

SANDSPIEL

Newsletter of the Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group

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June 1992

'92 Nat'l Conference: The Tribe Gathers

“Sand, Psyche, and Symbol,” the second national sandplay conference, was held May 14-17 in San Rafael, California. Sponsored by the Sandplay Therapists of America (STA), the North American branch of the International Society for Sandplay Therapy (ISST), this conference brought together five pre-eminent figures in sandplay, 20 other presenters, and 330 participants for three days. It was a gathering of the tribe, and as a tribal ritual it had a lot to offer: words of wisdom from the elders, an opportunity to see the next generation of chiefs, a chance to meet those of other clans (the northern California clan, the Irish-English clan, and others), shared meals, and the buying and selling of wares.

What a major conference such as this lacks in intimacy, it more than makes up for in the opportunity to hear the major international figures in sandplay, and the best of the best could be found in the presentations by Estelle Weinrib and Kay Bradway.

For reasons of health, Estelle Weinrib's "What is a Sandplay Process?" was delivered by audio tape and slides; this enabled her to lead the follow-up discussion. This new but very effective way of capturing and preserving a sandplay presentation in no way masked Ms. Weinrib's characteristic warmth and humor. She explained that "a completed process" is a misnomer; one's process is never complete until one dies. Instead, the "process" that the therapist witnesses during a sandplay therapy sequence is but one loop in the multilevel spiral played out over one's lifetime; we may revisit the same issues and conflicts at different ages and developmental levels, and each time the process will have the timeless symbols of the archetypes, interwoven with the particularities of an individual's history and current life challenges. Weinrib presented a case illustrating one such loop in the process of a very damaged young man who needed to heal an internalized Terrible Mother image before he could move on in his life.

Kay Bradway's presentation of a case of

a 60-year-old woman dying of cancer was, as always, elegantly beautiful, deep lake water to the flowing river of Estelle Weinrib. For me, the emotional power of this presentation made it the highlight of the conference. In 14 trays, we saw the patient's striving for healing, her grappling with the physical assaults of her illness and its treatment, the working through of unresolved issues from earlier in life as she confronted the shadow, the integration of the material and spiritual worlds, and the early denial and later acceptance of death, all portrayed symbolically in the sand.

Those of us in the frequently chilly Midwest were especially pleased to be able to hear Dr. Chonita Larson of Hawaii, the third of the three U.S. founding members of the ISST (with Bradway and Weinrib) at last; Larson (inexplicably) prefers warmer climates and we have as yet failed to lure her to Minnesota (although she was an early and enthusiastic supporter of the MSTG's efforts to organize). Larson's "Puer-Senex," an exploration of the contrasting archetypes of the eternal youth and the old man, was one of three presentations

...as a tribal ritual it had a lot to offer...

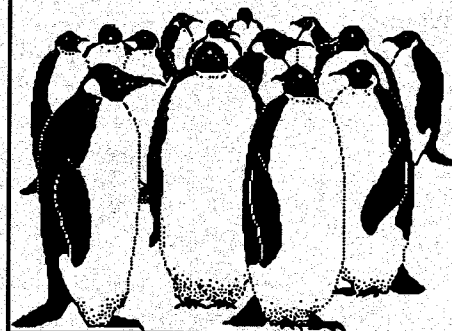
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Potluck! Pool Party! Board Meeting!

Friday, July 10, 5 p.m.
Meeting starts 7 p.m.
Home of Carol Kindschi
and Larry Greenburg
2129 Larpenner Ave.
Falcon Heights, MN
RSVP 642-9417

All MSTG members invited.
Please join us!

Board Meeting, Sept. 3, 7 p.m.
Barb Weller's house



MSTG members and friends at the peak of Mt. Tamalpais, overlooking NE site in San Rafael, California. Standing, left to right: Barb Weller, Carol Kindschi, Mike Falcus of Shropshire, England, Ethel Griggs, Doris Meyer, Joe Meyer, and Chris Welch of Lancashire, England. In front, left to right: Rosemary Hindle of Lancashire, England, Margaret Ryan of Dublin, Ireland, and Jackie Kelley of New Jersey.

