

**Understanding Sandplay Therapy from a
Contemporary Philosophical Perspective:
Between East and West**

by

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the therapeutic practice of Sandplay in order to elaborate its theoretical underpinnings and provide a contemporary perspective. The research is based on my observation that an intrapsychic model of understanding Sandplay therapy is limited in its accounting for the emergent contextual and relational dynamics at work in the patient's and therapist's experience of the Sandplay process and each other.

Sandplay is dynamic and experiential. An intrapsychic understanding alone cannot adequately encompass the psychological reach of play which, by its nature, is human and relationally and contextually complex. Because Sandplay is a nonverbal therapy with play as its medium of expression, a philosophical understanding of play is a key element in this critique.

Sandplay therapy as envisioned by Dora Kalff is based in classical and developmental Jungian theory in which the process of individuation is viewed as a dynamic intrapsychic process. The intrapsychic model is built on a Cartesian philosophical tradition emphasizing separateness between inner and outer, subject and object, self and world, spirit and body, and between psychological phenomena as contained structures that communicate with each other from separate vantage points.

Continental phenomenological-hermeneutics, in contrast to the Cartesian "isolated mind" understanding of experience, is a philosophy that accounts for the always here-and-now historical socio-cultural contexts in which a person's experience is embedded. Hermeneutics is concerned with how we make meaning of experience in the contexts of our lives and relationships. In recognizing that meaning is socially constructed and subject to change, hermeneutics allows that new meaning is always possible.

The conceptual anchor is a clinical Sandplay case described phenomenologically and interpreted: first from the Kalffian-Jungian perspective, second from the perspective of Asian philosophical ideas (which Kalff integrated and I build upon) and third from the perspective of Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutical philosophy of play. Each illustrative analysis of the case is a critique of its limits and the breadth of understanding it offers. In conclusion, I suggest the possibility for an integration of aspects of the three perspectives and make an initial attempt at doing so as I try to do justice to understanding Sandplay as experience.

Keywords: Sandplay therapy; Dora Kalff; C.G. Jung; hermeneutics; Daoism; expressive therapy

*To my husband, Timothy Porteous,
whose enduring support I have greatly appreciated.*

*To my patient, who generously gave me permission
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List of Acronyms

CAST	Canadian Association for Sandplay Therapy
ISST	International Society for Sandplay Therapy
STA	Sandplay Therapists of America

Introduction

My aim in this dissertation is to critically examine the theoretical and philosophical framework of Sandplay therapy. I will suggest that Sandplay therapy was developed within an intrapsychic framework and as such is focused primarily on the individual mind. In an intrapsychic understanding, experience is objectified and detached from its source, the person who experiences. In contrast to this traditional approach, I will maintain that Sandplay is an experiential therapy and that the patient's therapeutic process is emergent and always embedded in social and cultural contexts.

I will contrast the Jungian intrapsychic view with Daoist and hermeneutic perspectives and proceed by way of three separate interpretations of a clinical Sandplay case. I will discuss these approaches in terms of their contributions to understanding the patient's experience as it is represented in her Sandplay pictures. I will suggest that: (a) the Jungian framework, even though intrapsychic in theory, contributes a symbolic point of view that places the patient's experience in larger contexts that when realized can significantly effect change; (b) a Daoist interpretation of opposites as complementary dualities situates the patient in Nature and mutually influencing processes of change; (c) a Gadamerian hermeneutic interpretation of play as a metaphor for how we experience anything that is meaningful (Porter & Robinson, 2011) challenges the idea that experience may be objectified; it attends to the historical pre-understandings and prejudices that an interpretation must take into account. I will conclude by suggesting a possible integration of Jungian, Daoist and hermeneutic ways of understanding Sandplay in my final discussion.

Sandplay is an expressive therapeutic modality in which the patient is given the means to express herself both nonverbally and verbally, as in music therapy, or art therapy. In Sandplay the media are sand, water and figures. The patient, who is of any age, plays at a waterproofed sandtray partially filled with sand. The sandtray's specific dimensions (19.5" x 28.5" x 3" deep) allow the patient to view and focus on the entire

scene at once. The patient's play is undirected by the therapist who witnesses the play unobtrusively from close by. Two sandtrays, one containing dry sand and the other damp sand, are available. The interiors of the boxes are painted blue, to represent the sky or water. The patient may choose and place in the sand figures from a collection representing, as completely as possible, a cross-section of all inanimate and animate beings¹ (Kalff, 1991). The patient may simply shape the sand, and may or may not use water. Playing with these materials, the patient is free to create and imagine, and in a state of absorption and reverie² embarks on the self-directed therapeutic process.

Sandplay was developed by Swiss Jungian analyst Dora Kalff (1904-1990) in the mid-20th Century. Kalff integrated three perspectives in her development of Sandplay: the sandtray method of child psychiatrist Margaret Lowenfeld (1890-1973), Jungian analytical psychology, and Asian ideas supporting her understanding of the Jungian theory of individuation as a spiritual, embodied process. The theoretical home for Sandplay was Jung's intrapsychic "depth" psychology, a way of thinking about psychological processes in terms of hierarchically arranged dynamic structures, such as ego, self, shadow, located inside the conscious and unconscious mind. These conceptualizations and others in the Jungian/Kalffian framework rested on assumptions characteristic of the dominant Cartesian philosophical perspective, by which I refer to the notion of the isolated individual mind that can be understood separately from its social and cultural contexts. Consciousness and the unconscious and their components are represented as though existing as structures located at different levels of the psyche. These structures theoretically have no apparent relationship with other individual psyches or with any aspect of the person's environment. Thus, a focus on the patient's internal experiences according to an intrapsychic model limits understanding the patient's world. The patient's experience of their world is fluid in that it continuously

¹ The collection includes trees, plants, stones, marbles, mosaics, wild and domesticated animals, human figures (adults and children of many nationalities and races in various walks of life: farmers, workers, soldiers, knights, Eskimos, Africans, Asians, etc.) fantasy figures, religious figures from diverse cultural spheres, houses, fountains, bridges, ships, vehicles (Hegeman, 1992; Kalff, 1991; Weinrib, 2004).

² In the *Forward* to Erich Neumann's *The Child*, Louis L. Stewart describes Neumann's depiction of the "field of psychic energy" shared by mother and child as Gaston Bachelard's "poetic reverie". Neumann placed great importance on the activity of creative fantasy, as did Jung, for the psychological well-being of children and adults of all cultures.

undergoes change through mutual influences and is embedded in historical social and cultural contexts. These aspects of the patient's experience are visually present in the sandpictures but I suggest that an intrapsychic theoretical framework does not offer ways for understanding it in these ways.

Kalff was first and foremost a practitioner and teacher. She pursued her own educational, artistic, and spiritual interests, which was a traditional choice for women of her era and privileged social class (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). She travelled widely, disseminating the theory and practice of Sandplay in lectures, workshops and seminars in Europe and far afield, in the United States and Japan. Kalff was exceptionally sensitive to the importance of the therapist's relationship with the patient in cultivating the trust and confidence necessary for self-expression. She did not extend this understanding to other aspects of Sandplay that are relational, contextual and complementary processes.

My analysis will begin by turning to the source of Sandplay. I will elaborate Dora Kalff's approach to working with patients, understanding sandpictures and the Sandplay process itself. I will refer chiefly to Kalff's work and to its roots in Margaret Lowenfeld's *World Technique*, the individuation process of Jungian analytical psychology, Erich Neumann's developmental theory, and the influences of Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan traditions. The case example of a Sandplay process in Chapter 2 illustrates how the patient can change through play how she experiences herself in the world. Kalff's vision for Sandplay was that the therapist must create a "free and protected space," an environment where there is psychological freedom for self-expression. In this context, Kalff believed, the patient's creative capacity for change is activated, protected, and allowed to grow in the presence of the therapist. By keeping close to Kalff's original ideas I have acknowledged the fundamentally relational spirit of Sandplay and the play process that is at its core.

In Chapter 1, I will describe the theoretical and philosophical origins of Kalffian Sandplay, and the main trends in how Sandplay is being discussed and applied internationally. In Chapter 2 I document the Sandplay process of a young woman I worked with several years ago and who has provided her express permission to cite our work together in this dissertation. My account of our work illustrates how the process

evolves in the Sandplay room, and how the patient responds to the therapist's intentionally created freedom and protection in the room. I suggest that the photographs of the sandpictures, their descriptions, the patient's narratives on their meaning, all bring the patient's experience to life.

In Chapter 3, I provide an interpretation of the therapeutic process that is consistent with a Kalfian/Jungian understanding. This interpretation illustrates the intrapsychic emphasis of the Kalfian/Jungian approach. It also shows the experiential and symbolic nature of the interpretation, which is full of meaning but is limited in its contextual and relational considerations. I suggest that the intrapsychic perspective may be widened to include both the experiential, symbolic approach and the contextual and relational aspects of the patient's experience of being in the world. All of these elements constitute the process of change within the therapeutic relationship,

Chapter 4 introduces the Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan ideas that Dora Kalff introduced, but did not write about in a comprehensive way. The correspondences she made and those I have discovered reveal the degree to which Kalff's thinking took place beyond an isolated mind framework. Kalff's interest in these Asian traditions and her integration of them served as a kind of bridge between the individualistic components of her theoretical orientation and the Daoist and hermeneutical perspectives that I discuss in Chapters 4 and 5. Kalff learned about the Asian traditions in lectures, seminars, conferences, and discussions with influential individuals. Her familiarity with symbols from Asian myth is scattered throughout her case analyses and presentations; her understanding of the body/mind/spirit relationship, a direct result of her visits to Japan and Tibet, was presented in a lecture and became an important component of her interpretations of her patients' sandpictures; her commitment to meditation and breathing practices enabled her to travel and keep to a demanding teaching schedule (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994).

Kalff's perspectives on Asian philosophies drew on limited sources. I expand her original views through my own research on Daoist *yin-yang* thought and through an extended interview with her son, Dr. Martin Kalff. I will discuss the significance of *yin-yang* thought for understanding the patient's change process in the context of Nature, natural processes, and the mutual influencing between complementary dualities. I will

use these perspectives to elaborate the Kalfian interpretation of the case that I presented in Chapter 3.

The hermeneutical exploration of play in Chapter 5 focuses on the contextual aspects of the experience of play. Gadamer developed his analysis of play in relation to the experience of art. His approach was directly opposed to the separation of subject and object which is characteristic of an intrapsychic understanding of psychological processes. A sandpicture is not a work of art, but it is highly meaningful to the patient, who has made choices to create it, fully participates in creating it and is invested in how it unfolds. In applying Gadamer's analysis of play in Sandplay, I will develop a hermeneutic approach to understanding the patient's experience as it is represented in the sand. I will discuss the relationship between patient and sandpicture as a fusion from which something new emerges, rather than as two separate entities, subject and object. I suggest that the sandpicture, like the work of art, provides a way of encountering our prejudices and assumptions. I also discuss the Sandplay pictures from a hermeneutic perspective, pointing to the patient's and the therapist's mutual embeddedness in social and cultural contexts.

Some readers may nevertheless wonder why the philosophy of Sandplay therapy matters. What purpose does such an analysis serve? Why not leave Sandplay to develop and change, as all psychotherapies inevitably do? The premise of this study is that by articulating the philosophical assumptions inherent in the theoretical underpinnings of therapeutic practice, we can better understand and critique those assumptions that guide our work, and can change them if need be. As an example, in writing this dissertation and coming to an understanding of the philosophical assumptions underlying Sandplay I have realized why it is a challenge to teach students how to interpret sandpictures. It is clear to me now that the intrapsychic frame of reference is mainly incompatible with the nature of experience and is confusing to the student trying to make the connections between theory and the manifestations of experience in the sandtray. I also believe that if the therapist's task to provide a "free and protected space" as Kalf (2003, p. 17) defined it, then fostering an awareness of our own embeddedness, and our own values and assumptions, is a prerequisite for creating a trusting therapeutic relationship and enhancing the possibilities for meaningful change.

Chapter 1.

Theoretical and Philosophical Origins of Kalffian Sandplay: Western Roots and Asian Influences

1.1. Introduction

Following on my description of elements of Sandplay in my Introduction, this chapter places Sandplay in a historical context. I will trace theoretical developments, individual contributions and situations that shed light on how Dora Kalff came to develop Sandplay and how Jungian theory became the theoretical focus. The historical background also shows that an inquiry has never been made into the philosophical underpinnings of Sandplay.

The seed of Sandplay's earliest history lies in the post-World War 1 child study movement in the United Kingdom, Europe and America, when governments made children's physical and psychological health a priority (Urwin, 1991). Working in this context were individuals who recognized the importance of play in psychological healing and as a form of communication. Their initiatives in the use of play with figures, and later on adding sand and water, laid much of the groundwork for the development of Sandplay in Switzerland.

I will begin by building my introduction to Dora Kalff, the psychotherapist who developed Sandplay and in her lifetime built its credibility in Europe, America and Japan as an effective therapy for children and adults of diverse cultural backgrounds. I will trace events of her early life; interests that would influence her future work; and the role played by individuals and ideas that coalesced into her unique approach to therapeutic play. I will conclude with a description of Sandplay's international roots and a review of contemporary Sandplay training and trends in practice that have developed since Dora Kalff. Placing Sandplay within a historical framework will serve to contextualize and

introduce the subject of the next chapter, a phenomenological description of Sandplay process.

1.2. Dora Kalff: Background

Dora Kalff (1904-1990) was a Swiss child and adolescent psychotherapist. The third of four children, Kalff suffered as a child from respiratory illnesses. These bouts limited her physical activity, but they also allowed her the time to develop her creative imagination and spirituality (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). In her early schooling at the Girls' School of Fetan, a boarding school in the Alps, Kalff's Greek teacher encouraged her to study Sanskrit and, later on, basic Chinese. Her son Martin Kalff (2003) has described this period as nurturing the beginning of her life-long interest in Eastern philosophy. After graduating, Kalff majored in philosophy at Westfield College in London, and later studied to be a concert pianist with Robert Casadesus in France (M. Kalff, 2003; Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). Following an unsuccessful marriage to Dutch banker, L. E. A. Kalff, with whom she had two sons, Kalff met C. G. Jung's daughter, Gret Jung-Baumann, who introduced her to her father. This 1948 meeting would be the springboard for the development of Kalff's venture into psychotherapy. Jung encouraged her to develop her natural abilities for putting children at ease and advised her to pursue a career in psychotherapy (as cited Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). In 1949, using a small inheritance from her father, Kalff began a 6-year study of analytical psychology at the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich. Because Sandplay and analytical psychology are "mother-based" psychologies (Samuels, 2008³), it is worth noting that Kalff's devotion to the Madonna and her interpretation of the meaning of the Madonna would likely have played a role in predisposing her to a Jungian oriented therapy.⁴

³ A "mother-based" psychology theorizes that influences on development may be traceable to experiences as early as *in utero*.

⁴ Four years before her death, Kalff spoke about the importance for her of the Madonna as symbolic of the "free and protected space" that is the hallmark of Sandplay theory. When she was preparing her move to Switzerland to study at the Jung Institute, Kalff dreamt that the house she would live in would have a Madonna. Indeed, as it turned out, the house she bought, and which her son Martin has lived in since her death, has a Madonna inset into the front wall (Kornfield, 2006).

1.2.1. Analytical Psychology

The centerpieces of Jung's theory—the process of *individuation* and the role of the Self⁵ in individuation; the theory of archetypes and the collective unconscious⁶; and Jung's discovery of play as the dynamic aspect of fantasy (Stewart, 1981)—would become Kalff's guideposts for her developing ideas.

In Jungian theory individuation refers to the individual's innate tendency for psychological development through the life span (Stein, 2006). Each of the main schools of Jungian psychology—recognized broadly now as the classical and the developmental, with extreme (fundamentalist classical and developmental-psychoanalytic) versions of both (Samuels, 2008)—has a perspective on how individuation unfolds in analysis.

The classical Jungian understanding is that the Self—the central archetypal organizing principle that guides psychic development toward wholeness (health)—compensates for the limitations of the individual's conscious attitudes by way of imagery that emerges in dreams, fantasies and imaginative activity. In the analytic process, the individual explores the meaning in the imagery with a view to integrating new meaning and a more adaptive attitude. The developmental school founded by Michael Fordham introduced the somatic component of individuation and emphasizes the adaptive processes of the individual intrapsychically and to the environment (Solomon, 2008). Individuation is a *process* in which the individual develops awareness of compensatory attitudes and perspectives. In the theory, it is this awareness that can serve to further the development of the personality. The vehicle for awareness of a compensatory

⁵ The Self is a *symbol* of the psyche in its entirety, not only the ego. Development toward the Self is part of the individuation process (as cited in Salman, 2008). Hence, the Self both guides and is the goal of the individuation process. The Self from Jung's viewpoint is the creative, purposive, non-destructive core of the human psyche (as cited in Samuels, 2008).

⁶ The nature of archetypes and the collective unconscious is the subject of confusion and debate. For the purposes of this chapter, a useful definition links the concepts together and with Sandplay. Archetypes, according to Jung (Samuels, Shorter, & Plaut, 1986) are innate, inherited, instinctive patterns of behaviour shared by all human beings and cultures. They cluster around the universal (collective) experiences of life such as birth, marriage, motherhood, death and separation. Archetypes may be expressed in images in Sandplay, for example, as a child, couple, mother and child, old man, threshold, journey, the meaning of which is understood in the context of the patient's life. The archetype is a potentiality, or unconscious form, until it is manifested in an image.

perspective is the imagery in dreams or fantasies, or the imagery that emerges in self-exploratory activity or expressive therapy, such as Sandplay.

At the time Kalff was practicing, Jung's analytical psychology focused on individuation of adults in midlife. According to this view, in the second half of life there is a gradual emergence away from the ego's control toward the realm of the self, i.e., from merely personal values and toward those of more impersonal and collective meaning (Hart, 2008; Samuels, 1985). For Kalff, who worked with younger patients, it was important to find a modality that would appeal to children. While she was studying at the Jung Institute in Zurich, child psychiatrist Margaret Lowenfeld, who had been practicing in London, delivered a lecture on the "World Technique" she had developed and had been practicing for 25 years. Kalff was impressed by the possibilities of the technique for her own practice. Two years later, in 1956, after completing her analytic training, and with Jung's encouragement,⁷ Kalff settled in London for a 1-year apprenticeship with Lowenfeld.⁸

1.2.2. Margaret Lowenfeld (1890-1973)

Lowenfeld's World Technique introduced to child psychotherapy the basic materials and many of the fundamental ideas that Dora Kalff would use to develop Sandplay. Lowenfeld used a single sandtray, 29.5" x 20.5" x 2.5" partially filled with sand, with water available. Figures were also available in a cabinet with multiple small

⁷ In 1937, Jung had attended a lecture given by Lowenfeld in Paris. He had been impressed and had contributed ideas during her lecture as to the meaning of the Sandplay pictures she presented (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). His interest in Lowenfeld's work with play would have appealed to his intuitive belief that playing was creative and curative. Jung had instinctively turned to playing his "building games" on the shores of Lake Zurich looking for understanding and inspiration following his break with Freud and his subsequent disorientation and depression (Jung, 1989).

⁸ The training was normally 2 years, but Lowenfeld reduced this requirement to 1 year on learning about Kalff's previous training in Zurich. While she was training in London, Kalff met two other child analysts—Michael Fordham, who had facilitated her meeting with Lowenfeld, and Donald Winnicott (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). Little has been recorded about the nature of her meetings with Fordham and Winnicott and their impact on her, but Winnicott and Lowenfeld had exchanged ideas, often disagreeing, as noted earlier, on key issues. Nevertheless it is probably safe to say that Winnicott's views on therapeutic play and playing and his psychoanalytic perspective on the importance and nature of the therapeutic relationship would have met with Kalff's interest and support.

drawers. She believed that the sand tray facilitated a more complete communication, beyond the verbal, between therapist and patient and helped the therapist understand the unspoken aspects of the child's experience. The World Technique had its beginnings in early 20th Century Britain.

