

# SANDSPIEL

Newsletter of the Minnesota Sandplay Therapy Group

Volume V, Number 1

July 1993

## Bradway Seminars Stimulate Heart and Mind

MSTG was graced with the presence of Kay Bradway who came for a weekend (April 23 and 24) of presentations, discussions, and study. We reviewed with her two of her works, "Sandplay in Preparing to Die" and "Water and Fire and Co-transference."

Kay, for those who do not know her, is a founding member of the Sandplay Therapists of America, the International Society for Sandplay Therapy and, as a Jungian analyst, of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. She spent some of her growing years in Minnesota and still has roots here; we believe that MSTG, when it is at its best, reflects her beneficent influence as the group grows in size, experience and wisdom. Our "co-transference" is alive and well.

For first-timers, participating in the slide and audio programs and the group discussions were moving and challenging experiences. For those of us who were privileged to be hearing the cases a second time, the presentations were equally, if not more, powerful. Her willingness and eagerness to hear our responses and reactions, stimulate discussion and continue her own learning enabled us to be open to such possibilities in working with

others. Her warm yet penetrating teaching style as well as who she is touched us as much as the content of the presentations.

"Sandplay in Preparing to Die" was a poignant telling of a sandplay process of a sixty year old woman with terminal lung cancer. She chose sandplay as a way to... "get things together and prepare for death." She made 14 sandtrays in her 21 sessions

that enabled her to build a connection between the known parts of her life and the unknown in death. In the process of doing so, she healed wounded relationships in her life; she faced her shadow, death as the ultimate unknown, and experienced hope and anger; she experienced immortality through the birth of her first grandchild,

and she connected life and death into one, without fear. This was accomplished with very few spoken words, and yet the process was communicated clearly, concisely and powerfully through her work in the sand. For a more detailed summary and pictures of this work, one can refer to Kay's 1992 article in the *Journal of SandPlay Therapy*, 2 (1), 13-37. However, reading the article and being able to watch the process unfold while

discussing it with Kay are two very different experiences.

In her second presentation, "Water and Fire and Co-transference," Kay provided a link between the classical (Freudian) use of the concepts of transference and countertransference with that by Dora Kalff. Traditionally, "transference" is used to indicate the repetition or transference of previously experienced feelings (positive and negative) onto the therapist. In contrast, Dora Kalff used the term to indicate the presence of a positive relationship between client and therapist with little regard to predeterminants or the negative aspects of that relationship.

"Co-transference" is Kay's preferred term, indicating a "feeling with" instead of "feeling against" between client and therapist. Co-transference or "interfeelings," if you will, takes place simultaneously and is a shared process, in contrast to the separation implied by the terms transference and countertransference. All of these terms acknowledge both past and present relationships, conscious and unconscious, positive and negative. As a result, the client-therapist relationship is structured in a "protected" fashion. Each projects and each responds at times entirely unconsciously in a complex, valuable mix.

Kay illustrated this in her presentation of slides from a process of a divorced woman in her late forties. This woman completed a process with

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## Please Note

This is the first newsletter of 1993. This longer issue combines news from the beginning of the year with announcements for next fall.



Kay Bradway

# Return to the Maya 1993: Week One

In January, seven pilgrims from MSTG circle the Yucatan Peninsula in a quest for greater understanding and appreciation of ancient civilizations, symbols, and rituals. The surroundings, including the flora, the fauna, and the people currently living in the region help give a sense of connection between Self and the cosmos. The past and present become one. The remnants of Maya cities are like gigantic sand trays disclosing the collective unconscious of human kind dating back thousands of years.

The "sandplay process" begins with the Late Classic Maya and goes back thousands of years to Olmec culture and then gradually back through classical Maya civilizations to the present. Each "tray" provides glimpses into the history of the creators and revelations of the collective unconscious through a vast array of archetypal images.

One can hardly do justice to the process revealed by these ruins in one

trip and a synopsis of the experience diminishes it further. Can one really describe in a few words fifteen sand trays each involving hundreds of symbols? How can the numinous encounters and the awe of the seven journeyers be recounted here? Trite but true: "you really had to be there."