School's Out... But Feelings Linger on For St. Stephen's Kids and Therapists

School is out for the summer - and in most schools, kids celebrate. Not so at St. Stephen's Catholic School, the inner-city site of MSTG's first internship project during the 1991-92 school year. Kids and therapists both had a hard time saying goodbye after a moving and meaningful year together. Some children ended their "special time" with pizza parties and slide shows. Some landed in therapists' laps; one dug both arms into the sand tray, whispering "Good-bye, sand!" One child held a candlelight memorial service in the sand tray for a deceased relative; another, who had been falling over her feet at the beginning of the year, joyfully demonstrated her new skipping skills all over the gymnasium. And all the children asked us to come back again.

Due to economic or familial factors, none of these children would have received therapy if it had not been for the project, and according to the school, all of them were in need of it. Seven of the eight children received twenty individual therapy sessions; the eighth left the school after fourteen sessions. Questionnaires completed

Four Internships Available At St. Stephens for 92-93

The MSTG Board has approved renewed its commitment to St. Stephen's School and to individuals in need of supervised sandplay training experience. There will be another opportunity during the 1992-93 school year to provide individual therapy to inner-city children who would not otherwise receive therapy, and in exchange to be part of an intensive supervisory group of no more than four interns with clinical supervisor Barbara Weller. All group hours will count toward those needed for certification by the ISST, either as seminar or supervision time.

If you have completed your individual sandplay work, are licensed to practice psychotherapy in Minnesota, and can be available for about three hours on a weekday afternoon during the school day, you are eligible to apply for one of these positions. You also will have the opportunity to meet with the therapists and supervisor of this year's project and see some of the results of the research. A research component will also be a part of next year's project.

If you are interested, please call Carol Kindschi, project director, at 642-9417 or Barbara Weller, clinical supervisor, at 724-0854. Please let us know of your interest as soon as possible.

by the teachers and children prior to and at the conclusion of the project are not yet tabulated, but reports from the teachers suggest that some significant behavioral changes seen in the classroom may be partly due to the help received through therapy.

The four therapists, Ethel Griggs, Carol Kindschi, Roy Maiden and Joe Meyer, all reported that the project had involved "more hassle than expected," with the need to take time from workday afternoons, get to the school, prepare the room, pick up kids, clean up after kids, and get back to their regular jobs. In addition there were early morning supervision groups when the therapists and supervisor looked at the children's slides and artwork together, and time spent initially setting up the room, and packing it again at the end of the school year. But not one of us would have missed the experience.

Among the benefits of the project for the therapists were listed: the opportunity to study the sandtrays of children sharing a similar (school) environment, using the same space and same materials; the generally supportive attitude of the school staff; the quality of the supervision group experience; the opportunity to work with children from a variety of cultures and economic backgrounds none of us could have seen in any other work environment; and most important, the eagerness of the children themselves to participate in therapy.

During the summer, the therapists and supervisor will meet with Dr. Lawrence Greenberg, research director of the project, to evaluate the data (slides, notes, and questionnaires). It is expected that at least one journal article will come from the experience, and several of the therapists may find usable case material for submission to the International Society for Sandplay Therapy in fulfillment of admission requirements. An informational meeting will be held in August to report in detail on the project to anyone interested, and particularly to those who would like to participate as interns in the next St. Stephen's Project for the 1992-93 school year.

—Barbara Weller

Winter Seminar, '93: MSTG to Return to Maya Ruins, Culture

MSTG will sponsor a return to the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico in January, 1993, for its second winter seminar. Participants will have options from which to choose including spending the first week (tentatively set for January 19 - 26) traveling by van and plane to explore Maya symbolism on-site at the ruins of Chichen Itza, Uxmal, Kabah, Sayil, Labna, and Palenque.

The second week (tentatively set for January 26 - February 2) will be a residential seminar at Akumal, O. Roo, Mexico, where we will continue the exploration of Maya symbols and rituals. Akumal is Maya for "place of the turtles" and is a quiet village on the white sands of the Mexican Caribbean in the heart of Maya culture. Accommodations will be the participant's choice of sharing a house on the quiet waters of Yalcul Lagoon or in an ocean-front condo on nearby Half-moon Bay.