The Socio-Cultural Context of Lowenfeld's Work

The first decade of the 20th Century in Britain was marked by declining numbers in the general population, generally deteriorating health, and high rates of infant mortality (Urwin, 1991). Government programs began investing in the development of environments that would support and encourage the emotional well-being and intellectual adjustment of children. New research was undertaken on infant feeding and nutrition, the introduction of "mothercraft" classes (early childhood and parent education), and epidemiological studies that included questions of parental lifestyle and child management (Urwin, 1991). In 1927, Britain's National Child Guidance Council was established to address these priorities, with Margaret Lowenfeld as one of the founders (Urwin, 1991). Her bicultural background, and her experiences as a physician during the First World War and the Polish-Russian war had given her a unique perspective on trauma and the limitations of language in communicating experiences that were not entirely conscious (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994).

Lowenfeld's Formative Background at Home and at War

Margaret Lowenfeld was the second child of Henry Lowenfeld, an entrepreneur of Polish descent, and Alice Evans, an English woman he had met in Poland. In childhood Margaret was plagued by various physical ailments, which, according to Sandplay historians and therapists Mitchell and Friedman (1994) may have been brought on by feelings of inferiority in relation to her gifted and successful older sister Helena, and her parents' strained marriage (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994; Urwin, 1991). Fortunately, her childhood was also filled with many opportunities for travel and cross-cultural experience (Urwin, 1991). Later in adulthood, supported by her mother and thanks to a large financial settlement following her parents' divorce, Margaret's life work became focused on healing. She trained as a physician and surgeon and spent 2 years in Poland working for improved conditions for prisoners and troops.

Lowenfeld's (1999) reflections on her war experiences are evidence of a developing awareness of the psychological repercussions on children of an imposed atmosphere of violence, isolation and fear:

This experience [of war trauma]...opened doors on to an interior world I would not otherwise have reached. Later...I realized that the living of roles totally different from and even hostile to each other, in a constant atmosphere of fear, and with a lack of any overall direction is of the essence of the experience of unhappy children, and the black misery of prisoners of war is very like the depression of infancy. (pp. 1-2)

In her psychiatric training and personal analyses, Lowenfeld (1999) became increasingly sensitive to the limitations of language in communicating the essence of her wartime experiences and used this knowledge to guide her study and treatment of children. It became her goal to develop a modality that would offer her patients a medium for expressing their experiences without adult intervention. In this she included transference and interpretation, the basic tools of psychoanalysis used by the Freudian child analysts who dominated the practice of child therapy in London at the time.

Development of the "World Technique"

Lowenfeld (1999) had been impressed as a child by the British author H.G. Wells' 1911 *Floor Games* in which he described elaborate play with his sons using miniature objects and other materials found in the world, such as boats, trains, people, animals, bridges, vegetation, and so on. According to Lowenfeld, Wells' *Floor Games* was play without adult direction, free of adult verbal interpretation, and free of the overlay of a formal theory. Lowenfeld theorized that playing in this way, adapted to the clinical setting, could allow the child in therapy to have an experience free of the therapist's immediate interpretations, and would provide the therapeutic environment she was seeking to provide and the kind of objective study of a child's mental state that she wished to make (Davis, 1991; Lowenfeld, 1999).

Lowenfeld (1999) started with a collection of miscellaneous materials kept in what she referred to as a "Wonder Box." A year later she added two zinc trays, 75cm x 50cm x 7cm (30" x 28" x 2.8"), one with mouldable sand, the other with water, and a cabinet (named "The World") containing phantasy material, construction material, house or miniature adult material, and materials giving scope for movement and destruction

(Lowenfeld, 2008). Acting, play, recounting dreams or fantasies, painting, writing stories were other possible avenues for communication of the child's experience (Lowenfeld, 1999). Lowenfeld's child patients spontaneously named their sand constructions "Worlds," and from this, Lowenfeld called her method the "World Technique" (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994).

The British Psychoanalytic Context for Child Therapy

Lowenfeld had been trained as a physician and had not initially developed, or subscribed to, any existing theory of mind and even in the prevailing psychoanalytic approach to child therapy, she continued to think autonomously. As a result, Lowenfeld's (1999) relationship with the psychoanalysts in her milieu was often tense. Her objective was to help children "to produce something which will stand by itself and be independent of any theory as to its nature" (p. 3). She was devoted to resolving problems she attributed to psychoanalytic therapy, in particular what she saw as interference from the analyst with the mental and emotional life of the child (Lowenfeld, 1999).

In 1926, child psychoanalyst Melanie Klein (1882-1960) had retreated to London from Berlin where she had been criticized for her theories on the early mental life of children and the play therapy technique she practiced. She had come to London at the invitation of Ernest Jones, founder of the British Psychoanalytic Society (Grosskurth, 1995). Around the same time, child psychiatrist Donald Winnicott (1896-1971) had started integrating psychoanalytic ideas into his practice. And in 1927, Anna Freud (1895-1982), living in Vienna where she was specializing in child analysis, published her first book, *An Introduction to the Technique of Child Analysis*, her aim being to discredit Klein's theory and approach (Grosskurth, 1995).

When the Nazi forces arrived in Vienna in 1938, the continental psychoanalysts, including Anna Freud, migrated to London, and the debate intensified between Klein and Freud,⁹ representing the British and Continental schools of child psychoanalysis respectively. The differences between the two Schools were focused on technique, then

⁹ The debate took the form of *The Controversial Discussions* at the Scientific Meetings of the British Psychoanalytic Society between October 1942 and February 1944 (Grosskurth, 1995).

spread to the essential points of Freudian theory.¹⁰ The result was a split in British psychoanalytic training into three divisions: the Kleinian; the classical Anna Freudian; and the more moderate Middle or Independent (Object Relations) school, to which Donald Winnicott subscribed.¹¹

Within this context, there was little room for ideas from outside the psychoanalytic framework. This meant that Lowenfeld would find herself excluded from and criticized by the members of the British psychoanalytic establishment. In particular, Lowenfeld's beliefs that the therapist's role was to facilitate and not to interpret, and that analysis of the patient-therapist transference should not play a role in therapy, were incomprehensible to Freudian-trained analysts.

Klein criticized Lowenfeld for sacrificing the possibilities inherent in the transference and for not crediting psychoanalytic play therapy as flexible and liberating for the child (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). Winnicott was especially critical of Lowenfeld's use of figures and a sandtray, which he thought would limit the child's personal freedom. Neither was he in favour of the large size of the collection of figures from which the child could choose to build a scene, claiming this would bewilder and overwhelm the child. Unlike Lowenfeld, Winnicott emphasized the importance of the therapist's presence in the relationship with the patient.¹² Winnicott and Lowenfeld did agree, however, on the therapeutic effect of playing as an end in itself. Near the end of his life, Winnicott would express his deep appreciation for Lowenfeld's work and its value in the development of

¹⁰ There was agreement among the Schools, however, that the structure of training would be based in instruction on adult technique, personal analysis, and didactic course work (Grosskurth, 1995).

¹¹ Members of the Middle Group included John Bowlby and others who chose to allow for and respect the validity of ideas from either the Continental or British school, whether they happened to agree or not. The Klein Group, the Freud Group and the Middle Group finally agreed that no single group would attempt to take over the Society. To this day, the agreement stands, and is reflected in the Society's separate training divisions (Rycroft, 1995).

¹² Winnicott stressed that the therapist had to be 'good enough' so that in the relational atmosphere the patient could be freely expressive and take risks. 'Good enough' was an adjective Winnicott used to describe the mother in whose care the infant could become herself or himself (Davis & Wallbridge, 1991). It came to describe the imperfect therapist who nevertheless had the capacity to create an environment that would facilitate the patient's active development.

his own conceptualizations in a hand-written note found among his papers (Davis, 1991).

Michael Fordham (1905-1995), the British child psychiatrist and Jungian analyst, had introduced a sand tray and figures into his own practice, but later abandoned the approach, which he found to involve 'a certain 'depersonalizing element' that "went on into Lowenfeld's attempts to avoid the transference by not having a single therapist but switching the child between several" (as cited in Mitchell & Friedman, 1994, p. xiii). Fordham was also unhappy with Lowenfeld's practice of removing a child who needed to make a mess to a special room where facilities were provided for the child to do so (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). Despite these criticisms however, Fordham formed a close relationship with Lowenfeld. At Emma Jung's request, Fordham became Kalff's mentor in London. He arranged the meeting between Lowenfeld and Kalff that would prove so essential to Kalff's discovery of the modality she had been looking for.

Lowenfeld (1964) had formed her own comprehensive theoretical position from her experiences and clinical observations. She understood nonverbal and verbal mental functioning as equally important modes of communication and critiqued as incomplete the prevailing belief among child psychoanalysts that it was the wish or urge alone that brings a child's play into being. This method of interpretation was, she felt, limited by the Freudian theoretical frame of reference and was not based on an accurate understanding of the thought processes of children. Lowenfeld believed that children were expressing "personal, idiosyncratic, massive and multi-dimensional" aspects of experience in their pictures. Her ideas would become central in Dora Kalff's formulation of Sandplay. For example, nonverbal "thinking"—the use of play as mediator and generator of a child's urge to make sense of or introduce order into experience (Traill & Hood-Williams, 1973)—and her recognition of the significance of nonverbal or implicit¹³ experience in current problems.

¹³ Lowenfeld's concept of a 'protosystem' (a primary form of thought) corresponds with what is defined today as implicit memory. The protosystem cannot be known directly, but indirectly, through dream, play and artistic creation (Davis, 1991). Lowenfeld postulated that the protosystem includes various 'clusters' or groupings of sensory experiences that accompany an event or gather round a figure of emotional significance (Davis, 1991; Lowenfeld, 1993). It is the clusters in the protosystem that form the basis of symbolization (Lowenfeld, 1993).

On her return to Switzerland, Kalff entered a period of reflection on how she might integrate analytical psychology and the World Technique. She had begun noticing indications of the individuation process Jung had described in the sandpictures of her child patients. As part of this process of developing her own method, Kalff and Lowenfeld agreed that Kalff would name her approach Sandplay, to distinguish it from World Technique (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). For more guidance in how to understand the play configurations, Kalff turned to Jung and then to the developmental Jungian analyst Erich Neumann.

1.2.3. Erich Neumann

A student of Jung, Erich Neumann (1905-1960) was born in Berlin, and lived and practiced analytical psychology in Tel Aviv until his death. Neumann was trained in philosophy and medicine, and was also a poet and novelist. His contributions lay primarily in the field of developmental psychology, and the psychology of consciousness and creativity. Kalff was introduced to Neumann's ideas on archetypal patterns of child psychological development through a lecture he gave in Zurich. Neumann (1990) wrote about his theory in *The Child*, where he traces the development of the ego and individuality from the first relationship of mother and child to the full emergence of personality through the child's relationship with its body, its Self, others, and "being-in-the-world."

Kalff was particularly interested in how her clinical observations of centering imagery in sandpictures seemed to parallel the psychological maturation process towards what Neumann referred to as *centroversion*.¹⁴ In their later discussions, Kalff and Neumann agreed that her experience of the children's sand constructions confirmed and illustrated some of his theoretical formulations (Weinrib, 2004). Years later, in

¹⁴ In *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, Neumann (1995) describes centroversion as an unconscious psychological force controlling compensatory processes that maintain the unity of an organism (pp. 286-287). By compensatory processes he is referring to the organism's teleological striving for balance and systematization. This force is manifested in circular images in Sandplay and marks the "constellation of the self." The constellation process can begin with smaller indications of centroversion, e.g., in scattered, periodic, circular images that slowly build toward a manifestation that takes up most of the sand tray and/or is particularly numinous in content and effect on both patient and therapist.

Britain, Jungian child analyst Michael Fordham (1970) would also argue on the basis of his observations of children's play that archetypal individuating processes were active in infancy and childhood, and that they were an essential feature of maturation.

Neumann and Kalff decided to do research together, but unfortunately this could not materialize due to Neumann's sudden death in 1960, not long after they had met (Weinrib, 2004). Nevertheless, Kalff continued to use Neumann's model as a guide to understanding early psychological development. Neumann's theory provided structure for understanding Sandplay developmental process, and remains an integral aspect of Sandplay developmental theory (see Appendix A).

1.2.4. Asian Connections

Dora Kalff's studies at school included music, the Sanskrit and Chinese languages, and Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). These subjects lay the ground for her spiritual development, which continued to mature into adulthood and found expression in her psychological work (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013). Her early interest in spirituality continued to develop and later drew her to Jung's psychology, in particular the idea of the Self and Self-realization as a spiritual phenomenon (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013). For Jung (1969a), the Self and the God-image are spiritual, non-material phenomena that symbolize wholeness (p. 198, para. 308). Both the God-image and the Self are given the highest value in psychological experience (p. 63, para. 116). Jung said that as a symbol, the God-image or Self is "capable of drawing together heterogeneous psychological fragments or uniting opposites" (p. 109, para. 170), which in Jungian psychology is the process of discovering the full expression of the personality in relationship to others and the environment. According to Jung, such symbols represent order and noted that they appear in patients' dreams during times of psychic disorientation or reorientation.

Rather than writing down how she integrated her perspectives on spirituality, Kalff chose to communicate most of her insights orally, in lectures and workshops. Thus, in order to learn more about how Kalff thought about Sandplay in the context of the Asian ideas she had encountered, I interviewed her son Martin Kalff, Ph.D. Dr. Kalff is a Tibetan Buddhist scholar, a Sandplay therapist specializing in spiritual development, and

meditation teacher.¹⁵ According to Dr. Kalff, Dora Kalff was a deeply spiritual person, and this in his opinion was the reason for her affinity with C.G. Jung's psychology, in particular his notion of the Self. Jung's Self is a process in which the conscious ego is in relationship with the unconscious. Jung compared this to the relationship between the earth (ego) as it orbits the sun (the unconscious) (p. 238, para. 400). Dr. Kalff, who is also a scholar of theology and the history of religion, suggested that the Self, which Jung (1966b, p. 238, para. 399) has defined as "the God within us" can show itself in different spiritual traditions and takes different forms according to the culture. Dr. Kalff (2013) cited the example of the mandala, which Jung saw in the work of his patients and Dora Kalff saw in her patients' Sandplay. According to Dr. Kalff, Dora Kalff touched this spirit in music, in her therapeutic work and in her personal "inner" experiences. To learn more about it, she sought out meetings with spiritual thinkers from different traditions, including the Greek Orthodox patriarch Athenagoras, the Dalai Lama, and Daisetz T. Suzuki (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013).

As she was consolidating her ideas for the practice of Sandplay, Kalff was inspired by the Buddhist emphasis on allowing the "seeker after wisdom" to find the answers. This confirmed for her the importance of creating a "free, protected space" where the patient's self-healing capacity could be awakened (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994; M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013).¹⁶ Former trainees have commented on Kalff's ability to provide stability in the therapeutic process especially through her communication of openness, presence, and nonjudgment (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013).

Kalff's experience of distressing wartime hardship, her divorce, and the imperative to find a profession as a single mother in post-war Switzerland brought her face-to-face with a measure of suffering, which she acknowledged as such (M. Kalff,

¹⁵ Martin Kalff was a founding member of the International Society for Sandplay Therapy established by Dora Kalff. In 1991 he founded the Centre for Sandplay Therapy, later named the Pegasus Centre for Sandplay Therapy, Psychology of Religion, and Creative Expression in Zollikon, Switzerland. He is co-founder of the Buddhist Centre in Zollikon.

¹⁶ This refers (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994; Martin Kalff, 2013), to the Buddhist belief in creating space for exploration and expression of felt experience, and the notion of delayed interpretation. This followed the Zen practice of not answering students' questions directly but teaching them instead to rely on their imagination and resources.

personal communication, 2013), referencing the Buddhist teaching that mental and physical suffering or *dukkha*¹⁷ is an inescapable part of being human. Her personal analysis with Emma Jung, her explorations of Chinese language and culture, her interactions and learning with the Zen philosopher D. T. Suzuki and with Tibetan Buddhist lamas, including the Dalai Lama, provided an unusually rich context for developing her experience and understanding of how Asian symbolism, especially Buddhist symbols, and the relationship between spiritual life and the body, could apply in Sandplay (Kalff, 1971).

Dora Kalff's Experiences of Buddhism

The significance of Kalff's attraction to Asian understanding of life and mind was forcefully presented to her in dreams. Without having travelled to Tibet, and before she had met any Tibetan Lamas, Kalff dreamed of being approached by a Lama who gave her a gold rectangular instrument. She was instructed to swing it in a circular direction, which caused the ground to open and to reveal in the sunlight the other side of the world, the West (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013; Markell, 2002; Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). This dream was interpreted in her analysis with Emma Jung to mean that through her knowledge of Tibetan thought, she might also serve the West (Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). Even if the Lama in her dream were interpreted subjectively to symbolize a contemplative or spiritual attitude, it suggests that through her relationship to this attitude and further cultivation of it, she could potentially be instrumental in creating a bridge between East and West. In a second dream, on the night of Jung's death, Jung invited her to dinner. In the middle of the dinner table was a large mound of rice. Pointing to the rice, Jung indicated that Kalff should continue her exploration of Tibetan and other Asian traditions. These dreams strengthened her resolve that to do justice to her work she must integrate ideas from Eastern traditions, and she actively followed this path.

In 1961, when Switzerland offered asylum to Tibetans expelled following the invasion by China, Kalff took in as a boarder the Tibetan Lama Geshe Chodak. He

¹⁷ *Dukkha* goes beyond the conventional definition of suffering as bearing or undergoing pain, distress, or injury (Webster, 2004) to include simply "unsatisfactoriness" or "imperfection" (Brazier, 2001).

remained there for 8 years (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013; Mitchell & Friedman, 1994). This connection led to meetings with other Buddhist Lamas and teachers. Among these was the Dalai Lama, with whom she enjoyed a reciprocally warm relationship. She also learned Sōtō Zen breathing from one of the Dalai Lama's tutors, Trijang Rinpoche (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013). The Lama Yeshe invited Kalff to teach Sandplay to young Buddhist monks in his centers (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013). She also taught a course on healing in Zollikon with Lama Yeshe and others. She learned Buddhist teachings from Gesche Jampa Lodro, a Tibetan monk who was working in a factory in Zollikon until he was discovered by Kalff. With the financial support of Kalff and her friends he was able to teach in a neighbouring atelier that later became the Yiga Choezin Buddhist Centre in Zollikon, which continues to exist today. Kalff met Zen master Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki (D. T. Suzuki) at an Eranos¹⁸ lecture and had several meetings with him in Switzerland and Japan. According to Martin Kalff (2013), she said before she died that she would have preferred to deepen her understanding of Zen with D. T. Suzuki rather than continue with psychological work, and was saddened by his passing before she could make this possible. It would seem that of all her experiences of Buddhism, in later life Kalff had developed a strong sympathy for Zen thought.

1.3. Sandplay's International Presence

By her own account, Kalff was strongly influenced by her father who encouraged her to get to know the world through travel (Kornfield, 2006). It was mainly through her extensive lecturing and training throughout Europe, the United States and Japan, that Sandplay has been adopted around the world today. The 247 members of the International Society for Sandplay Therapy practice Sandplay at present in 13 countries: South America, Canada, China, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, the Netherlands, South Korea, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Others, in Australia for example, are training for certification and International Society for Sandplay

¹⁸ An intellectual discussion group for the study of psychology, religion, philosophy, spirituality that has met annually in Switzerland since 1933.

Therapy (ISST) membership. Country membership in the ISST requires that at least five individuals be certified.

The ISST was founded in August, 1985 by Kalff and 14 others representing six countries, the majority of whom were Jungian analysts. The objective of the ISST is to provide a formal structure for the study of Sandplay “in order to protect, develop and spread its practice” (M. Kalff, n.d., para. 3). ISST provides the training guidelines for becoming a certified member and a teaching member. As of 2014 there are ten national Sandplay societies in the world: the U.S. (92 ISST members); Italy (48); Germany (37); Canada (13); Israel (11); Switzerland (11); Britain/Ireland (10); Brazil (10); Japan (8); and the Netherlands (7). Individual members of the ISST, whose countries have not yet established national societies, come from Australia, China, Hong Kong, Latvia, Singapore, South Korea, Poland, South Africa, and Taiwan.

