to Sandplay. This course is designed for therapists who are using or beginning to use Sandplay therapy. Enrollment is limited to between 6 and 10 participants. Cost: \$240. If space permits, advanced trainees may register for specific sessions (cost: \$40/session) with instructor's permission.

2. *Introduction to Analytical Psychology* - Four 2 1/2 hour sessions, third Thursday evenings in November, January, March and May. Sessions and in-depth readings will examine basic Jungian concepts such as psychic reality, the totality of the psyche, ego, persona and shadow with an emphasis on understanding Jung, his life and psychology as related to the theory he developed. Beginning reading requirements are *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*, C.G. Jung, and *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, (Collected Works, Volume 7), C.G. Jung. Permission of instructor, Ruth Goodwin (644-8208), is required. Enrollment is limited to between 6 and 9 participants. Cost: \$100.

7-9:30 etc.

The committee is also considering establishing pro-seminars for advanced trainees and recent graduates. A pro-seminar would consist of a small group of advanced trainees and members of I.S.S.T. who would meet periodically to research and discuss selected Sandplay topics, including clinical practice.

We will be reviewing the St. Stephan's Project as a prototype for a clinical internship. In this project, each of four trainees in Sandplay will provide two children 20 therapy sessions each during the coming school year. The trainees will be in group supervision with Barbara Weller.

The committee will be formulating additional courses and educational experiences for next year and welcomes your suggestions.

-Larry Greenberg

Board Meeting Times

Thursday, Sept. 19

Tuesday, Oct. 29

Tuesday, Dec. 10

7 p.m. at Barb Weller's house

STA Announces New Sandplay Journal

The Sandplay Therapists of America has announced it will publish the *Journal of Sandplay Therapy* twice yearly, starting late 1991. Lauren Cunningham of San Francisco is editor.

The *Journal of Sandplay Therapy* is concerned with increasing understanding and expertise in the use of sandplay by providing theoretical, practical, historical and research articles. The *Journal* also will contain papers on case studies, current work with specific populations, professional concerns, and book reviews, as well as essays on the therapeutic process and symbols as they relate to sandplay.

Cost of the *Journal* will be \$20 for one year, and \$50 for a charter subscription in which subscribers will have their names listed in the first issue. A subscription is also included as part of an STA Associate Membership fee of \$45.

The Editorial Board consists of: Lauren Cunningham; Kay Bradway, Sausalito, CA; Harriet Friedman, Los Angeles, CA; Martin Kalf, Zollikon, Switzerland; Hayao Kawai, Kyoto, Japan; Chonita Larsen, Honolulu, HA; Joel Ryce-Menuhin, London; and Estelle Weinrib, New York. Harriet Friedman is an ISST Member and the remaining are ISST Founding Members.

A subscription to the *Journal* may be obtained by writing *Journal of Sandplay Therapy*, 3616 19th Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55407

Creation Myths Discussion Nov. 8

The second informal discussion of symbols and themes in sandplay will take place Friday, Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m., at the home of Carol Kindschi and Larry Greenberg, 2129 Larpenteur Avenue, Falcon Heights. The theme will be creation myths and will include a showing of a PBS video on the Popol Vuh, a creation story of the Maya. Regina Driscoll will lead the discussion. All MSTG members are invited. Members may read or research some aspects of the topic ahead of time, or just come to listen and discuss.

Please RSVP to Carol or Larry, 642-9417. Refreshments will be served.

Sandspiel is the newsletter of the Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group, 3616 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55407, Tel: 612-724-0854. *Sandspiel* means "sandplay" in German. The MSTG was formed in 1988 to provide education and training in the area of Sandplay, developed by Dora Kalf of Switzerland. 1991-92 board members: Regina Driscoll (President), Mary Ellen Einspahr, Ethel Griggs, Mary-Lynn Harrison, Carol Kindschi, Joe Meyer, Holly Smart, Alice Wagstaff, and Barbara Weller (Past President). *Sandspiel* Editor: Mary-Lynn Harrison.