Participants will be able to register for either or both of the weeks. Details and costs are not final at this printing but will be in the range of \$750 for week one and \$550-\$650 for week two. Costs include lodging, some meals, ground transportation (or air fare internal to Mexico for week one), guides, and registration. Airfare to Cancun, Mexico will be up to the individual but the final dates will attempt to match dates for charter flights from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Registration preference will be given to MSTG members. If you have questions or you are interested in registration, please call Carol Kindschi at (612) 642-9417.

Two Introductory Workshops

- "Floor Games: An Introduction to Attachment Therapy." Thursday to Saturday, Sept. 10-12, 1992. Cost \$280.
- "Introduction to Sandplay." Six-hour workshop. Saturday, Sept. 26, 1992. Cost \$60.

Contact Barbara Weller at 724-0854 for more information.

MSTG and MNATA to Co-Sponsor Fall Conference on Inner Child

Plans are currently underway for a conference featuring Lucia Capacchione, Ph.D., A.T.R., on Nov. 6 and 7, 1992, co-sponsored by the MSTG and the Minnesota Art Therapy Association (MNATA). Dr. Capacchione is a well-known art therapist and author whose books include *The Creative Journal*, *The Power of Your Other Hand*, and *Recovery of Your Inner Child*.

A Friday evening lecture open to the general public will be followed Saturday by an all-day experiential workshop for professionals. Participants will be guided in a variety of techniques including drawing and writing with the non-dominant hand, written dialogues, art therapy, journal keeping, voice dialogue and movement expression.

Integrating Approaches: Ruth Daugherty and Agnes Bayley

This past winter and spring we had the opportunity to further our awareness of tasks of healing in the area of attachment. In previous workshops Agnes ("Nessie") Bayley has emphasized the importance of sensory work when dealing with those who have had interrupted development or interfering trauma. We had learned of the importance of touch and were privileged to experience the impor-

tance of touch when Ruth Daugherty, a massage therapist and colleague of Nessie's from Britain, came to the Twin Cities and introduced us to ways to use non-threatening and healing touch. A few weeks following the workshops, psychotherapists and message therapists met to begin networking. Nessie helped us to see the need to continue this work and to work together to integrate the experiences and needs of clients.

Awakening the Senses: Touch and Smell

In her one-day workshops last February and March, Ruth Daugherty drew attention to the senses of smell and touch and their use in the attachment techniques outlined by Agnes "Nessie" Bayley. Ruth and Nessie are colleagues in Britain who have worked together to integrate the sensory components of attachment work. Ruth led small-group workshops for massage therapists, psychotherapists, and for foster parents.

Workshop participants learned of the effects of a variety of essential oils that can be used during massage or as aroma at home or in the office.

We also learned a variety of techniques that offer touch in a non-threatening way through head, hand, and foot massage. Participants learned first by watching Ruth,

second by being coached in using a technique on another with ongoing feedback, and, third and perhaps most importantly, by experiencing massage themselves given by another workshop participant.

It was especially useful to be reminded of the importance of touch when, in our society, there seems to be an ever-increasing concern about problems that can arise in therapy when boundaries are unclear or the relationship is vulnerable to abuses or misinterpretations. Ruth's workshops challenged us to consider the question and appropriate responses to these legitimate concerns while not losing sight of all the necessary components of psychological healing.

— Carol Kindschi

MSTG Miniatures Success in California

MSTG Miniatures was invited to sell at the national conference in May. Because MSTG supporters in California agreed to accept delivery of our orders this became feasible. It was the first time we had ever sold miniatures outside of the Twin Cities.

The space allotted for sales tables was small, and presented a special challenge to both buyers and sellers. Even so, nine MSTG members shared the responsibility and tried to make it a positive experience. The MSTG tries to provide quality miniatures to fellow therapists at reasonable prices. Many at the conference thanked us not only for the fine selection but also for the astonishingly low prices. Several shared that they were especially pleased with the black figures.

Talking with others about their work and how they intended to use various pieces was a real plus. One could easily imagine how supportive some of the pieces could be in therapy.

As we work with the miniatures we have begun to understand and respect the tremendous power they represent. Not only do we need to respect the sandplay collection, but also to consider the symbolism and power of each object. We need to understand how the senses can be enhanced or overwhelmed even by the collection of items displayed for sale. We hope those who purchased from MSTG will learn of the unique qualities their pieces possess, and hope they will fill a special spot in their sandplay collections.