In 1962, Kalff was invited to give a presentation of her work at the March Joint Conference of the Jungian Analysts of Northern and Southern California held in San Francisco. The ensuing enthusiasm for learning Sandplay led to almost yearly visits from Kalff to give lectures, seminars and training sessions for individuals (Stewart, 1990). The C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, and the James Goodrich Whitney Clinic housed in the Institute to provide Jungian analysis and psychotherapy, including Sandplay, to the public, became the focal point for training and research in Sandplay in the United States. This work at the Clinic, and elsewhere in the country, carries on today. In the spring of 2010, *Sandplay Therapists of America* (STA) opened a Sandplay Therapy Institute to promote the study of Sandplay as taught by Dora Kalff. The Institute offers a 2-year program of 4 intensive weekends per year taught by a team of certified Sandplay therapists and researchers. In addition to the Institute, 11 regions provide training and consultation with ISST members. Since 1991 the STA has published the *Journal of Sandplay Therapy* out of San Francisco. The Journal continues today to publish refereed articles from Sandplay therapists worldwide.

In 1966, at the instigation of D. T. Suzuki and Dr. Hayao Kawai, a Jungian analyst and former student of Kalff, she travelled to Japan to teach Sandplay. Her ideas about psychotherapy, her Jungian background and connections on personal, spiritual and philosophical levels with the Japanese laid the foundation for a long and creative

relationship with the Japanese therapists. The Japanese Society for Sandplay Therapy was founded in 1987 and has today more than 2,000 members, of which eight are certified with ISST. Today the Society publishes the *Archives of Sandplay Therapy* biannually out of Kyoto University. Kalff taught extensively in Europe as well, particularly in Italy and Germany where the majority of members today are also Jungian analysts, physicians and psychiatrists. A German/Swiss journal, *Sandspeil-Therapie* publishes biannually from Stuttgart. The Italian Society (AISPT) began publishing *Orme: Sandplay Therapy Online* in 2014; and the South Korean members began publishing the *Journal of Symbols and Sandplay Therapy* in 2011, also available online.

1.4. Contemporary Sandplay: Training and Trends in Practice

Over the 20 years of post-Kalffian developments, Sandplay has been subject to elaborations and revaluations in the hands and minds of a growing number of practitioners from around the world. Working in diverse settings of private practice, clinic, school, hospital, with training backgrounds ranging from Jungian analysis, psychoanalysis, psychiatry, and pediatrics, to psychodynamic and relational psychology, social work and counselling, Sandplay therapists have adapted their practice to their environment. Overall, their collective contributions have widened Sandplay's original "Kalffian" framework but, at the same time, they have met with growing concerns about whether essential ideas in Kalffian theory are being altered or lost. The question, "But is it Kalffian?" (Cunningham, 2007) has been asked outright, and has been quietly debated formally and informally since 1992. At a conference held that year in California, Sandplay therapists had begun to express uneasiness with the dangers of therapists using the sandtray without a good understanding of analytic process and reducing Sandplay to superficialities and technique.

We must keep in mind that Dora Kalff was a Jungian analyst and her teaching was directed mainly to analysts. She may have assumed a pre-existing theoretical knowledge with which she integrated ideas about therapeutic play learned from Margaret Lowenfeld, and her experience of Eastern practices. She was not a researcher or theoretician and did not write a comprehensive Sandplay theory. Kalff's ideas are

presented mainly through clinical case material and comprehensive discussion of symbols in relation to psychological process. Nor did she expressly set out limitations on who should practice Sandplay, except as a caution printed in bold typeface at the beginning of her only book, *Sandplay: A Psychotherapeutic Approach to the Psyche*:

In the hands of a properly prepared therapist, sandplay is a powerful, invaluable modality. The operative world is “powerful.” To the extent that any method can heal, so can it do harm.

Therefore, I urgently advise that even a psychotherapist highly experienced in other methodologies, who contemplates practicing sandplay, should have had a deep personal experience doing a sandplay process as a patient with a qualified sandplay therapist and an extended period of careful supervision—anything less would be irresponsible.

(D. Kalff, 2003, p. ii)

Training programs overseen by the ISST respect Dora Kalff’s (2003) caution. All trainees must experience their own Sandplay process. Requirements for theoretical, experiential, and clinical knowledge are clearly set out; supervision hours, papers examining symbols and theoretical questions, and a thesis/clinical case study are also required.¹⁹ The training takes on average 4 years post-master’s degree to complete. In an effort to preserve the analytic attitude in practicing Sandplay, the Italian training program will admit only Jungian analysts, although this is not required by the ISST.

The trends emerging over the past 20 years reflect a growing emphasis on analytic aspects, the masculine, and the body (Cunningham, 2007). Examples in the English language Sandplay literature examine the role of the therapist and the appearance in the sandtray of the transference-countertransference relationship, sometimes termed the co-transference (Bradway, 1991; Chiaia, 2001, 2003; Costello, 2008; Cunningham, 2004; Kawai, 1993; Millikan, 1992; Montecchi, 2004; Napoliello, Cagna, Palma, & Ripamonti, 2010; Oda, 2004; Rocco, 2000; Turner, 1994). Exploration of preverbal and infantile states (Cunningham, 2006; Heathcote, 2009; Pattis, 2002; Shafarman, 1995), are bringing attention to how play in this context elicits imaginal

¹⁹ The Canadian Association for Sandplay Therapy (CAST) website www.sandplaycanada.ca gives details about all trainings and certification requirements, and provides links to other international Sandplay therapy associations, including the International Society for Sandplay Therapy (ISST).

representations of the patient's emotional experiences of relationship from in utero forward. There has been a growing interest in how to understand the paternal function and the distinctive patterns of masculine development played out in men's and boys' processes (Dundas, 1993; Nelson, 1995; Pastore, 2007; Risé, 1993,1994; Shaia,1994; Trudart, 2004; Weller, 1994). The exploration of somatic issues has arisen from witnessing the unconscious pictorial representations of the body or parts of the body which uncannily show points of tension or disease that may not yet have been diagnosed (Akimoto, 1995; Amatruda, 1998; Castellana, 2006; Freedle, 2007; Honda & Akimoto, 1997; LeBel, 2009; Kiepenheuer, 2003; Michiko, 1997; Punnett, 2009; Taki-Reece, 2005; von Gontard, 2010; Yoshikawa, 2005). The intersection and integration of Sandplay with branches of psychoanalysis are of ongoing interest (Castellana & Kirsch, 2006; Chiaia, 1998, 2006; Manevsky, 2003; Montecchi, 1999).

Other areas of new inquiry are found in the application of Sandplay in severe psychopathology such as psychosis, borderline syndromes, psychosomatic illnesses, addiction, and narcissistic personality disorder (Lennihan, 2004; Merlino, 2008; Oda, 2000; Pattis Zoja, 2004); the use of Sandplay with couples, families and groups (S.C. Albert, personal communication, 2007; Steinhardt, 2007; Taki-Reece & Ford, 2006, 2007; L. von Keyserlingk, personal communication, 2001). Questions of research (Bradway, 2002; Morena, 2004) and research studies investigating the effectiveness of Sandplay from an empirical standpoint are being published (Hong, 2011; Ramos & da Matta, 2008; von Gontard, 2010). The application of ideas from neurobiology (Turner, 2005), chaos theory (Capitolo, 2002) and leadership education (Mayes & Blackwell-Mayes, 2002) have also been explored in the literature.

1.5. Conclusion

In this perspective on Sandplay's history I have wanted to show its genesis, the individual contributions to Kalfian Sandplay theory, its international rootedness, and the nature of the discussion and current trends that surround Sandplay. I have outlined the three roots of Sandplay: analytical psychology (specifically, Jung and Neumann); Margaret Lowenfeld's World Technique, with a history of 25 years; and the classical Chinese philosophical perspectives, with a history of 25 centuries. The diversity of ideas

packed into these major influences and incorporated by Kalff into Sandplay theory and practice is perhaps responsible for its international appeal and clinical effectiveness.

Moving from the discursive standpoint in this chapter, I will next document the phenomenological, subjective experience of Sandplay. My purpose is to bring into this discussion the living experience of Sandplay—to bring the reader closer to an understanding of how Sandplay happens and the need for a philosophical frame that reflects the dynamic experience that playing makes possible.

Chapter 2.

A Phenomenological Description of a Sandplay Process

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter I describe the lived experience of a young woman in a Sandplay process. This phenomenological description presents an example of how a patient engages with Sandplay materials verbally and nonverbally in building the images and responding to them. The complete process shows how the images and their meaning for the patient change and develop. The therapist's verbal and nonverbal participation is shown to be an integral part of the process. I will begin with an orientation to the Sandplay environment: the physical features; the role of the therapist; and how play facilitates the healing process.

I introduce the case with the patient's background and characteristics, and her reasons for seeking help. In describing how she changed her perspective and feelings about herself I include photographs of her constructions in the sandtray and her narratives on their meaning. These reveal her experiences as they form and change in her play.

In the conclusion to this Chapter, I show and describe the relationships among all of the pictures. This view of the whole reveals an emerging, changing psychological process, which I will discuss within a traditional Jungian/Kalffian perspective in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 I will build on Kalff's interest in Asian thought by presenting a Daoist perspective. I will conclude with a hermeneutic understanding of the process in Chapter 5. I will consider all three perspectives in a preliminary attempt at an integration in my Discussion at the conclusion of the dissertation.

2.1.1. The Sandplay Environment

In practice, the Sandplay space contains two sandtrays (one containing dry sand, the other damp sand), and the therapist's collection of figures represents the *universe* of living and material objects which are displayed on open shelves. Either or both trays provide containment for the play and concentrate the patient's attentiveness during play. The therapist focusses initially on the therapeutic relationship and creating trust, which is established in ways and within time frames that vary according to the nature and intensity of the transference and countertransference feelings.

The therapist explains what Sandplay therapy is and how the patient might benefit, how it works, and that it is not compulsory. Therapist and patient agree early in the therapy that the patient is free to play at any time. The therapist explains the rules of Sandplay: that there is no pressure to play; that the play is free of restrictions on expression except for actions that might endanger the therapist or the patient; that generally the play is kept within the sandtray,²⁰ that there is a time frame; and that the play will be recorded.²¹ While the patient is engaged in playing, the therapist tracks how the patient constructs the picture and the narrative as it is built and afterwards, and then photographs its final composition. The picture's apparent symbolism is not discussed until the patient has completed her process, so that the play may be integrated without the therapist's interpretations, which could potentially take the patient off course so to speak. Usually, patient and therapist work together verbally prior to the play, and re-engage verbally afterwards.

While tracking the play, the therapist is actively listening to the patient's comments, but does not comment on them. She also notices at the same time her own emotional and physical reactions, which she does not speak about at the time, but can bring into the therapy later on if it seems appropriate and helpful to the patient's understanding of herself in her relationships. These feelings may also be important in

²⁰ Children may also play outside the sandtray, on the floor. When this occurs, the play sequences outside the sandtray are regarded as equally important in the therapist's interpretation of the play.

²¹ Recording is normally done by the therapist in writing, but where there will be video-recording, the therapist obtains the patient's (or the patient's parents) signed consent.

the therapist's understanding of her own feelings toward the patient. Awareness of these countertransference feelings provides the therapist with information about possible assumptions that may interfere with her ability to provide the patient with the nonjudgmental, safe environment in which she can freely express herself.²²

In the Jungian view, the picture and the patient's narratives are metaphorical representations of the patient's psychological process. They are the key to understanding the patient's experience and guide the therapeutic interventions. How the patient's Sandplay-world is constructed and the meaning the patient gives it is the basis for subsequent interpretation, understanding, and intervention by the therapist. I will discuss these aspects from a Kalfian perspective in the next Chapter, based on the following record of a Sandplay process as it unfolds.

2.2. The Case of Eva

Eva was a 23-year-old woman who came to therapy for help adjusting to a life-changing diagnosis and invasive treatments for a soft tissue sarcoma in her leg. Eva had been referred by one of the hospital psychologists who was a member of the team about to discharge her from a 4-month rehabilitation program. The psychologist felt that Eva might respond well to the physicality of a Sandplay process. Before the diagnosis 1 year earlier, Eva had led an active life at a university where she was studying kinesiology and training for the Canadian Olympic cross country ski team. She no longer had the muscular strength she needed to continue her training and was devastated that the prognosis for returning to her previous level of activity and performance was not good. She often had to use a cane to prevent falls. She had met John, her boyfriend, 2 years earlier. He enjoyed skiing as well, although not at the elite level. Eva had no previous history of medical problems, and had no previous experience of psychotherapy. Eva was anxious about her future, depressed by her radically new situation and identity, and the

²² This assumes a psychodynamic theoretical standpoint that, in an interpersonal relationship, patient and therapist interact nonverbally and experience each other through their historical socio-cultural experiences. In Sandplay, the therapist tries to the extent possible to be aware of her own biases that may shape her interpretations of the sandpictures.

effect it seemed to be having on her relationships. Eva hoped that Sandplay could help her to adjust to her losses and to rebuild a satisfying life.

In Sandplay there is no prescribed duration for therapy, unless the patient wants to use an insurance program, in which case the patient may decide to extend therapy beyond the time paid for by the insurance company. Generally speaking, the patient knows, and the pictures reflect, developments favourable for ending. Following 20.5 hours of therapy over 1 year, Eva felt ready to end, and her sandpictures reflected her readiness. During that time she created five Sandplay pictures.

2.2.1. Family Background and History

Eva and her younger brothers grew up witnessing parental conflict. Her father held black and white views on ethical issues and expected his family to do the same. In their home, his word was the law. On weekends he drank excessively. Her mother, who suffered from chronic depression and drug addiction, was emotionally unavailable and frequently threatened suicide with a lethal supply of sleeping pills she had hidden away. Generally speaking, growing up in this kind of emotionally unreliable and unpredictable environment negatively affects a child's self-image, her ability to trust and have intimate relationships, and her ability to regulate emotion. As we went over her family history Eva cried when she described how her parents had become more reliable and available after her surgery. It was as if the relationship had undergone a complete transformation, a "rebirth," as she described it; and, in her words, this had changed her as well. "My diagnosis changed how I related to them because of how they responded to it."

In spite of the stress of her circumstances and the challenges ahead, Eva was exuberant and extremely resourceful. She refused to allow the constraints of her new disability to hold her back. The intensity of her need to be *able* was impressive, but it hid an equally intense emotional experience—a combination of disappointment, anger, and grief—that she could not trust herself to bring forward safely, to examine and integrate. Eva wanted to accept her limitations and how she saw others' perceptions of her. She wanted a new perspective, on herself and her relationships. Her Sandplay illustrates the grieving process of coming to terms with her loss, how she adopted a new attitude

toward herself and her competence, and the changes that became the foundation for concrete changes she made in her life.

2.2.2. The Sessions

Session 1 (August 11, 1.5 hours)

I invited Eva into the room and we began the process of getting to know each other. She told me about her interest in Sandplay and I explained that she could play whenever she felt ready. Many patients are concerned about not being able to create a picture that is pleasing, and I made a point of saying that the point of the play is simply that, and aesthetic results were not a requirement. I showed her the collection and the damp and dry sandtrays. She spent some time looking at the collection and expressing her excitement about Sandplay, but preferred to wait. Patients may want to begin with Sandplay immediately, but Eva wanted to talk, and I wanted to hear more about why she had come and how she hoped I could help her.

Sandplay therapy sessions have no predetermined structure apart from the time frame, and it is not mandatory for the patient to create a picture in each session. The patient may feel the need to create pictures each time, or may begin by spending most of the time with the sandtray and tapering off their frequency as issues are resolved. For some patients very few pictures meet their needs. For others, few words are necessary. The important point is that the therapist never insists or expresses disappointment. Some patients may find it difficult to express themselves in words and the therapist can suggest playing.

Eva recounted her 4-month post-surgery treatment in the hospital and her growing awareness of the psychological impact of having to change the life course she had in mind for herself. This meant lowering her expectations of her athletic goals, and she was unsure about what these could be. Eva described feelings of ambivalence about her own competence. On one hand she saw herself as “totally competent” in her studies, but these perceptions were mixed with her own new assessments of herself as incompetent in her sport and her perception of how others saw and judged her now.

Eva gave me more of her family context. She described her mother as demanding and very direct; and father as quieter and having a strong sense of responsibility, a trait she felt she shared. She talked about her siblings in terms of their careers, and needed some encouragement describing her emotional connection with them. She said she felt closer to one brother who she described as the mediator in the family, and more impatient with the second brother who she described as a victim. In her descriptions of herself Eva was most interested in talking about her studies and past achievements in sport, and more wary of thinking about the texture of feeling and emotion in her experiences.

We explored what she would like to change. This related again to competence: “I want to change the feelings of incompetence.” She described the meaning of this for her: “my skills are underrated and unidentified;” “I’ll never get noticed;” “I want to feel needed;” “I want people to expect me to be competent.”

The structure of Eva’s world had been turned on its side by the diagnosis and treatment process. She needed help righting it again: adjusting her idea of the meaning of “competency” and the weight or value she placed on her accomplishments.

Session 2 (September 22, 1.5 hours)

Eva felt it was important to “update” me. This meant talking about school, her relationship with her boyfriend, and how the family would celebrate her mother’s 60th birthday. She had refined what she wanted to work on: her general feeling of being disorganized and unable to finish what she starts; wanting to “be more free” of having to ask for help. Eva tracked the sensation that arose in her body as she talked. She described the sensation as “heavy,” “big,” “toxic,” “potentially overwhelming,” “sabotaging,” an image, she said, of “silly putty contained in a net that can dissolve.”

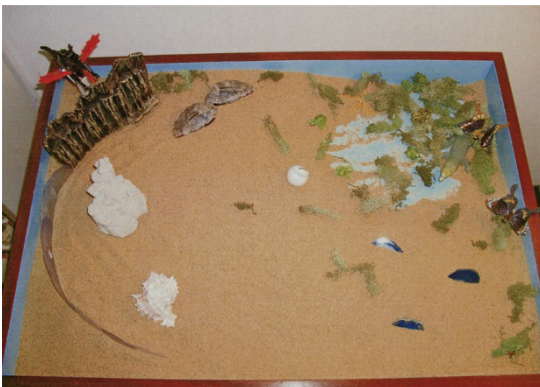
We explored the meaning of the image and its roots in her experience of loss. We talked about how she might work with it to decrease the powerful feelings of anxiety she associated with it.

Session 3 (October 6, 1.5 hours)

Eva said she did not have much she needed to talk about, and was “determined to do Sandplay.” She went to the collection on the shelves and examined several figures and natural stones. “I really like these” she said of the geodes. (A geode is a sphere-shaped stone, usually partially hollow and lined with mineral crystals or concentric layers of minerals.) “I’m going to get the whole container out” and she looked closely at the patterns in the geodes and flat river stones. Eva proceeded to go through a long process of choosing carefully the figures and stones she wanted to use, laying each one out on the table. Each geode was carefully examined in the light to “check out their interior patterns.” When Eva chose a figure, she looked at it, sometimes deciding she would not use it and returning it to its place on the shelf. She did this with a dragonfly, a golden butterfly, a small red dragon, and a small white skeleton. She looked for some time at the animals, but did not touch them.

When she was ready to place the figures she prepared the sand, pushing it from the rear right corner to reveal the blue. She arranged moss over the blue and surrounding area and on the left far edge next to the wood barrier in the left corner, then smoothed the sand with movements from right to left and toward her. Eva was absorbed in the process, deciding where to place each figure, which involved placements, adjustments, and readjustments. Figure 2.1 is her first picture.

Figure 2.1. Sandplay Picture 1



Note. In describing the location of objects or shaping of sand, the term “far” refers to areas far away from the front of the picture. “Near” refers to areas near the front. The “front” is where the patient is standing during the creation of the picture. The terms “far” and “near” also refer to the depth psychology framework in which awareness may be farther from or nearer to consciousness.

Sandplay Picture 1 Description

A white baseball lies just above centre. To the right of the ball the blue bottom of the tray is exposed and partially covered with pieces of moss. A frog with a golden crown sits among the moss. (This frog was the first figure Eva placed in the tray. She had adjusted it carefully so that it was looking directly at her.)