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Celtic Trip Evokes Images, Emotions

One of my main reasons for being a part of the International Society for Sandplay Therapists has always been the wonderful inter-continental connections which have come about through this group. One of the best has been knowing and learning from Nessie Bayley, who has developed a form of attachment therapy that seems to work as nothing else does with severely damaged people. It was a great privilege to be invited by Nessie to meet with her English and Irish groups during a three week visit there in June.

My first stop was at Chance for Children, a house in South Norwood, London, which was purchased by a small group of individuals to provide a center where severely damaged children, their families, foster parents, and their therapists could come for nurturing, healing, and learning. Dilys Griffiths, an amazingly energetic and dedicated woman who is one of the sponsors of the Center lives in it, and provides therapy, teaching, and hospitality to all comers. Except for her own room, the entire house is for the use of the community. Foster parents may be found in one or more bedrooms at any time, taking a respite break from their charges and talking things over with Dilys as she cooks them Sunday lunch. Children might be out in the yard talking to "their" tree, working in their garden plot, watching a fox, or cooking in the kitchen with Dilys. The living room is their play therapy room. Opening off it are a big terrace for messy painting projects, a sandplay room, and a sitting room. The phone rings much of the night and weekends; how Dilys stays as sane and warm and welcoming as she is was one of the main marvels of the trip.

During that first week Nessie, Dilys and I met with a group of 15 therapists and residential workers for a training session on attachment work and sandplay therapy. Due to the recent Children's Act in Great Britain, requiring that children be maintained mostly in their own homes, but (like here) without nearly enough funding to provide adequate services to them, there was a great deal of anguish over the welfare of those children and the burnout in therapists trying to help them. Nessie and Dilys repeatedly emphasized the need to "nurture the nurturers" and did so throughout our meetings.

It was on to Manchester and Nessie's cozy terrace house in suburban Stockport for the next week. That, too, is a "Center" for children, their families, and therapists. While

there I met with some of the people who are working on symbol papers and beginning sandplay therapy with clients. The extent to which they incorporated their own culture in their symbolic journeys was wonderful, and the experience was one of mutual education as I learned of lions, stones, water, the Trickster, the vessel, horses, and many more...all with a thoroughly Celtic slant. Despite the universal problems of funding, I learned that many of their centers seem to have a real understanding of the needs of damaged children, and was deeply touched by the intensity and success of the therapists' work. Mike Falcus, one such, is able to spend two to three hours weekly with a little girl, and can then drive her home and have another half hour's family session with her and her foster parents. Despite multiple abuse and separation, after several years of this attention, the child is flourishing.

After a brief break for a trip back to 1840's Haworth and the Bronte parsonage on the Yorkshire moors, we moved for three days to Lancashire and the home of Rosemary Hindle. Rosie and Frank (her border terrier) are therapists to a number of developmentally delayed young people who live nearby and sometimes stop in for tea. Our days were spent at Stopforth Barn, an 18th century stone building converted by a young couple into a beautiful conference center, overlooking sweeping hills and woods. There we discussed monsters, shadow, and transformation, as well as other universal concerns centering in sandplay therapy. In the long evenings of the English midsummer, Rosie, Frank and I tramped the hills and checked out the 18th century beacon, where fires were to be lit to warn of Napoleon's approach.

The final lap of the trip was a week in Ireland, beginning with three days with the Irish contingent of Nessie's trainees. Some of them had attended the national conference in St. Paul, giving us all a lovely feeling of reunion right at the start. We met in the Dublin offices of the social welfare department, in a large meeting room whose walls were plastered with pictures of adorable Irish children needing homes. The constant reminder of the driving force behind all of Nessie's work - those beautiful, hurting children - stayed with us all throughout the meetings. And there, too, it was a mutual educational experience. I learned much more about the Travelers, Ireland's minority gypsy people; about "begrudgery" and the limits of luck among a society suffering constant economic hardship, and about that wonderful Irish silver tongue: "the English gave the Irish the language, but the Irish taught the English how to use it." I enjoyed the warm hospitality of Margaret Beaumont and her husband in their beautiful cottage on Dublin's Strand, where they watch racehorses working out along the beach while breakfasting. The last three days were a special gift, when Margaret Ryan was tour guide, chauffeur and companion on a trip back to my Irish roots. Together we explored Tipperary, and the best moment of the journey came when I stood waist-deep in weeds in an ancient Irish churchyard, listening to the wind in the trees above the graves of my ancestors.