—Doris and Joe Meyer

Return to Wilder Forest...

A group of therapists returned to the free and protected space of Wilder Forest in late March to learn and experience more about "Floor Games" with Agnes (Nessie) Bayley from England. This time the topic was how to help clients access feelings and how to help parents of children with attachment disorders.

After introductions, the workshop opened with Pat Eggleston, a psychologist from Oak Park, Ill., presenting a case of a severely abused child. The client's drawings and Pat's description of the therapy process provided a moving example of how the Floor Games process leads to healing.

In the first "Nessie" workshop we learned about Floor Games by doing the activities the client would be doing. This time we made personal shields from natural materials of the woods or other materials brought individually. Wonderful collages and lively sculptures emerged as we brought our protective elements into physical form. Using rocks and feathers we also made a river of feelings, going back to our beginning, or "source," and journeying to the

present. For me now, as two years ago, the process of making these items took on a life of its own and the creative time passed quickly as I flowed through my reflections.

A main focus on this workshop was a presentation of the work being done with parents at Chance for Children in England. Nessie talked about teaching parents about the process of attachment and the necessity of providing a free and protected space for parents so they can experience Floor Games techniques.

As the workshop drew to a close, Nessie invited us to consider the importance of "place" in facilitating healing and healthy development. She listened carefully and respectfully as we each shared the place or places in which we have met our emerging Self. For many, the place had been the family burial ground in which ancestry and the sacredness of one's life had been experienced.

When some of us began to feel daunted by the woundedness of the many families we serve, Nessie directed us to choose just one family and begin to apply the reparative techniques to them. Many of us left feeling

more clear about our own journeys and we could resume the work of accompanying others on theirs.

—Mary Ellen Einspahr



Nat'l Conference (continued from page 1)

on the puer-senex conflict, clearly a rising area of interest for sandplay therapists. Dr. Larson used a case presentation to illustrate how sandplay enabled a 36 year-old man to escape the trap of his relentless striving for youth, come down to earth at least, and form his first stable relationship with a woman.

Dr. Martin Kalff, ISST founder Dora Kalff's son and a notable sandplay therapist in his own right, presented "The Development of Love." Using source material as diverse as the sandplay processes of two Swiss girls and Buddhist creation stories, Kalff presented his explication of food and feeding images as representing not only nurturance, but also the individual's first connection with the material world.

In "Sandplay and Relation," Dr. Hayao Kawai of Japan discussed the importance of the story that connects the sandplay images, and how the story helps to make the relationship between the ego and the unconscious. The creation of the story is part of the healing, Kawai maintains, but cautioned

that the story must contain unknown elements, must surprise the client and the therapist, or the story is mere explanation, not creation.

In addition to these five major presentations, conference participants could choose three from among 20 breakout sessions, offering a chance to experience the work and ideas of sandplay therapists from the U.S., Canada, Japan, and Europe, including the MSTG's own Barbara Weller, whose "Wildman in Captivity" was very well received. We look forward to having Barbara present this material locally in the future.

Large gatherings such as these, although overwhelming at times, have a special power to connect individuals of similar mind and diverse talents; in addition to the tangible rewards of education, many of the conference participants came away with renewed energy to plunge into the world of symbols and psychotherapy.

— Regina Driscoll

Kay Bradway's presentation... was, as always, elegantly beautiful, deep lake water to the flowing river of Estelle Weinrib.

Joe Meyer Becomes New MSTG President



The MSTG installed Joe Meyer as its new president at the annual meeting in April. Regina Driscoll, Barbara Weller and Lynn Thompson were elected to three-year terms, and Kate Davis Rogers

was elected to finish out the remaining two of three years for Mary-Lynn Harrison, who resigned from the board. Miniatures were sold, refreshments offered, and attendees heard reports of all aspects of the MSTG over the past year, and discussed hopes and ideas for the future.

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 Kalff of Switzerland. 1992-93 board members: Joe Meyer, President; Regina Driscoll, Mary Ellen Einspahr, Ethel Griggs, Carol Kindschi, Lynn Thompson, Alice Wagstaff, and Barbara Weller. *Sandspiel* Editor: Mary-Lynn Harrison. Editing, Regina Driscoll. Typeset and Design: Clay Schotzko.