A starfish lies hidden under the moss over the blue. Two frogs without crowns are sitting in the moss between the crocodile and the crowned frog and on a slope at the edge of the blue, close to the white ball. A small turtle at the rear of the picture is walking in the direction of the ball along a path between two pieces of moss. A crocodile sits in the moss with its head on the blue. Two butterflies sit on the crocodile and on some moss closer to the front of the tray.

Three flat blue agate geodes are partially submerged in the sand near the front of the tray. On the left side in the rear corner, a black dragon sits behind a wooden structure or barrier. Two geodes with their hollow sides facing the centre sit next to each other to the left of the wooden structure. Continuing from the wooden structure is a crescent of thin opalescent shells. A white castle and a pink murex shell lie within the crescent. Pieces of moss are thinly distributed throughout the right and far left corner of the picture. The centre front is empty.

Sandplay Picture 1 Narrative

Looks like the frog prince. The baseball is the golden ball. I first chose it because it reminds me of John [her boyfriend]. I just like the sparkling things. I like the dragon as a caricature. He is meant to work with other things. He's a protector. This [the green moss] is the wild. This [the left side] is the more domestic. People can hang out on the rock. Inside I imagine its manicured lawn, and outside it's wild. Although this is wild it's the grounds of the castle. Here [the geodes far left] is where you can sit and watch what's going on. You can sit in the sun there too—just take it in.

The crocodile doesn't do much other than swim. The starfish is under the vegetation—sometimes in the water, sometimes not—just watches the turtle. It's loud if you are sitting there listening to the animals, but it's also quiet and calm [the butterflies].

Behind the castle is a fence that blends in. The dragon needs to fly around. He's not really that scary. He just looks that way. I can imagine him, the crocodile and the frog prince all going for coffee

when they get relieved of their *looking scary* duties....Maybe like in Vancouver there's a Starbucks on every corner.

I really like this frog prince guy. [She picks him up.] I think he's kind of bored though. He can't venture out because he's royalty. But when someone comes with the golden ball, he'd know what to do. Now I'm wanting to look at the story of the frog prince. I like him. The frog part is a natural part of him; the crown is sparkling. But he doesn't look happy. It's not fun. The dragon has a job but he looks like he could have fun too. He could lay down the law too. No one can control him, but he wouldn't do anything to hurt anyone. They don't need to worry. I think he'd be ticked off if someone told him what to do. Maybe he's John.

I asked Eva to pay attention to her body. Awareness of somatic sensation often turns the patient's attention to new dimensions in the picture.

I feel like the frog prince because he's in this organic space but he can't do much because he has to be *just so* [her emphasis]. He has to be *all royal*. He has a certain role to play but he can play with the others. He has more status. He's more comfortable with dragon and crocodile than with the other frogs. They have the same job. He has to wait until people bring him the ball. That's not really fun. He can't discover things on his own.

I ask Eva if there is anything a frog prince could discover on his own. The question elicits tears. She continued:

I don't want to be stuck and dependent on everyone else. I'm sure the dragon would fly him around if he asked.

Eva talked about a book about a frog wanting to fly.

There are parts he'd like to do something about.

Eva talked about her need for acknowledgment of what she can do and what she wants to be acknowledged for. She talked about how she is good with kids. She had discovered this in her internship.

Crocodile and starfish are mother and father. Dad is the alligator; sometimes my mother.

Eva talked about her strengths: her ability to see the world from a child's perspective; and her ability to relate well to children. However, she expressed her ambivalence about this, because children and work with children are not valued. We talked about the importance of the child's healing because of its impact on the adult the child becomes.

As the session was coming to a close, Eva talked about the anxiety and tension she experiences when she moves into the adult world, and the anxiety she experiences when she is dealing with the insurance case worker.

Session 4 (November 17, 1.5 hours)

Eva had been writing in her journal but had felt it was not a comfortable way for her to explore her thoughts and feelings. However, she said, the exercise had stimulated a great deal of reflection.

Eva talked about her relationships with friends, her experience with a job interview in which she had felt discounted, her experiences at the university, and feeling she is "learning from her feet again." Her dream she said was to teach physical education, and she had ideas about where she might be able to do this. The main themes of the session were a new experience of feeling grounded; her desire to be seen beyond her "disability"; finding her calling; and her feelings about the sacredness of her own space. She expressed her frustration over lack of respect for her personal space by people who would bump into her without offering apologies; or people who would use disabled parking spaces, which made it more awkward for her to move from parking lots into buildings, especially when it was pouring with rain.

Session 5 (December 15, 1.5 hours)

Eva talked about two crises she had faced, how she had handled them, and the positive effect on her confidence of "conquering" them. One incident had involved her van breaking down and finding herself in a dangerous situation on the highway. She recounted how she got help and taken to safety. In the second situation an emergency had occurred at home. She had managed to stay calm, get help, and was able to get the situation under control.

Eva also recalled a recent experience of feeling fully engaged with a child, observing his responses to her allowing him to follow his own direction.

Eva felt she was “working with the world now, instead of fighting it.” “It’s way easier,” she said. “I’m optimistic.”

Eva added, “Sandplay seems to work. I feel calmer; a lot calmer.”

Session 6 (January 20, 2 hours)

Eva presented as cheerful and humorous. She reported having had more problems with her van, and her growing dissatisfaction with the quality of the vehicle.

Over the Christmas holidays Eva’s boyfriend John’s mother had died of a heart attack and John had introduced the idea of he and Eva having children together. Eva had strong feelings about moving in that direction and making sure the best possible situation in terms of her own health was available to a child.

Eva was more interested at present in developing her own career, and finding outlets for her physical energy. She had found that she still enjoyed skiing immensely, even though she had to change her expectations of competing at the level she had been used to before her illness.

Eva’s family was planning a summer holiday together. She expressed some apprehension about the physical challenges of travel for her now, but was also looking forward to it. Eva created her second picture in this session (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2. Sandplay Picture 2



Sandplay Picture 2 Description

Four geodes frame the far right corner of the picture. A house of birchbark sits in the far left corner. A man carrying a bundle of hay stands next to it. A second birchbark house with a campfire next to it sits on the left side near the front. A wood log fence—a “dock”—lies on its side in the front centre. Two canoes—the left one with a paddle—sit in front of the dock. Two starfish lie in the far right corner. These were also used as she was settling in to the play to make impressions in the sand in front of the birchbark house and in the near right corner while it was empty and, as the last gesture, in the front of the picture closest to her. River stones distributed with the geodes frame the right side, from the rear centre to the front centre. Twigs frame three sides of the picture, and are concentrated in the area behind the house in the far left corner. Three twigs lying on their sides also frame an otter placed in the right between the starfish and the canoes. A golden crab sits to the right of the otter outside the frame formed by the twig. Three trees stand on the left side and lichen is distributed mainly around the right edges.

Sandplay Picture 2 Narrative

It looks like a vacation place. Maybe people live there year-round. It's a real lake. The whole thing is one little inlet, where you can't see the neighbours.

The twigs are all trees. The twigs in the lake are driftwood. The green mossy stuff is like grass or vegetation that grows on the edge of the lake.

In front of the houses is the beach. I liked the print [the impressions she made with the starfish]. The part that's printed is land. The rest is water.

There are two canoes to take people away. I was hoping for a kayak. On the right is a kayak; the other is a canoe.

The otter is having fun. He belongs in the lake. I notice he has a starfish too. I notice he's looking at the light, basking in the sun.

The man with the bundle, reminds me of John. He doesn't really fit because there aren't other people.

I took the pot off the fire—didn't like that. Like sitting 'round the campfire.

The wood fence is a dock.

That house reminds me of when I was 13 I went on an exchange trip. The house was like that; trails all over. I remember the trees.

The twigs are organic looking. That's why I like those houses too.

The geodes look neat with the light reflecting in them.

The lamp [shining on the tray] looks like the sun on the land. The daytime is on the left and the evening on the right. Maybe otter is doing a moonlight swim.

I asked Eva to pay attention to her body. She said she felt calmer. She said she felt most tension when deciding where to put the dock.

I knew it had to fit somehow. I just wasn't sure where or how. I have no idea why the dock would be there for me. Maybe the campers have taken a break after their portage.

This is all earth tones. John is like that.

I like the gold crab—made me think of skiing. He's small because I'm not very good yet.

Maybe the guy is carrying in groceries.

The fence is a natural thing. You can play with it [it was pliable]. I also knew it wasn't going to be a fence. I thought it was going to be a bridge.

The starfish are alive.

I wish I could hang things. It seems kind of flat. I would like to have fish wire and hooks. I would hang shiny things [stars] then it would be night time. If it was night not too much would change. The guy would be sleeping, the crab might crawl under, the fire might be out.

The sticks work. They are taller trees. There would be a tire swing. The other house is his friend's house.

That guy's working too hard. Otter has it figured out. I think he's hungry. I don't know.

Sometimes it bugs me asking for help. It can be a problem. Sometimes people just don't know how.

Session 7 (February 18, 2 hours)

Eva presented as cheerful and energetic. She was ready to “go forward” and was planning her future, she said, in particular her education and career. She was clearing the basement of her home of materials stored since before her diagnosis; and she was sorting out her experiences with people on the “continuum of sensitivity” toward her disability.

Eva began to talk in more detail about her family of origin experiences, the effects she had felt of her father's rigid demands for conformity to his values and the effects of her mother's lack of availability and threats of suicide. Eva talked about the violence between her parents and incidents from early in her life that had left her anxious and fearful, attempting to protect her siblings. Eva described how she felt the emotional chaos had affected her: she was tentative in relationships; she was not affectionate; and it was difficult to trust. Then Eva talked about the shift in her relationship with her parents following her diagnosis. “They became reliable.” This brought tears. “They were there, no matter what.” “It was like a rebirth.”

Session 8 (March 9, 2 hours)

Eva said she was feeling hurt and angry about “society's devaluation of disabled people,” was asking herself whether she played a role in this, and whether she should take some of the responsibility. She was able, she said, to find solace from these values when she could escape into the natural world. Her third picture is shown in Figure 2.3.

If I had more time I'd add more activity. Batwoman and Robin are playing hide-and-seek.

John sitting on the stone [figure in the armchair]. He's taking a break. The stone is a little outdoor rink outside the igloo. It reminds me of my brother's rink. The chair is like a throne. It isn't any old bench. It doesn't fit with anything else in here. It's high maintenance, like the rink I guess.

Pointing to the pot on the twigs:

this is a fire under the pot. The rock head [the black female head] represents campfire stories. This is where you warm up after the rink and the beach.

Pointing to the castle ruin on the left edge:

It's a cross between the beach and the forest. Houses are in the forest. You can go anywhere. It depends on whether you are in a hurry. You can go around the front or the back.

Pointing to the wood logs:

That's the dock. Both are kayaks. One could be a double. I want people to be able to....

They all fit together. The fire and houses are on hills.

Eva puts the male figure in the chair.

It's busy. There's a lot in there. There may be food in the pot for John. The otter is visiting the starfish. The kayaker is taking soup stew to John.

Session 9 (May 15, 1 hour)

Eva presents as well and energetic. She reports that John has moved in with her and is sharing costs, which takes care of some of the financial burden. Eva talks about her feeling of connection to "earth things."

Eva expresses a strong sense of being in charge generally, then tells me about an abortion she had when she was 18. She has not yet told John, though she has

brought up the subject in a general way. John's disapproval has left her feeling torn, as she does not want secrets between them. She wants him to know about the abortion and why she had it. Eva herself disapproves. She holds religious beliefs that do not support abortion, and feels guilty about her choice. She says she feels her sarcoma is God's punishment.

Session 10 (May 18, 1 hour)

Eva talks about her beginning to be able to breathe, in the sense of feeling more accepting of her losses. She said she had always thought of herself as being able to "get out of any situation," easily, quickly. Now, she simply has to "set things up," and "has a better idea of what to expect." Eva became contemplative: "the transformation is whole, not just bodily." We talked about what it has been like for her psychologically to adjust to her physical limitations. She said she was becoming more of an activist, and wanted to be involved in working with the city on behalf of disabled people, especially in the area of public transportation. I acknowledged with her how she had been able to get a better grasp of how she wanted to be in the world, how she had become more appreciative of her resourcefulness, and how she was reshaping her goals for herself in ways that were both satisfying and realistic. Figure 2.4 is Eva's fourth picture.

Figure 2.4. Sandplay Picture 4



Sandplay Picture 4 Description

The picture is framed by pieces of coral in each of the four corners, two butterflies along the far and right edges, a black female face at the left edge and a batman and robot C3PO figure standing side by side at the right edge. Thirteen shells are distributed throughout. Dark blue stones are scattered between and around shells on the left side, light brown stones are scattered around an otter and two starfish near the centre; white and clear stones lie in front of a black swan taking off; green stones, a large brown tonna shell and murex shell form a large circle surrounding the swan.

Sandplay Picture 4 Narrative

I guess the stones are my version of water.

She refers to the right side as the “beach,” and the left side as “deep water.”

C3PO made me think about R2D2. Batman and C3PO both remind me of John. They’re sitting on the beach. They should be skipping along the seawall. They’re not in a hurry. They’re enjoying the scenery—like the otter—just hanging out. Butterflies are flitting around. The bird makes bubbles when it’s taking off.

When Eva pays attention to her body, she says:

I am more relaxed. This is what I wanted to do. Now I can relax. I don’t have to turn around to the next thing. It’s a space—for smelling the flowers.

This is a change of scene. I like the sparkling water things. If I can’t be on the beach, it’s relaxing having the water on my body; although now it’s difficult because I have to hold onto things, be careful.

Referring to her new way of life, she says:

Now I can breathe. I’m getting past the loss. Before, I was confident I could get out of any situation, now I have to set things up. Now I have a better idea of what to expect. The transformation is whole, not just bodily.

Eva expressed her feeling that she has come a long way in adjusting to the changes brought on by her illness.

Session 11 (June 29, 3 hours)

Eva announced that she is thinking about getting a dog. She spoke often about how she envisions her and the dog being together.

Eva is noticing that she is dealing with many endings, and that she wants to establish something solid, something new.

Eva built her fifth and final picture in this session (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5. Sandplay Picture 5



Sandplay Picture 5 Description

An otter is swimming on its back under a bridge at the centre. Coloured stones and coral, are scattered around this central motif which is encircled by a pathway that leads to the bridge. This pathway encircles a tree in the rear right corner in which two doves and an angel are sitting, a castle with people sitting on a bench nearby, in the near right corner, and a tree at the left edge which has a horse standing underneath it. A playful young polar bear is on its back to the right of the bridge, in the otter's path. A turtle is walking toward the bear from below. Three frogs, one with a gold crown on its head are grouped together just below the polar bear's left paw. A tiny clay house is outside the pathway in the centre far-edge. A man sits on a bench to the right of the clay house. A couple is sitting on a bench near a small tree in the right corner, opposite the

couple next to the castle. Two people are standing on the bridge at the centre. A boy and girl holding hands are walking along the path toward the bridge from the left side. Two smaller bridges are at the left and right sides of the pathway.

Sandplay Picture 5 Narrative

The clay house is an outhouse by a manmade lake, a walking path, rolling path that's easy to walk. Big ramping bridge in the middle. On the right is a playground for agility practise, for a little dog. No swings but there would be. I would go on the swings, but the dog wouldn't. I'd have to have someone with me.

That's John (man sitting on the bench next to clay house) waiting for me while I'm in the bathroom. He's probably texting me, "are you ok?" I'd say, loudly, "I'm fine—it's too hot!"

Pointing to the blue castle:

this is like a Cinderella's castle, like at Disneyland, people sitting on benches, like on vacation.

Pointing to the bridge on the left side:

left is the not so nice side—more stabby—could get caught up. Or you could get over to the right side where it's fun. No-one likes the pokey side [the left]. This side [right] has frogs and a frog prince and turtle. The polar bear is drinking coke. The right is maybe more taken care of. The angel's there looking over everything. The left has two trees. It's maybe more organic, wilder. No-one's making sure it's all good. The horse is like a dressage horse—constrained, not very happy. His ears are turned back, but he's doing what he's gotta do. He's in the shade of the tree 'cause it's hot out.

Tracing the pathway:

go all way round or go over the bridge and stay in the nice part. If you're very adventurous you can go all around. There should be a path so if you go in the water you can go on the path.

Sensing into her body, Eva says:

I was going around the left side—the hard part. Do I go around the hard part again or go around the nice side again? Those two could

have thought they were going to the nice side and could have ended up in the hard part. The hard side makes my shoulders twinge.

Then Eva recalls her experience of getting the diagnosis. She says she is hyper-vigilant all the time now, maintaining balance, being careful not to bump into people, staying safe.

Most of my frustration is there. I can't just *be*.

Eva is aware of the two realities she lives in—the before and after—and that she is attempting to find a happy medium. She continues reflecting on the dualities in the picture.

This side [right] is much more peaceful and inviting. This side [left] is the un-fun, tedious, that's me cleaning up after the dog, but look at how much fun the dog is too.

When I look at the frogs and turtles—they can go on land or in the water. I get how life is when able, and also when disabled. I sit in both realms. I feel like a crossover between being able bodied and disabled. Now I feel that I'm amphibious. I straddle both worlds. I like being amphibious, except it's tiring. The polar bear, otter, also go on water and land.

Session 12 (August 2, 1 hour)

Eva and her family were about to embark on a holiday together and this stimulated reflection on the dynamics in her family of origin. She found it “helpful and relaxing” to process the genogram. She was able to see the connection between her parents' early experiences and their behaviour. She began reflecting on a new perspective on the meaning of their interpersonal behaviour and her relationship with them.

Session 13 (August 9, 1 hour)

After returning from the family holiday, Eva found herself reflecting on the year in therapy as a process of differentiating from her family experience so that she might make her own life. She described this time as “the end of a chapter.” She felt she might

now better see and accept the problematic relationships in the family and her physical situation. Eva felt that her process was complete for the time being.

2.2.3. Conclusion

Figure 2.6 shows all of Eva's sandpictures together to more easily identify significant themes that are revealed in the use of certain figures. I observed the following:

- the natural world provides a context for each scene;
- the frog prince appears in the first and last pictures;
- the otter appears to slowly swim in a spiral toward the centre beginning in Pictures 2, and through 3, 4 and 5;
- one starfish is barely visible in the first picture, then pairs of starfish appear in Pictures 2, 3 and 4;
- the pairs of starfish are in proximity to the otter in each of Pictures 2, 3 and 4;
- turtles and frogs appear in the first and last pictures;
- the third picture with large fire and black female face precedes a significant change in content in Pictures 4 and 5;
- there is a pair of kayaks (as she called them) in Pictures 2 and 3;
- shells and/or coloured stones are in each picture;
- castles appear in Pictures 1, 3 and 5;
- greenery (lichen, trees) is in each picture except Picture 4;
- the final picture contains three bridges;
- the content in the last picture is united within a pathway around the circumference.

These observations and others may be interpreted in the context of Eva's life in different ways, as I will show in the chapters following.

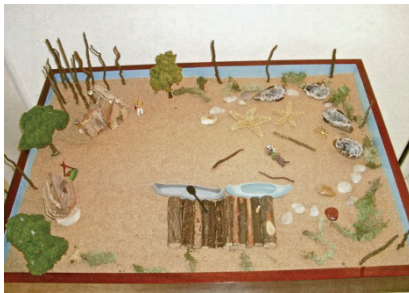
Figure 2.6. The Whole-Part Relationship of Eva's Sandplay Pictures 1 to 5



Sandplay 1



Sandplay 1 Detail



Sandplay 2



Sandplay 2 Detail



Sandplay 3



Sandplay 4



Sandplay 5

This phenomenological description demonstrates the initial step taken when interpreting a Sandplay process. The description is, to the extent possible, a detailed record of what transpired during the therapeutic process, without formal interpretation. In a traditional interpretation the phenomenological description is followed with a Jungian/Kalffian perspective on the case material. I will follow this custom in showing interpretations of the descriptive material from three different perspectives over the following three chapters.