The snake figures prominently in the depictions and rituals of the Maya. Burning sacrificial blood with parchment is said to send a sky serpent heavenward. At each equinox a serpent descends the pyramid of Culcucan as the play of light and shadows create the illusion of a snake on the north staircase. At the base of the stairs are huge stone heads of snakes to complete the impression of the descending serpent. The serpent represents many facets of life and the universe and unites the heavens, the earth, and the infraworld.

Rattlesnake motifs decorate the buildings throughout the city of Uxmal. Chac is prominent here with his serpent

nose, creating an elephant-like appearance. While each site offers pyramids to climb, the Magician's Temple offers the steepest and highest we encounter. Some of the group brave the challenge of this pyramid. Conquering this height reminds this writer of the tale of Sisiutl, the two headed sea serpent described by Anne Cameron in *Daughters of the Copper Woman*: "When you see Sisiutl the terrifying, though you be frightened, stand firm. There is no shame in being frightened, only a fool would not be afraid of Sisiutl the horror. Stand firm.... Who sees the other half of Self sees Truth." The climb and descent afford an opportunity to face Sisiutl. Double-headed serpents show themselves throughout the journey to the Maya in reliefs, paintings, masks and sculpture.

Our journey is sometime fostered by guides who share their perspectives of the history and symbolism of the Maya. As we venture into the site of the most distant past, no official guides are available. At Parque La Venta we are on our own to ponder the meanings of sculptures, mosaics, and reliefs. Our own energies unite with the piece of the world we share with the ancients.

Each of us can recount our magical moments: the sound of an owl, the sight of the magnificent frigate bird, the fragrances of the jungle, the taste of native fruits, the feel of waters of Misol Ha. This traveler was drawn to the egrets and herons that accompanied our circle drive. Trees blossomed with egrets and night herons. The spotlight from our car would stir the egrets from their roosts; the blooming trees exploded as the white herons flew like giant dandelion seeds wafting through the air when blown by a puff of wind.

Wood storks caught our attention one morning and led us to a marshy area populated with various egrets and herons. One egret had gray on its wings — a unique feature none of us had seen before on a live egret. However, this writer had just fashioned a stained glass piece in which there is an egret with grayish wings: synchronicity.

As the first week's exploration ended, this writer left for Minnesota while others remained and new participants joined the gathering for a second phase of the Return to the Maya. Now I reflect and wait to compare notes with my fellow "archeologists of the Self."

— Steven Olmsted



## Return to the Maya: Week Two

The second week of the 1993 Return to the Maya seminar was designed as a residential week to complement the previous week's extensive travel to the many old ruins. The site was again Akumal, "The Place of the Turtle" in Maya, where the first MSTG Mexico seminar met two years ago. That trip held extraordinary magic for its participants; remarkably, much of that magic unfolded again this year.

During the week of January 26 to February 2, there were 10 participants: five who had also been a part of the first week's adventures, and five enthusiastic newcomers. The MSTG rented a house called Smile of the Dolphin, a beautiful three-story whitewashed house (well-known in Akumal for its rather Freudian towers) on the lagoon Yal-ku. Hilario Hiler, who had been our interpreter and guide during the 1991 trip, was again able to join us. The Smile of the Dolphin served as sleeping quarters for several, temporary library housing the books and articles everyone brought to share, site for our seminars, communal kitchen, and informal meeting spot. With Yal-ku to one side of us, the Caribbean on another, the mangrove swamp on yet another, the house was also an extraordinary nature center; one could birdwatch from the balconies and stargaze from the roof, as well as swim off the back yard.

The week included several evening

presentations by seminar participants on subjects such as a history of the Maya; copal, the Maya incense, and other aromatic substances; the symbol of the World Tree, including the *ceiba* or *yaxche*, the sacred tree of the Maya; and caves and the little people of the Maya, called the *aluxe*.