I am still sorting out ideas, impressions, and knowledge gained, and corresponding with some of the people I met on the trip. I hope that many of you will meet them too, perhaps at the next National Conference in San Rafael. Or perhaps on a Celtic journey which you may take some day.

- Barbara Weller

Workshops

Barbara Weller will conduct the following workshops:

Oct. 17, 18, 19: *Floor Games: A Multisensory Therapeutic Approach for Children and Adults with Attachment and Bonding Issues.* Experiential and theoretical. Cost \$275, deposit \$75 by Oct. 8.

Nov. 16: *Introduction to Sandplay Therapy.* Cost \$80, \$25 deposit by Nov. 1.

Call Barb at 724-0854 for further information.

Sandplay Therapists of America National Conference: "Sand, Psyche & Symbol" May 14-17, 1992 in San Rafael, California. Brochures will be available and mailed in October 1991. Mark your calendars now.

'Little People' of Our Continent

One need only travel on the North American continent to find a wealth of examples of the importance of "Little People," as described by Joe Meyer in the May, 1991, *Sandspiel*. One such group that has captured my interest during travels and readings are the Little People of the Maya in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico.

Legend reports that Quetzalcoatl, the Plumed Serpent himself, on his journey from wealth and Central Mexico (i.e., consciousness) to the poverty and purity (i.e., the unconscious) of the Yucatan, suffered a great loss when the dwarfs and hunchbacks traveling with him died of cold as they climbed the snow-topped volcanos en route.¹ Legend also tells that the Pyramid of the Magician at Uxmal, one of the steepest and grandest of all, was built in a single night on order of the ruling monarch by a dwarf born from a cosmic egg.²

Modern Yucatec storytellers maintain that the first people were dwarfs and built the ancient temples in ruin today. The dwarfs or "ancient ones" lived in the time of darkness. When the sun rose, they turned to stone, and a flood brought the first age to a close.³

The "Aluxe" (pronounced Aloosh) of the modern-day Yucatan are most notorious indeed. Their roots lie also in ancient times when they were made of clay by evil "h-menod," a shaman, who died and left no one to control the Aluxe.⁴

Current belief in the Aluxe governs behavior of Mayan farmers and businessmen alike. The Maya who have understood my interest have been willing over time to talk about their beliefs which are not readily obvious to visitors. In such discussion, I have been told that the Aluxe are about a foot tall, have beards, may have hair all over their bodies, wear hats of mud, and have an unpleasant odor about them. If you acci-

dentally look at one directly, it can lead to madness. Since their feet may be on backwards you need take care to that you don't run into them when trying to walk in the opposite direction to avoid them. The *milpa* (cornfield) can be protected by planting clay likenesses of the Aluxe in the four corners to act as guards. Offerings of food will keep them cooperative. They can be mischievous, however, and missing tools and materials during our recent construction project in the Yucatan were attributed to the Aluxe.

An acquaintance of mine, Señor Dimitri, who has lived in the jungle all of his 66 years, recently led me to a small uncharted ruin which he assured me was the living quarters of the Aluxe. He also assured me that they were only there at night and would not harm us because he is reverent and leaves food for them.

The Aluxe of the Yucatan have captured my interest and enthusiasm. Those who experienced the cave of the ancient Maya during the MSTG seminar last January in Mexico could sense the power such a place offers to the Maya. My search for stories will continue as will the power and reverence of the Aluxe.

- Carol Kindschi

Endnotes

- 1 Nicholson, I., *Mexican and Central American Mythology* 2nd edition, 1988, p. 105.
- 2 Ibid, p. 104.
- 3 Bierhorst, J. *The Mythology of Mexico and Central America*, 1990, p. 8, 131.
- 4 Pearce, K. *The View from the Top of the Temple: Ancient Maya Civilization and Modern Maya Culture*, 1984, pp. 50-51.