The next chapter presents the Jungian/Kalffian understanding and points to the limitations of the intrapsychic approach. The fourth and fifth chapters show how Daoist *yin-yang* thought and contemporary hermeneutics provide frameworks reflecting current understanding of experience as socially constructed and relational and contextual in nature. Drawing on these explorations, I will conclude this thesis with an inter-perspective stance that may provide a tentative alternative model for approaching an understanding of the Sandplay process.

Chapter 3.

Kalffian Perspectives on the Sandplay Process of Change

3.1. Introduction

The clinical case illustrates how change may be facilitated by the patient's play in the context of the patient-therapist relationship and the therapist's understanding of the images. Dora Kalff (2003) believed that the therapist's emerging understanding of the symbolism in the pictures was an essential part of the therapist's role as protector, space and freedom (p. 7) in the emotional relationship with the patient. The psychological meaning in the images continuously evolves as the patient reveals more of herself nonverbally and verbally and the therapist arrives at new understanding. It is interpreted through a process of associating the image's components with what is known about the patient and with collective archetypal associations that include biological attributes of animals and plants the patient uses (Kalff, 1992). My interpretation of the case highlights the change process as it is understood from a Kalffian/Jungian perspective. I will comment throughout on how this understanding reflects the intrapsychic framework for Sandplay.

As introduction to the interpretation, I will elaborate the main themes of Jungian and Kalffian theory as they relate to the practice of Sandplay in general. I will start with a description of Jung's developmental concept of individuation, the overarching idea in Jung's psychology and Kalffian Sandplay alike (D. Kalff, 2003, p. 1). I will follow this with a description of the Kalffian perspective on therapeutic change.

3.2. Jungian Individuation in Sandplay

Individuation is an ongoing process, in and outside therapy, and is never fully completed in a Sandplay process, or in a lifetime. There is always more unconscious to become aware of and to integrate. Thus, evidence of individuation in a Sandplay process represents the patient's experience in the context of the process and the life being lived. Individuation continues after the Sandplay has been completed, as the patient continues to integrate new perspectives into their life experience.

Individuation is defined in Jungian theory as the process of realizing one's individuality, Self, or wholeness, through a collaborative "working relationship" (Hopcke, 1999, p. 63) or union (Jung, 1966b, p. 289, para. 486; 1969d) between conscious and the unconscious.²³ This "working relationship" in Sandplay is manifested in play with the sand and figures. In the playing, what is conscious (the explicit meaning the patient gives to the components of the image and the image as a whole) and unconscious (meaning that is concealed in the image) are united. The uniting of conscious with unconscious is a continuous, emerging and creative process of the Self (wholeness), being manifested.

In Jung's theory, the unconscious consists of two layers, a personal (subjective) unconscious, and a deeper layer, an impersonal (objective) or collective unconscious (Jung, 1966b), which contains archetypes. Archetypes are inherited patterns of essential human experiences and perceptions (Hopcke, 1999; Jung, 1969d). In Sandplay, archetypes may be represented symbolically in mythological stories or fairytales the patient may refer to in the image. They may also be symbolized in the figures, and configurations of figures. Archetypes may be anthropomorphic, such as mother, father, child, trickster; or may be what Jung termed transformational (Hopcke, 1999), such as archetypes of wholeness, birth or death, journey, marriage. Dora Kalff (2003) emphasized Sandplay's capacity to facilitate an experience of the archetype of the Self, or wholeness, which regulates the individuation process (von Franz, 1964). Kalff

²³ Jung (1966b, p. 289, para. 486) points out that "It is sufficient to know that the human psyche is both individual and collective, and that its well-being depends on the natural co-operation of these two apparently contradictory sides. Their union is essentially an irrational life process...."

described the Self as an experience of “inner security that insures...among other things, the development of [the individual’s] inherent personality” (p. 6), that is, an individuation process.

Individuation thus concentrates the therapeutic work on the cultivation of individuality *and* connection to the larger human experience symbolized in the archetypes. This would seem to be a more than adequate description of a process of becoming a person capable of realizing their potential. However, in its conception from an isolated mind perspective, it is incomplete. The focus on internal processes leaves out considerations of the individual’s embeddedness in historical social and cultural contexts. Context may or may not be addressed by the therapist, depending on his or her theoretical orientation. Because we are all embedded in contexts all of the time, I maintain that what these are and the nature of their influences should be brought into the therapy explicitly, verbally, and processed with the patient. The Sandplay therapist should consider the patient’s contexts and the therapist’s own contexts as having a significant effect on the patient’s understanding. They are always present in the relationship and in the sandpictures.

Following is a review of the Kalfian perspective on change that will be illustrated in the case interpretation. The free and protected space, the symbol, and archetypes of the self, shadow, masculine and feminine all play a role in this process.

3.3. The Kalfian Perspective on Therapeutic Change in Sandplay

Psychological changes depicted in the sandtray do not follow a precise, linear sequence. The order and the nature of phases of change differ from individual to individual and it is important that the therapist accepts the uniqueness of a particular process. It would be un-Kalfian to become judgmental or anxious if a patient’s pictures do not seem to be following the theoretical process. The theoretical considerations I outline below serve as a guide to understanding the most common components of an individuation process in Sandplay. The free, protected environment set up by the therapist is, for Kalff, the singular most important condition for change. The transcendent function of the symbol is a fundamental mediator of change in the Kalfian/Jungian

understanding. The significance of archetypes of Self, shadow, masculine and feminine, also play an important role in the change process. These will be illustrated in my interpretation of the case. Each patient works in their individual way. It is the therapist's work to accompany the patient through their particular process. As in a verbal analysis, a patient does the work they want to do or feels able to do.

3.3.1. Play and Change in the Free and Protected Space

The starting point in Kalfian Sandplay is the setting, the "free and protected" space (Kalff, 2003, p. 7) created within the patient-therapist relationship. Kalff stressed that it was the quality of the relationship that determined this environment, and that it was fundamentally instrumental in facilitating the individuation process. The therapist must fully accept the patient, must see the possibilities inherent in the patient and protect these as they develop. When the therapist takes this attitude and recognizes the patient's uniqueness, the patient may feel he or she is not alone. He or she may see the therapist as representing the protector, the space, freedom, and at the same time the boundaries (Kalff, 2003).

Usually in the first or second session the therapist will describe how the sandtray and figures may be used if and when the patient feels ready to play. The therapist describes the sand's qualities, how it can be manipulated, and how through playing we can fulfill the need to become more complete (Kalff as cited in Turner, 2013). The therapist may also describe how the play can be helpful for expressing and working through experiences and knowledge that cannot be verbalized. The therapist must not put any pressure on the patient to work in the sand, and must not want a particular result. In the "free, protected space" the therapist must accept the patient and the patient's expressions completely. Judgment and expectations are easily and habitually communicated and have been experienced before by the patient. The anxiety and self-criticism the patient would feel works against the sense of freedom and discovery that playing needs.

In order to protect the patient's experience, play is limited to within the boundaries of the sandtray. These limits also focus the play and intensify its effects. In the ideal situation, there are two sandtrays of specific dimensions (28.5 x 19.5 x 3

inches) available to the patient, one containing dry sand, and the other damp, to which more water may be added.

In the usually quiet therapeutic space there is more action and interaction than is apparent. While witnessing the patient playing, the therapist as much as possible imagines the patient's experience as it is communicated bodily, in the use of the sand, and the choice and placement of figures. We can say that a play interaction or dialogue occurs in ways other than between the patient and the sand and figures. The patient and therapist, therapist and the sandpicture are also in a play relationship.

In the Kalfian model play is understood as synchronistic, where there is an acausal relationship between the psychological and material worlds (Jung, 1969d, pp. 419-531, para. 816-997). In Sandplay synchronicity describes the dynamics between the patients' experiences and the symbols they choose to represent them. Kalf described Sandplay in these terms in a conversation with Estelle Weinrib (2004) that took place in June 1972:

Sandplay is a synchronistic event in that there is a simultaneous psychophysical phenomenon. The inner image is given physical expression. With each synchronistic event, the next step is born.

The synthesis between the psychic and the physical becomes the thesis for the next step in the process. There is a healing synchronistic moment when the inner and outer happen simultaneously. That is, the patient reveals the inner subjective state at the same moment that the therapist outside understands it. (pp. 73-74)

Thus, in Kalf's view, during the Sandplay process and in the free, protected environment, the therapist's interpretation as intuitive, indirect, implicit understanding, rather than direct, explicit verbal exchanges and interpretations about a picture's content, opens the way for the patient's self-initiated psychological development.

For Dora Kalf (2003), play is language that goes beyond the limits of verbal expression. When the patient is absorbed in play, she is engaged in consciousness free of the ego's direction, reason and judgment and more attuned to nuance and ambiguity. In the Kalfian understanding of play, the images created in the sand while the patient is in this state of consciousness symbolize preverbal, forgotten, traumatic and other implicit, unformed experiences (D. Kalf, 2003). Thus, the role of play is to mediate

between conscious and unconscious (Kalff, 1966, 1990, 1991, 1997; D. Kalff, 2003) in individuation and its intrinsic symbolic processes.

3.3.2. The Symbol in the Change Process and the Emergent Nature of Understanding for Patient and Therapist

Like Jung, Kalff held an immense respect for the unconscious resources available to consciousness and the power of symbols to mediate the emergence of new meaning in the individuation process. Jung (1969d) called the process of facilitating changes in meaning the symbol's transcendent function (pp. 67-91, para. 131-193). Images are symbolic, that is, having indefinite possible meanings, because they are perceived through the lens of the observer's historical experience and value system, and, for the therapist, theoretical preferences as well. The transcendent function of the symbol is a product of the dynamics Jung describes in his theory of the tension and reconciliation of opposites.

In Kalffian/Jungian theory the patient's forward movement in the individuation process is propelled by psychic energy generated by the tension and union of opposites. According to this theory, psychic energy is created by the patient's instinctive search, of which she may be unaware, for the unconscious opposite of her conscious experience (Jung, 1966b, pp. 53-54, para. 78). In Sandplay, the tension and union play out in the patient's symbolization of the figures and the sand and water. The patient discovers a wholly new psychological perspective (pp. 53-54), symbolically represented in a uniting of the opposites. In her analyses of her patients' Sandplay, Dora Kalff (2003) frequently refers to the awakening, movement or blockage of psychic energy and suggests that what we hope to see in a Sandplay process is "the positive use of these energies" (p. 50), in the natural process of resolving the psychological tensions the patient is facing.

In the Kalffian model of understanding, the Sandplay therapist slowly perceives patterns of experience and movement of energy as it develops in successive sessions. How the patient has symbolized her experiences and what she says about them communicates emotions and values associated with the issues the patient is working on. The therapist can only approach the meaning of these symbolic communications with humility, empathy, and uncertainty. She attempts to understand the patient's

unconscious process by merging the psychological meaning suggested in the symbols in the sandpictures with her knowledge of the patient's presenting problems and experiences.

The therapist further develops and refines her understanding of the pictures as the patient's process progresses in the context of the patient-therapist verbal and non-verbal dialogue in session and the patient's narrative or story about the picture. The therapist often uses her understanding of the process implicit in the picture's symbolism to formulate verbal interventions, without referring directly to the picture, to facilitate this process. Later, in reviewing the pictures, therapist and patient validate and anchor their meaning in the patient's development.

3.3.3. Archetypes of Self, Shadow, Masculine and Feminine in the Change Process

In the Kalfian/Jungian understanding the archetypes of the collective unconscious are the principle mediators of change. As the patient plays, images emerge that are symbolic manifestations of archetypes. These expressions are powerful and moving, for the patient and for the therapist. An experience of the archetype can, as Jung (1956, p. 232, para. 344) describes it, "seize" the whole person. The patient can experience a surge of emotional energy that gives her pause. This is a powerful influence that can mediate a shift in the patient's perspective.

The change process (D. Kalf, 2003, pp. 9-14; Weinrib, 2004, pp. 83-91) typically begins with an indication in the first pictures of the problem and possible resolutions, followed by a descent to the shadow: the individual's unconscious, unacceptable and/or unrecognized aspects of themselves. In Sandplay these shadow aspects are concealed in the symbolism of the figures and sand, where they can be physically and imaginatively manipulated in play. In the creative processing of shadow elements through play and the dialogue with the therapist, the patient's conscious perceptions have also been subject to a process of change.

In the Kalfian understanding, the meeting with the shadow is followed with a centering process in which the Self is "constellated." This is an indication that the patient is experiencing a sense of wholeness and peace, perhaps increased mastery of self-

regulation. Having worked with and integrated shadow elements, there is a renewed sense of well-being as the ego is strengthened through its relationship with the Self. This development is seen as significant and the foundation for an ongoing relationship between ego and Self. The ego-Self relationship is known as the “relativization of the ego,” a relationship in which the ego is modulated by awareness of its limitations and strengths and becomes “reborn” (Weinrib, 2004, p. 86). In Kalfian/Jungian intrapsychic theory the ego and Self are represented in this way as autonomous structures that are ideally in relationship. As concepts modelled on an intrapsychic understanding they are reified as structures with specific kinds of contents located in a psyche that is both conscious and unconscious in nature.

This is also the case with the concepts of animus and anima²⁴, which in the Kalfian understanding are activated by the reborn, strengthened ego. While the debate about anima and animus is real and must be taken seriously, as pointed out by Hopcke (1999) it is also important to keep in mind that these so-called “feminine” and “masculine” principles remain abstract patterns of human behaviour with long cross-cultural, diverse histories not intrinsically allied with gender. According to Dora Kalff (2003) both *anima/Eros* and *animus/Logos* are activated by an ego strengthened by its relationship with the Self. In Sandplay, feminine and masculine figures or sand shaped into “feminine” or “masculine” forms are seen as symbolizing qualities associated with relatedness and receptivity, the lunar and the passive consciousness; and qualities associated with the spirit, and logical thinking, the solar and active. Both women and men share both “feminine” and “masculine” qualities. As patient and therapist continue the process together, the symbolic work with the patient’s “feminine” and “masculine” aspects is followed with further ego development (Weinrib, 2004) until it is completed.

²⁴ The Jungian animus and anima is a highly controversial paradigm debated by feminists and post-Jungians alike. It is challenged for its oppositional dualism, its prioritizing of gender “otherness,” and its privileging of the masculine (Rowland, 2011). Authors Claire Douglas (1990), Susan Rowland (2011), Demaris Wehr (1987), Polly Young-Eisendrath (1990) are a few of the many voices in the debate, all offering different points of view in their opposition to the conservatism, heterosexuality and privilege reflected in Jung’s (1969a, pp. 11-22, paras. 20-42) conceptualization,

3.4. Interpretation

3.4.1. Sessions 1 and 2

Eva and I had spent the first two sessions together developing a rapport. She had spoken about her disappointment with her fall from stature and the high expectations of competence she had of herself and wanted to feel from others as well. Competence seemed to be the vehicle through which she could feel seen and significant. She hoped through our work together to become more organized, to be able to finish projects she started, to regain a sense of autonomy, and reduce her anxiety. We interpreted this to mean that she wanted to come to terms with her losses, accept the unavoidable physical limitations, reinterpret the meaning of competence, and feel she could be seen and appreciated for more than her achievements.

3.4.2. Session 3 (Sandplay Picture 1)

At this juncture in the process Eva has started to work in the sand. I will indicate the general phases of the change process as conceptualized by Kalff. Understanding the changes in this way reflects the intrapsychic interpretation of the process as internal, dynamic, and isolated from contexts.

The Psychological Situation and Potential for Change

Following Kalff's approach, I paid close attention to Eva's construction of this first picture and will elaborate its content in some detail to reflect its significance from the Kalffian perspective. In Dora Kalff's (2003) view, the first picture provides the therapist with important information about the patient's psychological situation and possibilities for a positive outcome: "Hidden in the symbols the picture may contain the path to the goal of the realization of the Self" (p. 9).

I noticed the frog prince and the white ball as she placed them, and silently to myself associated them with the fairy tale. I was curious about whether Eva might also make this connection. Jung's colleague, Marie-Louise von Franz (1970), who made a comprehensive study of the Jungian interpretation of fairy tales, commented that:

After working for many years in this field, I have come to the conclusion that all fairy tales endeavour to describe one and the same psychic fact....This unknown fact is what Jung calls the self, which is the psychic totality of an individual and also, paradoxically, the regulating centre of the collective unconscious. Every individual and every nation has its own modes of experiencing this psychic reality. (pp. 1-2)

Sandplay patients frequently bring fairy tale motifs into their sandpictures. In my experience, the fairy tales I have encountered have all played a significant role in the patient's process of change. In a Kalfian interpretation, the amplification, or interpretation of a fairy tale's archetypal pattern provides a collective context for the patient's personal associations. In the Kalfian understanding, when the individual is aware of her personal experience as an expression of a universal, archetypal pattern, there is a genuine possibility for change.

As Eva was creating the scene I also noticed the concentration of amphibious animals around the water in the far right and their collective position facing the centre of the picture, which suggested a convergence of psychic energies²⁵ associated with amphibious, or dual being directed toward the centre. I associated this with Eva's dual experiences of herself as extremely fit and competent and then unable to compete, even dependent on others. In the Kalfian model, the therapist looks for indications in the sandpicture of the movement of psychic energy. This is often represented in animals or people that are placed so that they are moving, pointing or looking in a particular direction. This movement can give the therapist clues as to the direction of the patient's process and how the process is progressing. The notion of psychic energy generating a goal-oriented purpose is intrapsychic in its perspective, illustrating a focus on internal dynamics or interactions between structures located within the mind. Eva's placing the amphibious creatures so that they faced toward the centre suggested a connection, as yet unclear, between dual being and centre, or Self.

²⁵ Psychic energy, or libido, is an important concept in the Kalfian/Jungian intrapsychic model. It suggests that although the psyche is understood as a container, as illustrated by Weinrib (2004; see Appendix A) it is also conceived as a dynamic system greater than the sum of its parts, rather than a static system of fixed components. This was a new model of psychic functioning developed in reaction to the materialistic bias of early European psychological research, which had reduced all functions of the mind to biological or neurological processes (Hopcke, 1999, p. 21).

In Sandplay the absence of figures may be symbolic of potential. I thought that something might possibly enter the empty space, perhaps in a later picture, and that transformative energy may be ready to break through (symbolized in the fire-breathing dragon, butterflies, frogs) to propel the process. There were no people, although she spoke about people in her narrative. I kept these thoughts about the image to myself, and explored with Eva her own impressions after she had completed the picture (see Chapter 2, "Sandplay Picture 1 Narrative"). In the Kalfian model the patient's unconscious process is allowed to unfold without directives from the therapist, such as interpretations of the picture while it is being constructed. In Sandplay theory, therapist interpretation of elements of the picture at this time risks breaking into and redirecting the patient's implicit knowing that is guiding its construction. Dora Kalf's (2003) idea was that it was not necessary to communicate the therapist's insights in words because it was the experience of the symbol that mattered. She conceded however that in "certain circumstances" (p. 9) interpretation, as long as it was connected with the patient's life, could be helpful. Generally speaking, the therapist's interpretations are not given until the process is complete and patient and therapist are reviewing it together. In this intrapsychic perspective, the patient's and therapist's internal experience of the symbol is given autonomy and priority over explicit interpersonal communications.

Eva commented first on the frog and the "golden ball" [the white ball] and associated it immediately to the fairy tale *The Frog Prince* (see Appendix C for a précis). She returned to the frog prince following her general associations with other elements in the picture, describing him as "bored" because "he is royalty and can't venture out," adding that "he *would* know what to do when someone comes with the golden ball." Eva's gravitation toward the frog and his "ball" and her associations suggested their symbolic significance. A Kalfian/Jungian understanding of the psychological meaning of the fairy tale *The Frog Prince* underscores the individuation process as the focus of her work (von Franz, 1970). The frog in the *Frog Prince* also pursues a golden ball. It does not belong to him but it becomes the mediator of his transformation back into a prince. The action between frog and ball that Eva refers to symbolizes the experience of an individuation process, which requires courage, persistence, and commitment. I felt that Eva possessed these qualities and I was optimistic about her prognosis.