Days were reserved for visiting a wealth of special places with Hilario as guide. We rose one remarkably chilly predawn morning early in the week to go to Tulum, the seaside postclassic site some 15 miles south of Akumal; there, Hilario spoke the Maya prayer to the morning and beat his drum, a slow, hypnotic, sonorous greeting of the day. A walk along the coast took the group then to see a small stone house, reputed to be the house of an *alux*. By then, it was nearly eight a.m., and we were ready to tour the Tulum ruins. Another day included a visit to a remarkably diverse array of *cenotes*, water-filled sinkholes which provide some of the best swimming and diving around; the Well of Sacrifice at Chichen Itza is a murky dark green, in keeping with its grim history, but the *cenotes* in the Tulum area are crystalline jewels, each with its own personality. One, called the Temple of Doom because of its 15-foot drop down to the water surface, was the site of one of our most memorable images: that of Doris Meyer swinging out over the *cenote* on a rope and dropping into the water, Tarzan's

Jane come to life. Unfortunately, the jungle light was too dim for a really spectacular photo (we thought her grandchildren would have enjoyed it).

Another long day took the group to the Maya church in Tulum, where a prayer was offered for an absent friend's recovery from illness; to several Maya villages between Tulum and Coba, including one where Misha Martin, a massage and aromatherapist, had a massage from a Maya woman; and an all-too-short visit to the ruins at Coba. There were other experiences as well, too numerous to catalog here.

I asked the members of the group at the end of the week if they could say what had stood out especially for each; they offered these impressions:

Seeing the intersection of the ancient and modern Maya; a quantum leap in understanding them; most especially, sharing it with Doris; the owls that appeared over and over (Joe Meyer);

Having Hilario speak the prayers in Mayan; the smell of the copal burning at Tulum at sunrise; going into the water and becoming part of that world; the blue-green color of the water (Kate Davis Rogers);

The gift of having such knowledgeable guides as Bob (Green), Carol, Larry and Hilario; symbols that appeared in my journal and drawings before the trip, including a blue-feathered bird like a quetzal and a tree goddess, later appeared here (Lynn Thompson);

Two ineffably spiritual moments, the church and the cave; when the group made a donation to the man keeping the Cross, I, who handed him the gift, was the recipient of his blessing (Carol Kindschi);

Everything, but most especially the sunrise, the drumming, the music; the waiting there on the shore, the dance of empowerment (Grace Hong);

The ancient civilization wrapped in Mother Nature, the trees and vines growing out of the buildings, the sites of sacrifice; the realization that I am one of Nature's children; the birds and animals that greeted us everywhere; the beautiful orchestration of the trip by Larry and Carol (Doris Meyer);



Hilario Hiler discusses local medicinal and cooking herbs with Bob Green. Doris Meyer and Kate Davis Rogers are behind them.

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## Week Two (Continued from page 3)

The trip in 1991 was a trip of discovery, encountering things for the first time; this was a reverberation, a deepening, each day, each week building on the one before; even things seen before were seen in a new and richer way (Larry Greenberg);

The church at Tulum (Misha Martin).

For me, what I remember best from this second week was the insight I gained into the power that the blue-green color has always held for me: I learned that the world tree, a special symbol for me, is called the *yaxche*, or "blue-green tree" in Mayan. For the

Maya, the four cardinal points are each associated with a color (red, yellow, black, and white), but there are two additional directions in the cosmos, up and down: the sky, which is blue, and the earth, which is green. Where they meet in the tree is blue-green, and is of course the Center. Thus, the color, and the tree, represent wholeness, totality, the Self; the color itself is a numinous experience. Each time, this seems to be the quintessence of these trips to the Maya; each of us, somehow, becomes a little more integrated, and finds our way to our Self.

—Regina Driscoll



Week one's seven travelers. Back row, left to right: Steve Olmsted, Chris Holder, Joe Meyer, Doris Meyer, Regina Driscoll. Front row: Larry Greenberg, Carol Kindschi.

## Supervision Opportunities Expanded for 1993-94

The core curriculum for sandplay therapy training is expanded this year with opportunities presented by visits from Lucia Chambers and Lauren Cunningham, ISST members from California. Each will come at regular intervals throughout 1993 to provide small group training and supervision and individual supervision. Their availability makes it possible for MSTG members who have completed a personal sandplay process, to get ISST supervision (in addition to that available from Barbara Weller) without traveling out of the state.