The therapist makes note of these symbols and what they might have to say about the patient's process of change. Clarifying questions that stay within the metaphorical meaning of the picture may be asked in the conversation with the patient about the picture when it has been completed. Eva described her own experience of feeling "bored" and constrained. When she said that the frog would know what to do when someone comes with the golden ball, she seemed to communicate that there was a solution to be found in her relationship with someone who could facilitate her individuation process. The symbolism also suggested to me that it was important for her to experience me bringing myself into our relationship. Dora Kalff (1966, 1990, 2003) emphasized the therapist's role of creating space within the therapeutic relationship where the patient's Self may be constellated and can develop an ongoing connection with the ego, in the individuation process. This illustrates the intrapsychic understanding of the psyche as dynamic and structured: ego and Self are entities that in Sandplay theory must ideally be in a living relationship with each other.

The *Frog Prince's* limitations and desire for connection with the Self symbolized in the ball became a central theme in Eva's process and illustrated the Kalfian/Jungian theory of the self-regulating psyche imagined as a dynamic intrapsychic process that is activated and isolated within the mind. Her reference to the Self, understood in the Kalfian/Jungian view as her totality of ego-consciousness *and* unconscious, symbolized by the golden ball suggested that Eva knew unconsciously that connection with her Self²⁶ would help her to know how to proceed in her life. She noted that "the frog part is a natural part of him; the crown is sparkling; but he doesn't look happy. It's not fun." This seemed to describe Eva's connection with her own nature and her body in her new status, which was special in its difference, but left her for now anxious and depressed. When Eva focused attention on her body as she studied the picture, she added that *she* felt like the frog prince "because he's in this organic space but can't do much because he has to be *just so...all royal.*" He had a certain role to play. He had a certain status. He was more comfortable with dragon and crocodile than with the other frogs. "He has to wait until people bring him the ball. That's not really fun. He can't discover things on his

²⁶ A living ongoing dialogue with her unconscious that has the effect of expanding her resiliency, experiences, and choices. Her process, as seen in the images, shows how this develops.

own.” When invited to say more about this, and whether there was anything a frog prince could discover on his own, Eva continued, tearfully, “I don’t want to be stuck and dependent on everyone else.”

Eva talked about the picture as part wild and part more domestic, a symbolic expression of the “tension of opposites” that in Jungian theory generates the psychic energy for change, and an illustration of the orientation to assumptions of duality and separation characteristic of the intrapsychic perspective. The “more domestic” part is observant, relaxed, connected to the rational and consciousness [the sun²⁷]. It suggested that Eva was familiar with the rational, where she felt at ease and had functioned well. But there was another way she experienced herself which felt “wild.” Did the wild part represent the emotions she had kept in check in order to manage herself within the discord of family life? The accident had thrown her into a previously unknown or unacknowledged experience of herself. Eva described the more domestic (home-based) part as “manicured lawn,” suggesting manipulation of Nature for purposes of appearance and aesthetic preferences. Eva had been acculturated to be rational, independent, strong, accomplished athletically, but also, in the context of the emotional turbulence at home, anxious about safety, unable to trust. This training at home had separated her from her emotional life, which she seemed to be re-discovering.

The crescent Eva created on the left edge of the sandtray is associated in Jungian theory with the phases of the moon and suggests that change is coming. The therapist’s awareness and understanding of symbols of change and renewal as hopeful signs promotes understanding and is important in building an atmosphere of trust (D. Kalff, 2003, p. 9). The moon has its effects on the ebb and flow of Nature in the myths of almost all peoples (p. 90). Due to its physical size, this crescent suggested strongly Eva’s potential for change. The moon cycles of becoming, waning, death and renewal are associated with the feminine bodily experience of cycles (Eliade, 1987; Kalff as cited in Turner, 2013). The crescent sits opposite the three blue agates Eva had pushed into the sand on the right side. Kalff said that it was important to imagine the picture as

²⁷ The sun, due to its brightness and clarity, is understood in Jungian theory as a symbol of rational consciousness.

having features of the body,²⁸ because of the natural intertwining of body and psychology (as cited in Turner, 2013). The three agates are in the shape of a feminine face. Under the right eye Eva placed lichen that resembled tears. This suggested to me that I might anticipate Eva would later allow herself to grieve, and that grieving for her losses could allow room for the emergence of a renewed sense of herself—in Kalfian terms, a new ego consciousness—in which the results of her illness were not the centerpiece of her life.

The strong focus on the centre of the picture implied by the direction the frog prince, the frogs, the turtles and crocodile are facing, suggests the importance of the centre. The centre symbolizes the centre of the personality, the Self and centering, the process of individuation (Kalff, 1966, 1990, 1991, 1997; D. Kalff, 2003; Turner, 2013). The frogs and butterflies²⁹ are symbols of change and transformation, because of their complex developmental stages from egg to adult. There are two sets of two (geodes, butterflies), suggesting that something has to become conscious, and is aiming toward consciousness (Kalff as cited in Turner, 2013).

The placement of the butterflies, one on top of the crocodile, suggests transformation of the docile crocodile. Perhaps his hidden, unacknowledged aggressive characteristics would become helpful. The second butterfly, below it, also suggests a transforming process is occurring. Perhaps the butterfly's placement is an indication of change in Eva's rational approach to life.

3.4.3. Sessions 4 and 5

In Sessions 4 and 5 following the first picture (Session 3), Eva told me that since the previous session, she had been able to manage situations that could have become life-threatening calmly and successfully by getting help. She seemed more accepting of her limits and was becoming less likely to endanger the positive progress she had made

²⁸ Jung, followed by Kalff (2003), viewed the relationship between body and mind as follows: "the psyche and body are not separate entities but one and the same life" (Jung, 1966b, p. 115, para. 194).

²⁹ According to Kalff (2003, p. 84), when there are animals in trays we must look at their behaviour in nature. She referred to animals in sandpictures as symbols of our instinctive behaviours.

with behaviour that was emotionally charged by an impatient rush to become autonomous. She said she was feeling a lot calmer, and attributed this change to the Sandplay.

Before her Sandplay in the sixth session, Eva had told me about her boyfriend's proposal that they have children. She expressed some hesitation about this but thought she would like to, as long as she felt she had all the necessary supports in place to maintain her own good health as mother. At the moment, Eva was more interested in developing her career and finding physical outlets for her energy.

3.4.4. Session 6 (Sandplay Picture 2)

Into the Shadow: The Personal Unconscious

In the Kalfian theory of the change process, this picture has elements of the shadow, the unknown or hidden aspects of Eva's personality. Eva described the picture as a "vacation place" where people can live year-round. She said the whole thing was a little inlet where you have privacy: you "can't see the neighbours." It seemed to me that this picture expressed Eva's hidden psychological situation, which felt vulnerable, needed protection, and could only be revealed through play. It also seemed to speak to her process of adjusting to being in the world in a new way in relation to others, which required time and privacy. As she did in the first picture, Eva has created a separation, in the same proportions and sides of the sandtray. In the first picture, it was a demarcation between domestic and wild; here it is between land and water, daytime and evening. This suggested to me that she was working on reconciling the "domestic," socialized, conscious experience of herself with her "wild" unconscious, instinctual aspects, associated with darkness and water.³⁰ The "opposites" and their potential reconciliation or union, illustrate Jung's (1956, 1966b, 1969d) theory of the cycle of tension and reconciliation that moves the psychological change process forward.

Eva created another crescent, this time with geodes and river stones, on the right side of the picture. This crescent contains an otter who she said is "looking at the light,

³⁰ Darkness and water also suggest a return to the womb, where new life begins (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1994).

basking in the sun,” and, later on, is “swimming in the moonlight.” Otters are at home in water and on land. This otter could enjoy being in the sunshine or moonlight, the light and the dark, conscious and unconscious. Otters are closely associated with lunar symbolism,³¹ and rites of initiation among North American and African indigenous peoples, whose initiates undergo a transition or transformation into adulthood that involves leaving one world (a psycho-physiological state) to enter another (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1984). Among native Americans, the otter is regarded as a trickster figure and mediator between consciousness and unconscious unseen patterns, emotions, fantasies and desires (Caspari, 2003, p. 187).

As trickster, otter facilitates a re-evaluation of one’s point of view. The otter in this picture is framed and protected by three pieces of driftwood similar to the bare trees around the edges of the picture. Eva said that otter “has it figured out,” a hint of her unconscious knowledge and growing awareness of how she wanted to think about herself and how she could fit in society.

A small golden crab that Eva associated with the slowing down of her skiing capabilities is close by. She said she liked the crab, but he was small because she was no longer a good skier. The crab, as a crustacean, has a hardened skin, as opposed to a true shell, has adapted to different environments, and, because they are nearly all creatures of inter-tidal habitat and nocturnal habit, are often widely associated with the moon cycles and transformation (Caspari, 2003). The crab might be understood as a symbol of her feelings of inadequacy, but it also indicated unconsciously, as did several of the figures she had used, that change could be anticipated and that the change was associated with her feminine self.

The starfish, like the moon, is associated with totality, the whole person (Kalff as cited in Turner, 2013). In the first picture, one starfish was hidden under the vegetation. Here she brought the starfish out into the open where it was visible. Now, there were two, and she made imprints of another two in front of the houses, suggesting another

³¹ According to Mircea Eliade (1954), the phases of the moon—appearance, increase, wane, disappearance, followed by reappearance after 3 nights of darkness—have played a significant role in the elaboration of cyclical concepts. The cycle offers an optimistic view of life in general, suggesting that there is always a new phase.

connection between the water and the land, dark and light, unconscious and consciousness. The three symbols of the otter, crab and starfish placed in close proximity to one another inside the crescent point to her dialogue with the unconscious, an essential dynamic of change from a Kalfian point of view. The signaling of movement toward the centre by the amphibious creatures in the first picture is another indication of this, and it is continued here. Perhaps the canoe and kayak symbolized the transportation she needed for this individuation journey. She said she had felt a lot of tension when deciding where to place the dock. I interpreted this to mean that she would have to symbolically launch herself from this dock to be fully engaged in the change process.

Three quarters of the picture was framed in “sticks,” which she said were “taller trees.” Kalf said that dead trees indicate that although the situation may appear negative to the patient, she carries the potential for new life and a new direction (as cited in Turner, 2013). The three large green trees and the scatterings of moss between the twigs also point to this potential.

Activation of the Animus

One person, who “reminds her” of her boyfriend, is carrying a heavy load, alone. Jungian theory would suggest that this figure is an image of Eva’s contrasexual masculine, her *animus*, who was loaded down psychologically. This pointed to Eva’s feelings of loss and social isolation. The placement of the figure between two large trees, next to an “organic” house, indicates, along with the many other organic elements in the picture, that a natural development is underway (Kalf as cited in Turner, 2013). According to Dora Kalf (2003), when the contrasexual aspect of the personality is activated, the individual can form a differentiated relationship with the collective [social] world in which the person maintains her autonomy and unique individuality.

3.4.5. Session 7

In Session 7, Eva was spirited and optimistic. She talked about her educational and career plans, and the process of sorting materials she had stored away in her basement. She was also sorting out her thoughts about people on what she called the “continuum of sensitivity” toward her disability. Eva revealed more about her traumatic

emotional experience in her family of origin witnessing violence and threats. She had reflected on the effects: her difficulty trusting or showing affection; her anxiety about committing to relationships. She had talked about the effect of her disability on her relationship with her parents, who had become reliable, dependable, caring. It was like a “rebirth” she said.

3.4.6. Session 8 (Sandplay Picture 3)

Ego Strengthening

While reflecting on her hurt and anger about her experiences of society’s devaluation of the disabled, Eva raised the question of whether she played a role and should take some responsibility. She was able, she said, to find solace from society’s values in the natural world, and she turned to the sandtray.

Eva called this picture “Hide and Seek.” It was a cross, she said, between unity and diversity. I thought the theme of unity in diversity spoke to her observation that she might play a role in the actions and attitudes she was noticing in the general population. In other words, she saw herself as part of and different from at the same time. The hide-and-seek play between Batwoman and Robin suggested Eva’s process of finding what was hidden or unconscious, which, according to the Kalfjian/Jungian understanding of the *anima* and *animus* relationship, may be the recovery or discovery of a playful interaction—the unity in their diversity—between her developing masculine (Robin is a young adolescent) and feminine aspects, a relationship that Kalff understood to be activated by a strengthening ego. The masculine decisiveness in aiming toward a goal and the feminine orientation to organic processes and openness to one’s Self work together to create the balanced field in which the ego can function at its best.

In this picture Eva had introduced developments showing that psychological change was in progress. The central area bounded by clay bricks, large trees, two houses and coloured stones contained the playful otter, which has moved from the 3 o’clock position in Picture 2 to 6 o’clock in Picture 3. The otter, who Eva had said “has it figured out” seemed to embody play and the changes mediated by play. Perhaps what the otter had “figured out” lay in its natural instinctive playfulness and ease with being in relationship as it plays. Eva’s discomfort with relationship seemed to be changing. Her

relationship with John was slowly becoming easier and closer. The otter is highly social. Pups from different families will readily play together and demonstrate an antic playfulness that is one of their most striking characteristics³² (Caspari, 2003). Is this an unconscious reference to the importance of play in this process? Eva had moved the otter clockwise, the direction toward consciousness (D. Kалff, 2003), at the centre of two successive pictures created weeks apart.

Centering

This picture also showed movement of the dock, the launching and landing point for the kyaks, to a more central location. Both kayaks, one with a paddle and one with a kayaker, seemed to symbolize her experiences of her personal autonomy before her illness (with a paddle) and afterwards (without). The two were moving toward the centre, suggesting further activation of the ordering and unifying principle of the Self. The two organic houses have been shifted to the centre space, signifying their more central place psychologically. Batwoman and Robin, introduced in this picture, were playing in the trees, and were partially hidden. Feminine and masculine elements are relating through play.

There were strong indications of transformation in this picture. There is the stark white/black and ice/fire contrasts” suggesting the tension of opposites that I have referred to as a foundational concept of change in Jungian theory. The tension in this picture anticipated again the building of energy that would give birth to a new attitude. The fire Eva said was lit under the pot symbolizes transformation (when a substance burns, its qualities change). The fuel for the fire was the trees that framed Picture 2. It was an image of the whole previous scene (framed by the trees, now firewood) fuelling the transformation of Eva’s psychological situation. The black (rockhead) female face, “campfire stories,” was placed in the same quadrant and at the same angle as the face in the first picture, which I have suggested was an indication that Eva could perhaps process her sorrows. This more delineated face, clearly feminine, was changing, and suggested that in acknowledging her grief, Eva may begin to experience herself in a new

³² Both young and adult otters regularly engage in play, which is both pleasurable and useful in preventing conflict and reinforcing territories (Conger, n.d.).

way. The igloo, the shape of the pregnant womb and birth canal, suggested a coming psychological rebirth.

In the near left and centre, two starfish moved around the centre in tandem with the otter and concentrated the psychic energy on the centering process. The white castle and murex shell remained in the left side as in Picture 1, and small pieces of coral have been added. Eva had combined elements we find on land (the castle and tree) and in water (the shells, coral and starfish), pointing to the conscious—unconscious dialogue that constitutes the Self.

The left side contained the castle ruin, with a large tree on either side. Kalff has suggested that trees can show the natural way of development (as cited in Turner, 2013). Eva said this castle was “a cross between the beach and the forest,” reinforcing the symbolism of water and land, unconscious and conscious interaction. This ruin had the appearance of the “wild” or instinctual aspect she had spoken about in her first picture, on the same side of the sandtray. It suggested her continuing preoccupation with getting to know this aspect of herself by way of the conscious-unconscious dialogue mediated by play.

The feminine face Eva made with the three agate pieces in Picture 1 was replaced by the black face and bonfire, which she said represented “campfire stories.” In the Kalffian approach tracking the use of space and figures between pictures reveals psychological developments. The black face suggests the shadow, which represents the aspects that are denied or forgotten, is changing. Eva placed the black face in the same area of the sand tray that she had placed the face in the first picture. This face was directly connected with the large fire and with nourishment provided in the pot. The small fire in the previous picture had become significantly larger, and this time, Eva wanted to keep the pot on top of the fire. In Picture 2 she had removed it, saying that she didn’t like it. It was as though she was now ready to contemplate something kept in her shadow. I interpreted this as Eva’s ability to effectively pace herself, and it seemed there was more that was important to talk about.

3.4.7. Session 9

Eva presented as well and energetic. She talked about feeling connected to “earth things” and expressed a strong sense of being in charge generally. Eva then described a significant, traumatic event she had experienced as a child that she had been unable to talk about, to anyone. She was very worried about telling John and did not know how. She said she felt responsible and was certain that the sarcoma was punishment from God. Eva had experienced the loss of her undeveloped, growing feminine self as a child and seemed to me to be in a process of retrieving it.

3.4.8. Session 10 (Sandplay Picture 4)

Birth of the Feminine Ego

The picture was, in Eva’s words, “a change of scene.” It was a dramatic shift from the previous picture created 2 months earlier. Eva said it was “deep water” on the left and a “beach” on the right, where two fantasy figures, Batman and C3PO, are sitting. Once more, she delineated between water and beach, but here the natural world is seen from a different perspective. It felt to me that Eva was exploring deep under the water where she might be able to retrieve what she needed to feel whole: the psychologically nourishing feminine elements, symbolized in the shells and the otter. The symbolism of shells is important in Eva’s process. Shells have been associated by human societies since prehistoric times with fertility and the erotic, rebirth and initiation (Eliade, 1991). They have been used decoratively in ritual as mediators of sacred powers, especially those ascribed to the moon and water. In their “Medicine Rite,” the American Winnebago tribe use magic shells kept in the satchels of otter-skin which they regard as essential to facilitating the patient’s psychological death and resurrection (Eliade, 1991). This is a characteristically intrapsychic interpretation. It assumes the psyche is a container and the objective of the process is to go deeper in it to the archetypal patterns of experience as these are expressed in the symbols.

The shells, otter, starfish and swan all have associations with aquatic symbolism and the natural rhythms of birth, death and renewal, a renewed psychological perspective and experience of the feminine. This suggested Eva was making a symbolic transition to a different experience of herself. Eva referred to the otter “enjoying the

scenery, just hanging out,” the swan making bubbles when it takes off, and the butterflies³³ “fitting around.” Eva moved otter from the 6 o’clock position in the previous picture to 9 o’clock in this one, still accompanied by the two starfish. She spoke about her new sense of calm, saying that now she could breathe, and felt she was “getting past the loss.” She said she felt more confident about how to handle situations. She said “the transformation is whole, not just bodily,” adding that she felt she had come a long way in adjusting to the changes brought on by her illness. At the same time she expressed some impatience with Batman and C3PO who reminded her of her boyfriend John. She thought they should be “skipping along the seawall,” not simply sitting and observing. Perhaps she was beginning to need a different kind of partner, someone who could actively join with her in her newfound sense of initiative and optimism. Or perhaps she was again referring to developing a playful relationship with her psychological masculine aspects, which, according to Kalfjian/Jungian theory in the intrapsychic model of understanding as separate from context, is necessary for the development of ego consciousness and adaptability.

3.4.9. Session 11 (Sandplay Picture 5)

Integration and Completion

Eva’s last picture was replete with the dualities she felt and constantly weighed, between life before her disability and afterwards: the feeling of the world as “safe,” “inviting,” and “peaceful” versus the world that is “unpredictable,” “stabby,” “wild,” “constraining,” “tedious” and abandoned by a benevolent overseer. She was beginning to be able to come to terms with these opposing experiences of herself and her life by thinking about them as complementary, as if she were amphibious and able to live in both realities simultaneously. She could think about her life as having many restrictions, and offering choices as well. She could allow herself to experience the sorrow of the loss of her physical abilities, and her earlier loss of a safe and secure childhood, while at the same time mustering courage and strategies to manage and plan her future.

³³ Symbols of womanhood, transformation, and the soul in various cultural belief systems and mythologies (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1994) that appeared in Eva’s first picture.

In this picture, created 5 weeks after Picture 4, the otter had reached 12 o'clock and was making her way under a bridge toward the playful, young, and physically much larger and stronger polar bear. Psychologically, this suggested to me that through the play process Eva was beginning to experience a connection with a potentially strong and hardy attitude that would help her survive the trials of being disabled. Both the polar bear and sea otter are amphibious creatures, like the frogs and turtles. The sea otter's journey around the centre and under the bridge to meet the polar bear, reinforces Eva's identification with their amphibious symbolism and the reconciliation of the *tension* between the two modes of being she was struggling to bring into harmony. Her experience of it and how she made sense of it helped her to experience herself in an ordered world once more.

There were three bridges, one large bridge in the centre and two small bridges on the left and right sides. In the Kalfian interpretation it is necessary to ask what in each case may be being bridged. The central bridge was an important intermediary between the "hard" and "nice" sides while also differentiating them. Psychologically, this spoke to Eva's readiness to acknowledge and bridge her experiences of being able-bodied and disabled, and that the sense of isolation was ending. The small bridges connected the pathway with the world outside, the familiar world off the beaten path, so to speak. They were perhaps symbolic of Eva's discovering other parts of herself, seeing the possibilities for forming connections with others or being open to others' efforts, including her family, to form connections with her in her new identity. Eva communicated that in spite of the limitations, she felt in control of the new situation, and her life was beginning to reflect this new way of being.

3.4.10. Sessions 12 and 13

As is usual at the completion of a process, Eva felt that she no longer needed the sandtray. She used this time instead to consolidate the year of therapy and her changed perspectives on herself and her relations with her family. Eva completed therapy with an understanding that she was not to blame for the emotional turmoil she had grown up with in her family. Most importantly, she felt capable of starting a new chapter in her life, with a robust sense of her connection with others and the possibilities the world had to offer.

3.5. Conclusion

I have illustrated in this Chapter a Kalfian understanding of the process of psychological change in Sandplay and how it is framed within an intrapsychic perspective. In this view, play mediates a dynamic interaction between conscious and unconscious components with separate identities, e.g., Self, shadow, in separate, hierarchically arranged locations within a container-psyche. In contrast and without exception, the play process using figures and sand, reveals instead a psychological world that is emergent and multi-dimensional, where all aspects are in relation as the process evolves within a single picture, from one picture to the next, and in the process overall. In its conception of the psychological world as components with separate dynamic functions, the intrapsychic view objectifies the subjective processes of experience and meaning making. The Self, for example is described theoretically as a combination of conscious and unconscious, an archetype of order and wholeness. This explanation in effect separates the patient from her experience of what the Self symbolizes—which may be an experience of integration, unity, awakening, even a quasi-religious experience. In an understanding of Sandplay as experiential, a philosophical orientation to subjective experience would seem to be more relevant. I will explore this possibility in Chapters 4 and 5 and in the final Discussion.

The symbolic approach in Sandplay, however, extends beyond the limits of the intrapsychic model. The meaning a patient perceives to be embodied in a symbol, consciously or unconsciously, is a manifestation of the patient's historical social, and cultural experience. A symbol is not a structure, although it may be present in one, and is not limited by boundaries or a specific location. A symbol cannot be compartmentalized. The symbol's meaning is forever renewing because it emerges from the contexts of the individual who experiences it. An example is the otter that was a central motif in Eva's sandpictures. Here, the otter symbolized for Eva the possibility of a way to think about herself in her situation she was trying to make sense of. Drawing on her historical experience as a resilient survivor in the social context of her family life and her ambition to be a productive member of society, as her culture demanded, Eva imagined herself as amphibious, knowing and accepting both her ability and her disability, able to live in both worlds at once. As she said:

When I look at the frogs and turtles, they can go on land or in water. I get how life is when able, and also when disabled. I sit in both realms. I feel like a crossover between being able-bodied and disabled. Now I feel that I'm amphibious. I straddle both worlds.

In a Kalfjian/Jungian understanding of the otter as a symbol and the otter's path as symbolizing a *circumambulation* of the Self (the centre), the otter's movement generates psychic energy and fuels Eva's psychological change as she developed a more secure, relaxed and centred sense of herself and slowly created order in her new life.

Jung (1969a, p. 224, para. 352) refers to the motif of the wheel, which, psychologically, suggests the containment of the ego within the greater dimensions of the Self. *Circumambulatio* was an alchemical term known to Jung (1969a) that described a concentration on the centre or place of creative change. The defined circle is a metaphor for the containment or therapeutic frame necessary during analysis or psychotherapy in order to withstand the tensions of the process and to prevent a regression (Samuels, Shorter, & Plaut, 1992). The image of the circling otter is an example of the multi-dimensionality of symbols in a sandpicture. It symbolizes in this case the psychological energy Eva was investing in working out a satisfactory way to be in her social and cultural contexts.

As I have noted, the otter embodies archetypal meanings: as a trickster figure, able to facilitate an initiation into a complete change of perspective; as embodiment of play and the play process, because of a natural, instinctive playfulness; and as possessing lunar symbolism, associated with water and the cycles of the natural world, and therefore the feminine. The symbolic approach is a view of the sandpictures as having infinite possible psychological meaning, energy, and complexity, and therefore able to manifest endless variations of experiences shaped by a person's contexts.

The Kalfjian/Jungian prioritizing of the individuation process as the goal of psychotherapy, and of life, over a shared search for understanding, gives less importance to the social world (Orange, 2010). Perhaps within Kalff's immediate Jungian environment research on the importance of relationships as understood more recently in attachment theory, had not yet been developed. Attachment theory is concerned with the

formation and nature of the infant's relationships with caregivers and others in the social environment. This theory has shown that the healthy development of an individual is largely dependent on the quality of verbal and nonverbal communication experienced in first relationships. According to the theory these early relationships shape our expectations of others and ourselves in all relationships by forming an "internal working model" (Wallin, 2007, pp. 26-37) that influences how we experience and interact with the social world throughout life. The research showing the significance of a person's relational world in shaping social development has been instrumental in the development of contemporary relational psychotherapies.

In conclusion, I have maintained that the intrapsychic view that was the context for Kalf's theoretical approach to Sandplay does not sufficiently communicate the nature of the therapeutic experience in practice. This may create obstacles to understanding the lived experience of patients and therapists. An individual's experience as socially and culturally constructed is a living emergent process that cannot be categorized or taken out of context and relegated to the limits of a space or container. In the Chapters that follow I will suggest that the intrapsychic perspective may be widened, so that Sandplay theory can account for the emergent, contextual, relational character of the therapeutic process while at the same time conserving the symbolic approach that is so meaningful and transformative. Both Daoist and contemporary hermeneutic philosophical understandings of experience provide a means of conceptualizing the Sandplay experience, and the sandpictures themselves, from an experiential perspective..To this end Chapter 4 explores Kalf's understanding of the influences of Japanese, Chinese and Tibetan ideas and expands on these with an exploration of Daoist thought as it relates to the Sandplay process. Chapter 5 will develop a hermeneutic philosophical approach to the Sandplay process in order to illustrate its contextual and relational elements.

Chapter 4.

Beyond Kalff's Applications of Asian Ideas in Sandplay: Chinese *Yin-Yang* Thought on Duality and Change

4.1. Introduction

In this Chapter I will build on Kalff's Jungian understanding of Sandplay and continue my critique of an intrapsychic model for Sandplay. Because Kalff's writing on her research into Asian thought is sparse, there is room for further exploration into the significance of Asian ideas for Sandplay theory and practice. I will discuss briefly her perspectives on Daoist and Buddhist ideas that supported her view of individuation as an archetypal, spiritual process. My primary aims are to question the relevance of an intrapsychic perspective for understanding Sandplay; and to develop Kalff's interests further with an examination of the Jungian idea of opposites from a Chinese perspective on duality and change in *yin-yang* thought. A cornerstone of Kalffian/Jungian Sandplay theory is the idea that the tension and union of conscious and unconscious aspects of experience are represented symbolically in the sand. The patient's play with the figures, sand and water is theorized to be the momentum for the interaction of these "opposite" elements in bringing about psychological change (D. Kalff, 2003, p. 1; Weinrib, 2004, pp. 72-73). A *yin-yang* approach views opposites as mutually influencing change; while in the intrapsychic view opposites confront one another. These are important distinctions when thinking about how Sandplay facilitates change, as I will explain in the sections that follow.

A *yin-yang* perspective seeks to understand change as it occurs in Nature and natural processes whereas intrapsychic concepts of isolation, boundaries, separation, hierarchy, or containment are founded on understanding the world from a rational perspective. Rather than understanding change in terms of *what* is changing, for example, ego strength or realization of shadow elements, in *yin-yang* thought the

emphasis is on a pragmatic understanding (Coutinho, 2014) of *how* the elements in a dual relationship constantly interact and change one another in the lived world.

Jung (1969d) described the opposites as the “shuttling to and fro of arguments and affects” (p. 90, para 189) that results in a new perspective. He explains:

the confrontation of the two positions generates a tension charged with energy and creates a living, third thing...a movement out of the suspension between opposites, a living birth that leads to a new level of being, a new situation....So long as these [opposites] are kept apart...they do not function and remain inert. (p. 90, para. 189)

Pairs of opposites are considered *irreconcilable*, but the “to and fro of arguments and affects” (p. 90, para. 189) eventually results in a third position, represented in the symbol. This is called the symbol’s transcendent function —the symbol’s power to unite what is conscious with the complementary unconscious, and vice versa, to effect change. Jung sees the opposites as “either confronting one another in enmity or attracting one another in love...forming a dualism” (Jung, 1970, p. 3, para. 1); and as “a conflict of incompatible tendencies” (p. xv).

Jung’s view reflects the intrapsychic idea of opposition and separateness rather than mutual influence. Even if the opposites are conceptually dependent on each other they are defined by mutual exclusion (Coutinho, 2014). In the Chinese *yin-yang* worldview, pairs of opposites are more likely to be presented as fluid and complementary contrasts in which each aspect of the pair is always in the process of transforming to some degree into or from its complement. Contrasts do not conflict but mutually influence each other, each being incomplete without the other. The momentum of transformation in *yin-yang* thought is mutual yielding and influencing, in contrast to the Jungian view, understood within an intrapsychic model, where it is a kind of mutual aggression (Coutinho, 2014).

4.2. A Review of Kalff’s Understanding of Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan Thought

I have commented in Chapter 1 on Kalff’s early education in Asian thought and languages, and how as an adult she continued to learn about them through her

association with Jung, her travels to Japan and Tibet, and in seminars and conversations with spiritual thinkers and teachers across traditions (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013). Kalff had a preference for communicating her knowledge and insights about the correspondences between Asian ideas and Sandplay in workshops and lectures rather than in writing. Her only writing of note on the subject (Kalff, 1971) is found in the proceedings of the fourth international congress for analytical psychology held in Zurich in 1968 (Wheelwright, 1971), titled *Experiences with Far Eastern Philosophers*,³⁴ Apart from this record, she made only brief references to Asian perspectives on archetypal symbols in her analyses of clinical cases generally. There is no other known written work authored by her on this subject. As I have noted in the Introduction to this dissertation, I interviewed her son Dr. Martin Kalff to compensate for this lack and to learn more about her views. These sources, and comments on her ideas in articles and books written by those she has trained, have been my only guide to Kalff's thinking about how the aspects of Asian philosophies she studied applied in Sandplay.

Kalff viewed the Self as an archetype of spirituality (M. Kalff, personal communication, 2013), and the body as the ground from which the spirit develops. These ideas were the focus of her investigations into Asian thought. Kalff's pursuit of Asian ideas shows the breadth of her approach; but as I see it, mixing Chinese and Buddhist with Jungian perspectives as she did, without examining their philosophical roots, diluted the power of the Asian view to provide new insight into how we can understand the patient's lived experience represented in the sand.

In Kalff's (1971) account, while she was practicing Sandplay in the 1960s, she observed her patients' consistent use of the number "5" in various forms following the constellation of the Self, a phase of psychological development in Sandplay when "inherent potentials begin to come alive" (p. 56). Kalff interpreted the number "5" as

³⁴ This paper was Kalff's investigation into Eastern traditional belief in the body as the wellspring of spirituality. Further explanation and the implications for understanding the Sandplay process will be discussed in this chapter.

being related to the physical body³⁵ and concluded that there was a connection between the physical body and the unfolding of the Self.³⁶ This idea was developed further (Kalff, 1971, 1980) in Kalff's (2003) interpretation of the 1,000-year-old "Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate" (*Taijitu*) (Figure 4.1) which was created by the Chinese philosopher Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073)³⁷ (Wang, 2005; see also Appendix D). Dora Kalff (2003) used the diagram to show that *yin-yang* thought expressed a process of change parallel to the Jungian individuation process. Zhou followed the Buddhist and Daoist *xiangshu* tradition of using images (*xiang*), numbers (*shu*), and diagrams (*tu*) to explain the universe and communicate knowledge (Wang, 2005). Images were seen as a form of thinking that could express meaning beyond the limitations imposed by discursive language (Wang, 2012). The creation of the diagram was a response to Chinese skepticism that words could adequately capture the self-generating and self-transforming natural world revealed through the interaction of *yin* and *yang* (Wang, 2012).

The diagram describes how all things are derived from oneness or unity, which is the Supreme Ultimate or Dao (Wang, 2012). In *yin-yang* thought, unity is fundamental, but because oneness cannot generate anything, it divides into *yin* and *yang* (Wang, 2012). Thus, although *yin* and *yang* are distinct they are also in unity. The tension and relation intrinsic to the inseparable *yin* and *yang* lead to changes and transformations that generate five elements (*wuxing*). The elements are not fixed, fundamental substances as they would seem to be from a Western perspective. They represent different functions and moments, or patterns of change that are mutually generating,

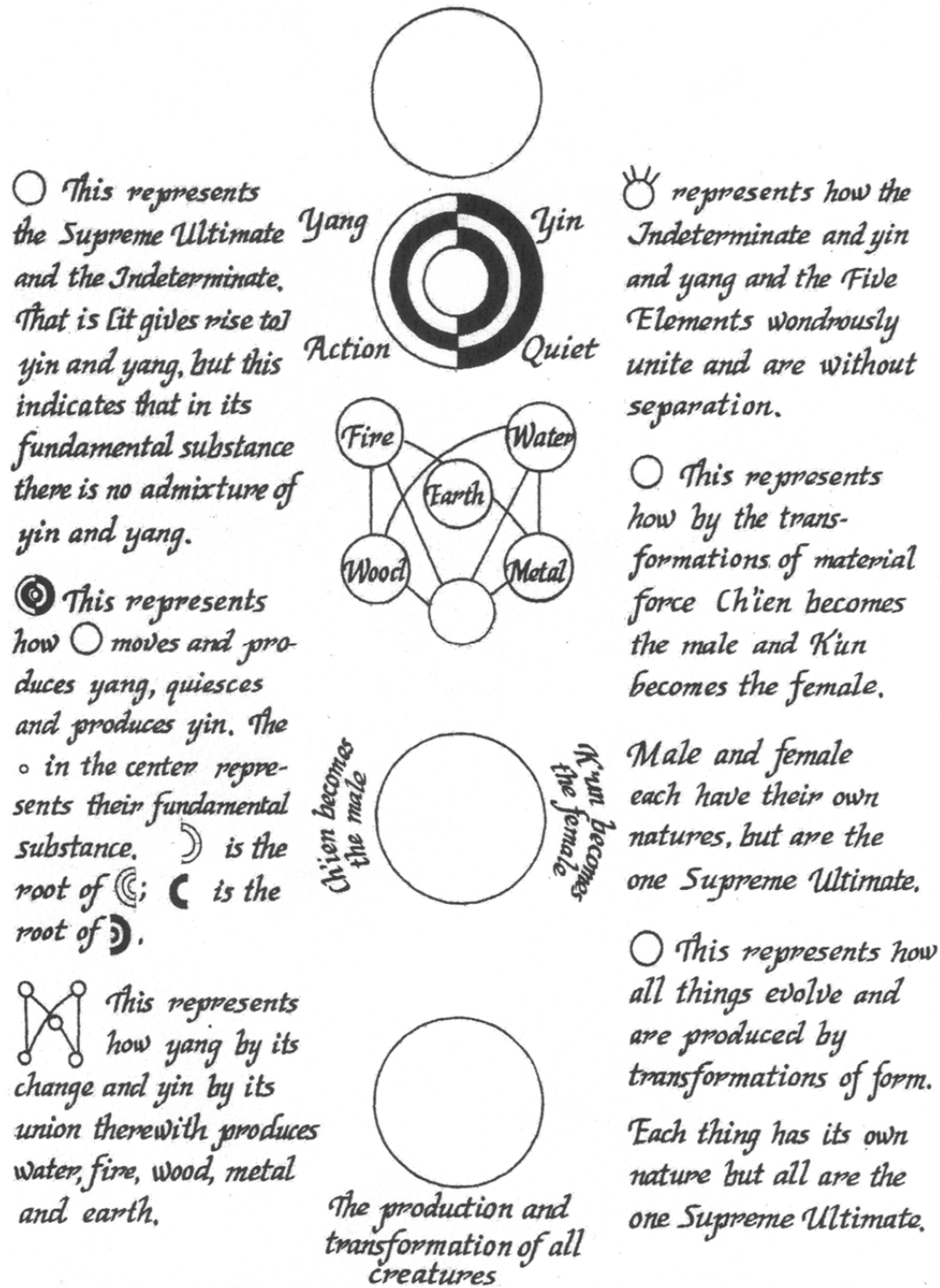
³⁵ The number "5" derives its primary symbolism from its place at the centre of the first nine numbers (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1994). From this point of view, it is the number of the centre, harmony and balance. In agreement with Kalff, it is also believed to be a symbol of the human being which, with arms outstretched in the shape of a cross, appears to have five parts—two arms, two legs and the torso (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1994); each human hand has five fingers and, each foot, five toes.

³⁶ In my experience, the sand in the sandtray is unconsciously experienced as earth or body. For many patients simply playing with the sand, moving it around, running it through fingers, or simply resting the hands in it is grounding and calming. Alternatively, the sand can evoke anxiety and cannot be touched. I have noticed, as have others (Yasunobu, 2006), that anxiety in relation to the sand is felt by those with histories of insecure attachment, suggesting that an experience of the sand is linked to unconscious feelings of security or insecurity rooted in infancy.

³⁷ Also known as Zhou Tun Yi (Wang, 2005).

overcoming, controlling and transforming (Wang, 2012). Change is seen as a mutually generative interactive process that creates the diversity of the lived world.

Figure 4.1. The Chinese “Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate”



Note. D. Kalff, 2003 (p. 11), used with permission from Temenos Press®; also see Appendix D for Zhou Dunyi's commentary).

Dora Kalff (2003) interpreted the diagram as follows:

The beginning of all things is shown in a circle, in which I see an analogy to the Self at birth. A second circle shows the interfusing action of yin and yang that produces the five elements. I am inclined to relate this circle to what I have said about the manifestation of the Self. It contains the germ of those energies that lead to the formation of the ego and the development of personality.... Just as the five elements arise from this constellation, the personality develops around the centering point of the ego. I equate this step with development in the first half of life. Also, in our tradition, five is the number of the natural man.... The third circle could be compared with the manifestation of the Self in the individuation process during the second half of life. In the fourth circle, I see the ending as opposed to the beginning. Here I see the end of the movement that leads from life to death. Following the law of transformation, on which the diagram is based, death, just like the sacrifice of a psychic situation lived to its conclusion, holds the germ of new life. (pp. 10-12)

In these few words, Kalff conveys her interpretation that the Jungian and Chinese conceptions of processes of change follow a similar pattern in demonstrating an “archetypal pathway to change” derived from a transcendental, spiritual principle, the Self, which is embodied in the patient and their work in the sand.