Those interested in participation in supervision should contact Barbara Weller at (612) 724-0854 to arrange a time and place for individual and/or group supervision. Cost is determined by an hourly rate of \$80 plus a share of air fare expenses divided by the number of hours and participants in any given weekend.

The rest of the 1993 schedule is as follows:

Lauren Cunningham:

August 5-7 1993

February or March, 1994

Lucia Chambers:

October 7-9, 1993

January, 1994 (tentative)

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## In-Touch Network Continues

In April, 1990, the first "Floor Games" workshop with Agnes "Nessie" Bayley was held at Wilder Forest, introducing the series of attachment exercises used in treating children and adults with severe separation issues in Britain. At that time, Nessie asked that the material never be taught unless the trainers made a commitment to form an ongoing network which would allow for consultation. Since then, sixty-two therapists have attended the initial training series and are now on the "In Touch Again" mailing list. With a few longer intervals, we try to meet on a quarterly basis, and provide a forum to

share difficult cases, successes, problems, and new approaches, always using the experiential "we try it on us first" method of learning.

This past year we combined the group of therapists and massage therapists (who were involved primarily in Ruth Daugherty's therapeutic touch workshops in February, 1992). The name of our group was changed from "Floor Games," which comprises only one of the series of attachment exercises, to "In Touch Again," suggesting the focus of re-establishing connection with oneself and with others.

The next "In Touch Again"

meeting will be Friday, October 1, 9:00-12:00 noon at United Hospital, St. Paul in one of the conference rooms near the cafeteria. In addition to the regular exchange of information and clinical concerns, members who are massage therapists will share with the group theories behind the healing components of touch.

The next "In Touch Again" 3 1/2 day training session will be held in Fall 1993. (Date to be announced). Please contact Carol Kindschi at 642-9104, Joe Meyer at 220-6726 or Barbara Weller at 724-0854 for further information as it becomes available.

# Saying Goodbye to St. Stephen's School

Words are hard to come by to describe the experience that I and three other therapists had this past year in providing sandplay to 10 children at the St. Stephen's School.

Not only did the children have difficult home situations, but they also had to deal with the closing of their very special school. They were losing their refuge from the pervasive chaos in their lives. One sobbing child told me, "But this is where I was born."

I was reminded of "The Last Lesson," a story that I had read as a child. The students have an air of

urgency to learn as much as they can before they lose their teacher who must leave. So it was with our students who were experiencing a significant loss of friends, teachers and the unique program that was St Stephens.

These children were fighting against many odds to achieve wholeness, and we were privileged to share the spiritual journey with them.

As one child poured sand into a medicine bottle, I realized how important her sandplay process had been for her and felt honored to provide the time and space for healing

to occur.

Thanks also goes for the support of the others who worked on this project with me: Carol Tellet, Cil Braun, and Grace Hong. Thanks go to Carol Kindschi and Jo Ellen Tucker who coordinated the program. Special thanks to Barbara Weller who gave us supervision, direction and nurturance as we worked through our clinical issues, technical difficulties, etc.

It has been a privilege to be a part of this project.

—Kate Davis-Rogers

## MSTG Elects New Board Members

The annual Members' Meeting was held in conjunction with the fifth birthday party on January 9th at the home of Joe and Doris Meyer. Reports from the various committees show us to be a vigorous and independent five year old!

Larry Greenberg, Carol Kindschi, and Alice Wagstaff were elected to serve on the Board for three-year terms. On February 16, the Board elected Carol Kindschi, President-elect, Regina Driscoll, Secretary and Ethel Griggs, Treasurer. They join President Joe Meyer as the officers for this year.

*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. 1993-94 board members: Joe Meyer, President; Regina Driscoll, Ethel Griggs, Carol Kindschi, Lawrence Greenberg, Lynn Thompson, Alice Wagstaff, and Barbara Weller. Sandspiel Co-Editors: Mary-Lynn Harrison and Carol Kindschi. Editing, Regina Driscoll. Typeset and Design: Clay Schotzko.

## Recovery of Your Inner Child

*A workshop by Lucia Capacchione, Ph.D., ATR November 6 and 7, 1992.*

I bought Lucia's book, "The Creative Journal" in 1982. It was one of the few art therapy books on the market. I used many ideas from it in my work as art therapist on the psychiatric floor at St. Joseph's Hospital.

This summer I learned of Lucia's forthcoming fall workshop and make definite plans to attend. In the interim I bought several of her other books, including "Recovering of Your Inner Child", which was the recommended reading for the workshop.

On Friday evening Lucia's presentation gave us a full evening of solid information about the way her system utilizes the dominant and non-dominant hand. She explained the need to have certain internal allies present to facilitate an orderly progression of the healing process. For example, having the protective and nurturing inner parent in place before moving into extensive work with the inner brat. On Saturday we began by making friends with our inner child and getting her/him to trust us. We drew our inner child with our non-dominant hand and asked questions with our dominant. The written dialogue moved back and forth between the two hands.

I recall one person on Friday evening asking how we know the inner child is real. Lucia's response pointed out that the critical parent in us promotes this kind of questioning in an attempt to break creativity and trust by denying the child any kind of expression. Our effort needs to exercise trust and keep up the dialogue as often as we can. Lucia's response helped me to accept the validity of the drawing by my inner child and to continue my dialogues.

**In addition to establishing the nurturing and protective parent to make it safe for the inner brat to speak out, we also needed to exercise our overseer/director to decide what archetype to bring forward and to observe, without being judgmental, which of the subpersonalities needs to speak.**

**One exercise, the one in which the inner brat took on the critical parent, provided some of us the opportunity to dramatize the exchange out loud before the whole group. Not only was the interaction spirited and on target, but it demonstrated the value of humor in getting straight to the point. I hadn't realized what good actors my AT colleagues were, nor had I seen so clearly the relationship between subpersonality resources and improv theater.**

It was a great help to my art therapy work to get clarity on the use of dominant/non-dominant hand work. I also found it helpful to learn the theoretical reasoning behind the place of archetypes and their roles in the process of therapy practice. The workshop served to demonstrate how the various parts of the system fit together to create a unifies approach.

—Lois Gelbmann, ATR

*(Reprinted with permission from Drawing Together, November 1992 issue of the newsletter of Minnesota Art Therapist Association.)*

## Italian Sandplay Therapist to Speak

Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 11. That day Dr. Andreina Navone, a sandplay therapist from Italy and a member of the International Society for Sandplay Therapy, will be in the Twin Cities to present two lectures and supervision. Dr. Navone is rarely available to present in the United States and we count ourselves very lucky to have her.

The working title for the lecture is "Development Through Regression"; Dr. Navone will address a general professional audience on issues surrounding the preverbal level of development in psychotherapy and sandplay. She will discuss the protective space, the role of the therapist, the initiation of the regression process in order to reach the Self, and the restructuring of the new ego. A seminar for more advanced sandplay therapists will go into these issues in more detail, addressing the risks of regression and technical aspects of the sandplay therapy.

There will be a few hours available for individual or small group supervision. Contact Barbara Weller at 724-0854 if you are interested in supervision. Watch for your brochures this summer.

### Board Meetings

Wednesday, July 14

Friday, August 6\*

Wednesday, September 1

All meetings take place at 7 p.m. at the home of Barbara Weller except where noted.

\*Lots of pool and pot luck at 5 p.m. at Larry Greenberg and Carol Kindschi's home and very little business.

## Bradway (Continued from page 1)

Kay while in "dual" therapies, carefully structured to allow for sandplay while also continuing work in a Jungian analysis with a different analyst. Kay walked us through the relationships (client and analyst, client and sandplay therapist) as they showed up in the sandtray pictures. Through the process, water shows initially as a source of nourishment and later as a source of energy. Fire presents initially as the generative fire of consciousness and later as the enabling fire of anger.

Kay has generously agreed to let MSTG keep a copy of these presentations in our archives for use in future formal studies. As we learned from this special time with Kay, returning to see these cases again expands our knowledge and appreciation of the process and of the wisdom she so graciously shares. We thank her.

-Carol Kindschi.