Referring to the number “5” in the “five elements”, Kalff (1971) states that the elements produced by the action of *yin* and *yang* become the five senses which then develop into spirit, but she does not comment further (p. 57). Her description seems to suggest that the transformation from physical to spiritual is a one-way, linear development, rather than one that develops in a mutual way. Kalff also writes that in Chinese philosophy the five elements are ruled by the earth (p. 57),³⁸ and for her this implied that spiritual life must begin in the body (as metaphor for the earth) and in everyday life (p. 59). For Kalff, the body is “the instrument through which we must experience the totality, the spiritual and the physical” (p. 57). The spiritual, she said, “transcends consciousness and points to the eternal foundation of our nature....” (Kalff, 2003, p. 8). Kalff’s (1971) observation of the importance of body cultivation in spiritual

³⁸ As noted, in Buddhist philosophy (Ronkin, 2009, p. 14), reality consists of interlocking events and processes that come and go subject to different causes and conditions. These are always mediated by cognition embodied in the five elements, also known as the five aggregates or five phases. The elements are a scheme for classifying the ever-changing phenomena at work in the universe, including the individual (Boisvert, 1995, p. 3).

development is in agreement with *yin-yang* thought, where the term for body, *shen*, is also the word for self, and suggests the fundamental importance of the body in Chinese thought (Wang, 2012, Kindle location 543). The Chinese believed that the cultivation of the human body to its optimal state of being was the avenue to healthy social relations, growth, and prosperity (Wang, 2012). In the context of the *yin-yang* principle of non-duality and interconnection of all things, the spirit is understood as existing in the body (Wang, 2012), rather than separate from it. It was this aspect, “the body-mind structure” as Kalff called it, and the significance of the number “5,” that she wished to investigate and experience for herself in Japan and Tibet.³⁹

Dora Kalff’s (1971, 2003) interpretation of the diagram is cast in the intrapsychic Jungian model where change is facilitated by the energy of tensions existing between conscious and unconscious opposites. The Chinese image, by contrast, represents a coherent understanding of natural change processes embedded in all of Nature (Wang, 2012). The natural world is seen as an interconnected process between celestial and earthly phenomena that undergo constant change (Coutinho, 2014). It seeks to convey the complex oscillations in the emergent, reciprocal, and relational constituents of change (Wang, 2012). It is tempting to name this pattern of change an “archetypal pathway,” as Kalff did, but doing so represents a process as a static thing or object. As I see it, this is the danger inherent in using an intrapsychic model for an experiential process such as Sandplay. The nature of experience is continuous process and processing in relationship with the environment, whereas the intrapsychic model contains and separates. In the context of Sandplay this limits understanding of the reciprocity and generative relations among the many objects and shapes created in the sandtray, and so limits the scope of understanding of the patient’s experience. Kalff’s

³⁹ When in Japan, Kalff visited Zen Master Siogen Onori who explained that Japanese Samurai children were taught ethical and spiritual principles before age six on the basis that perfection in physical being influenced the attainment of perfection in spirit. She discovered in Tibet that Buddhists regard every aspect of daily life to be just as important in achieving Nirvana as meditation and physical discipline. She also discovered in Japan that the psychologists and psychiatrists she had taught five years earlier, who had been using Sandplay since then, had found the same developmental patterns in their patients’ sandplay pictures as she had in her European patients’ sandplay. This was a pattern consisting of a body-mind relationship symbolized by the number “5” (Kalff, 1971). As Kalff understood it, this seemed to signal the transformation of physical energy into spiritual experience and that the body was vital in the achievement of spiritual experience (Kalff, 1971, p. 57).

interpretation as a whole reflects an intrapsychic conception of psychological processes as contents within defined containers unfolding in a linear progression. This is in contrast to a *yin-yang* worldview that is non-linear, non-dual, relational and contextual.

In choosing Daoist and Zen Buddhist ideas to support her Jungian understanding, Kalfi inadvertently (and unconsciously, it seems) began a process of changing the philosophical context for Sandplay. Individuation as a process of becoming is consistent with Asian thinking on processes of becoming, rather than being (Ronkin, 2009). The Jungian Self, understood within the intrapsychic model as an organizing principle consisting of conscious and unconscious contents, is inconsistent with a Daoist and Buddhist view of natural processes as basic to all phenomena (Ronkin, 2009). Kalfi in effect brought the intrapsychic model into question with her recognition of the parallels between the experience of Sandplay and Asian ideas. Had she been conscious of this perhaps she would have questioned isolated mind-dualism as a framework for Sandplay. She might have worked out a philosophical framework for Sandplay that takes into account the contextualized, emergent processes implicit in it.

In the next section I will trace the origins of the *yin* and *yang* metaphors (Coutinho, 2014), and the forms of interrelationships between opposites in *yin-yang* thought (Wang, 2012) to show how these ideas contrast with the Jungian intrapsychic view of opposites as irreconcilable.

4.3. *Yin and Yang:* A Non-Dual, Relational Conception of Opposites

The Chinese understood the natural world as a holistic system of interconnected processes undergoing constant change (Coutinho, 2014; Wang, 2012). In this correlative thinking of *yin-yang* thought (Wang, 2012, Kindle location 198), an event or action happening or performed in one domain affects corresponding factors in another domain. This cosmology is not based on linear causality between distinct entities (as in the intrapsychic model), but on the *relationship* between entities and phenomena (Wang, 2012, Kindle location 185). The interrelationships between entities applied as much to the human body and its systems as to the larger systems of society and cosmos. *Yin*

and *yang* do not mean anything in themselves, but are used to differentiate things in terms of their relationships and contexts (Wang, 2012, Kindle location 240).

The relations between *yin* and *yang* grew out of observing the natural changes of the seasons and the effects on the slopes of a mountain facing toward and away from the sun (Coutinho, 2014). Parts of the hill facing the sun were seen to be generally brighter, warmer and drier than the parts on the shady side, which, in the northern hemisphere, were darker, with soil that was generally more moist and fertile (Coutinho, 2014). *Yang* was used to describe the sunny slope, and *yin* the shady side. Following the metaphor of *yang* as sunny and *yin* as shady, *yang* is also light and *yin* dark. In extending the associations in the context of the sunny light side *yang* is also linked with dead and dry, *yin* with the dark moist side that is fertile, alive and supple (Coutinho, 2014, Kindle location 945). Thus, *yin* and *yang* are not labels, but express relationship. Furthermore, *yin* and *yang* express relationship within things, which can have greater or lesser degrees of *yin* or *yang*. The sun, for example, has the greatest degree of *yang* (light) followed by the daytime sky, and the moon and night sky, which are mainly *yin* (Coutinho, 2014). Thus, there is no sharp boundary between *yin* and *yang*. There is instead an extended phase of *yin*-becoming-*yang* or *yang*-becoming-*yin*. These processes are evident as well in a Sandplay process, as I will show.

Yin-yang thinkers considered it important to follow the seasons (Coutinho, 2014, Kindle location 220) as showing the characteristics of human experiences of change. As Summer ends and Fall begins, warm and cool days are interspersed, periods of rain intervene then disappear. Darkness comes earlier, slowly. Nights become longer, and the wind blows. The leaves fall to the ground leaving branches bare. Summer changing to Fall is not a discrete or sudden event. In this way too, processes and phases of change in the sandtray are gradual. Phases mix and separate gradually until the next phase is entered completely. The human connection with Nature is also shown in how figures representing living things from the natural world are often chosen over manmade objects. Sandplay seems to resonate with the natural, instinctive nature of human beings.

According to R. Wang (2012, Kindle edition location 252-351), there are six forms of *yin-yang* relationship. The first form is contradiction or opposition, where two sides are

connected and related but also opposed in some way. This kind of relationship is about tension and difference from which emerges a dynamic interaction. A second form of relationship is interdependence, where one side cannot exist without the other. Third, a relationship of mutual inclusion involves the implication of one side in the other. In mutual inclusion, an aspect of the relationship that is explicit also entails opposite, hidden forces that are in motion and potential. The fourth form of relationship, interaction or resonance, involves each side influencing and shaping the other. If the relationship is interdependent and mutually inclusive, a change in one will produce a change in the other. The fifth form of relationship is complementarity or mutual support, where each side supplies what the other lacks and where both sides stand on equal ground in performing different roles. The sixth form identified by Wang (2012) is change or transformation, where, as in Nature, relationships between things cycle through decline, deficiency, decrease, demise as well as flourishing, surplus, increase and reproduction, in a perpetual process of change.

In the *yin-yang* model, change between *yin* and *yang* is mutually generative and transformative. Each side of the relationship is intertwined with the other in some way, or in several different ways. This complex, refined way of describing the nature of relationships between opposites reflects the complexity of relations in Nature and a view of Nature and human beings as joined in a unified cosmos. This contrasts with the intrapsychic Jungian view of opposites as irreconcilable. As I have noted, the opposites in the Jungian intrapsychic paradigm are defined in terms of mutual isolation and distinction from each other, irreconcilable until bridged by the symbol that provides a new, third perspective. In this way of thinking about opposites, as Jung described, change comes about as a result of a confrontation between the opposites. Their relationship is described as dualistic and separate.

4.4. Interpretation of Sandplay from a *Yin-Yang* Perspective

In this interpretation of Eva's sandpictures I will explore her work with opposites as seen from a *yin-yang* perspective. Eva's therapy ultimately focussed on loss of ability as she had always experienced it prior to her illness. In her therapy she worked through

her experience of the change in her body's integrity. She discovered a new perspective and a new identity.

Thinking about her Sandplay in the context of the *yin-yang* understanding of the interrelations between the human body and the natural world, it is remarkable that in each of her five pictures the activities she described take place in Nature. In the *yin-yang* view, the human body "bears the same rhythm and properties as the greater cosmic body" (Yang, 2012, Kindle location 200). As well as the sharing of processes of change, as I see it, the natural world and the body are both where we as humans dwell. From this perspective, I suggest that Nature depicted in Sandplay may be seen as an expression of the human body and embodied sensory experience. In my view, the therapist must also approach the interpretation from an embodied perspective, relying on her own sensory experience of the objects and pictures by dwelling in them, so to speak, to help her approach an understanding of their meaning.

From this point of view the elements of the picture are not objects to be analyzed but are representations of sensory experience generating new meaning. In this way of interpreting, each picture represents the patient's embodied experience. It cannot be understood by objectifying, distancing analytically but by joining with it through a process of sensory attunement with the figures and the pictures as wholes.

I want to point out that in the natural environments of Eva's pictures a key figure is the otter, which moves one-quarter turn at a time in a clockwise circular path around the centre of each of pictures 2, 3, 4, and 5. This image suggests the Taoist view of the nature of cyclical change, described as the "potter's wheel of Nature" (Coutinho, 2014, Kindle location 1884). The potter's wheel signifies the beginning and ending cycles of all natural phenomena, which, like a circle, are continuous and endless, and begin and end at any point on the circle (Coutinho, 2014).

The otter circles the hub or centre of each of the four pictures. The centre is the axis around which the otter turns the wheel of change, suggesting, as I see it, that change is associated with the otter as amphibious. Eva pointed out on several occasions what the otter was doing in the scheme of things represented in the pictures. In Pictures 2 to 5, Eva described the otter variously as "having fun," "belonging in the lake," "looking

at the light and basking in the sun,” “visiting the starfish,” “just enjoying the scenery,” “just hanging out,” and in the final picture as “amphibious,” along with the frogs, turtles and polar bear. The otter is a constant presence and takes the stance of a kind of detached, knowing observer, in a necessary, always present relationship with the centre and the unfolding process. Remembering that Eva created the pictures, and chose to put the otter in this central role, suggests her own knowing, as self-generative and transformative, was always present and served as her guide.

As I see it, each scene is turning on the hub of the centre, evolving like the seasons. In the series of scenes, Eva’s experience of her body slowly evolves. Within each picture, dualities in the form of two objects placed together are also seen in each picture and strongly suggest the able-disabled relationship at the core of her work. This seems to suggest that over the course of her therapy as she was working out how to integrate her experience of duality, she experimented with different ways of experiencing her relationship to it. As this evolves, each scene anticipates and grows out of the previous one.

In a *yin-yang* understanding, images are considered a medium connecting the realm of what is intelligible with what is imperfectly knowable, thus mediating between known and unknown (Wang, 2012, Kindle location 6123-6144). From the perspective of Sandplay, the known and unknown refer to consciousness and the unconscious and their contents—the figures and configurations in the sand and the patient’s experience they represent. The patient’s choices of figures and their placement in the sand depict conscious and unconscious implicit, embodied experience in the form of an image. Thus, the *yin-yang* idea that the image mediates known and unknown is shared in Sandplay. *Yin-yang* thinking is clear that these opposites are mutually generative and transformative. As I have noted, in the intrapsychic view of opposites differences are in a relationship more akin to confrontation, unable to agree on one or the other position, and ultimately give way to a new perspective.

Eva created multiple opposites in her Sandplay. From Picture 1 (Figure 2.1) to Picture 5 (Figure 2.5) she expresses in these opposites the many ways she experienced tensions created by experiences that had manifested in her life, beginning in childhood. The illness seemed to create a degree of psychological tension she could not resolve on

her own. This series of images shows the mounting of tensions of opposites and their resolution.

In Picture 1 she described the image as “wild” (on the right, and outside) and “domestic” (on the left, and inside). In Picture 2 (Figure 2.2) she said that water covered the scene from the right side to the beach in front of the houses on the left. She also distinguished between the kayak on the right, and the canoe on the left. Eva named Picture 3 (Figure 2.3) “Hide and Seek” or “Unity in Diversity,” and described the castle ruin on the left as a cross between the beach and the forest. Picture 3 conveys a more complex experience than the previous Pictures 1 and 2. Visual opposites dominate on the right side where the white ice and igloo and the black face and black cooking pot just below are in sharp contrast to each other, both in terms of colour and temperature. Picture 3 seemed to be a culmination of tensions that were building.

Picture 4 (Figure 2.4) is a release or reversal of the tensions. It is an underwater scene, balanced, fluid, and coherent. Reversal is a theme in Chinese thought that evokes the image of a circle or spiral that forever continues in a ring formation (Wang, 2012, Kindle location 339). Picture 4 communicates a sensory experience of relaxation of tensions. Eva verified this in her narrative: “Now I can relax.... it’s a space for smelling the flowers....This is a change of scene....It’s relaxing having water on my body....Now I can breathe....I’m getting past the loss....The transformation is whole, not just bodily.” Opposites are present but have been minimized, in the figures of Batman and 3CPO. The water takes up the entire picture except for the narrow seawall on the right.

Picture 5 (Figure 2.5) expresses the resolution. It depicts a consolidation of her feelings of loss and her relationship to herself. The bridge divides the “not so nice” left side and the “nice” right side, but the pathway around the perimeter unifies them. The angel behind the two doves in the tree in the far right corner suggested to me that her spirituality and feelings of being “more taken care of” had played a role in arriving at her integration. The amphibious otter is swimming at right angles under the bridge toward the amphibious polar bear, frogs and turtles, which are gathered together next to her. She sums up her experience in her narrative:

When I look at the frogs and turtles—they can go on land or in the water. I get how life is when able, and also when disabled. I sit in both

realms. I feel like a crossover between being able bodied and disabled. Now I feel that I'm amphibious I straddle both worlds. I like being amphibious....

Eva's expression of herself as straddling her "able" and "disabled" selves manifests the complementary nature of the two worlds she knows. In the Jungian view, these opposites are conceived initially as irreconcilable, with the potential to eventually unite through the symbol. A *yin-yang* understanding explains how the opposite ideas of herself were always working on each other, mutually influencing and changing each other. It provides a way to think about—and to look for in the images—the processes of evolving relations occurring between opposites in the slow progression toward change.

Consideration of the patient's therapeutic process from a *yin-yang* perspective must also include the therapeutic relationship in which it unfolds. Therapists well versed in an intrapsychic approach may implicitly adopt a stance in which the patient is a separate person to be helped, using specialized skill and knowledge only the therapist has. A *yin-yang* view suggests instead that therapist and patient mutually influence and change each other, and that the therapist needs to keep this in mind. This matters because the therapist's attitude infuses the therapeutic relationship. It influences the patient's willingness to fully express herself, and the therapist's openness to the patient's emotional life. Both are necessary to the experience of change.

4.5. Conclusion

In my discussion of Asian influences on Dora Kalff's thinking I have looked beyond her Jungian interpretation of the Chinese "Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate." My rationale has been to explore how *yin-yang* theory expressed in the diagram might be useful in thinking about the core idea of opposites and their role in the Sandplay process. The premise of unity and thus the complementarity between all phenomena, as in the natural world, contrasts with the idea of separation implicit in the intrapsychic view. *Yin-yang* introduces a new way to understand Sandplay's therapeutic process, the images expressing it, and the therapeutic relationship.

My *yin-yang* interpretation of conscious and unconscious opposites depicted in the clinical material has shown the contrast between the *yin-yang* understanding of opposites as mutually influencing and the intrapsychic understanding of opposites as mutually exclusive. The relationship between unconscious and conscious, understood as mutually influencing, suggests that conscious and unconscious are never completely separate but are continuously influencing change in each other. Developments in the series of images Eva created revealed that a slowly evolving mutually influencing process between conscious and unconscious was at work. Understanding opposites as mutually influencing also applies in thinking about healing and change within the therapeutic relationship. As Eva was changing and accepting her situation, I too changed in my relationship with her. I developed understanding of her situation, her experience of it, and her social and cultural contexts.

In the next chapter I will show that a hermeneutic perspective also expands on the limitations of an intrapsychic approach in Sandplay.

Chapter 5.

A Hermeneutic Understanding of Sandplay

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss Sandplay from a hermeneutics-informed perspective, with a specific focus on the process of play. My purpose in taking a hermeneutic approach is to show how the individualistic, intrapsychic emphasis in the Kalfian theoretical model that I illustrated in Chapter 3 may be re-interpreted and elaborated within a hermeneutic understanding.

A hermeneutic perspective on Sandplay shifts the focus of understanding from reliance on an objective, dualistic analysis of human experience to an appreciation of the dynamic relational and contextual elements that constitute the patient's and therapist's experiences of each other, the play process, its symbolic meanings, and the patient's narrative. The relationship between patient and therapist, and between patient or therapist and the figures and materials, are complex and mutually influencing. If the patient feels accepted by the therapist and feels that her experience is understood, the patient's trust, openness and motivation to adopt new perspectives are more likely to develop. The social, historical and cultural backgrounds of both patient and therapist further influence how each negotiates the relationship between them, usually outside either person's awareness.

These relational and contextual aspects are integral to play, which is instrumental in facilitating the psychological change process that Jung and Kalf theorized. Framed within the reciprocal relationship between patient and therapist, play is also reciprocal in its to and fro between patient and objects, sand and water. These interactions give rise to something psychologically new or changed in a continuous process. Moving a figure, sculpting the sand, shaping a scene, represent and create experiential changes in

perception and sensation that may anticipate further changes. In playing, symbols become manifested in the images in the sandtrays. According to the intrapsychic Kalfian perspective, these are “containers” of the patient’s unconscious and conscious experiences, which are nevertheless situated in historical, socio-cultural contexts. Through play, the patient is in an interdependent relationship with the symbolic aspects of the pictures. The patient’s narrative in the play process makes meaning of the play experience and by extension the life experience the play is representing. The narrative reveals and connects her to her past, present and future.

I will begin by reviewing briefly the principles of philosophical hermeneutics and elaborate the relevance of hermeneutics for Sandplay. I will then discuss Hans-Georg Gadamer’s (1900-2002) hermeneutic understanding of play. Finally, I will return to the clinical case illustration and demonstrate how a Gadamerian and hermeneutic perspective helps to elaborate and clarify the Sandplay process.

5.2. A Brief History of the Hermeneutic Perspective

Hermeneutics is concerned with the art and theory of interpretation, in particular the interpretation of what it is to be human and how human understanding is possible (Sugarman & Martin, 2005). More specifically, with respect to understanding the patient’s psychological process manifested in the sandpictures Richard Kearney’s (2011) definition is especially applicable. Kearney notes that hermeneutics may refer to “the practice of discerning indirect, tacit or allusive meanings, of sensing another sense beyond or beneath apparent sense” (p. 1). For Kearney, hermeneutics is “the task of interpreting plural meaning in response to the polysemy of language and life” (p. 1). In the arena of Sandplay, the psychological process symbolized in the Sandplay pictures is a fusion of relational and emotional experiences in the patient’s life. The interpretive process needs to be sensitive to these complexities as they emerge and change.

Hermeneutics was initially concerned chiefly with the methodological and didactic interpretation of legal and religious texts (Føllesdal, 2001). Through the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), this process of interpretation expanded to include literary

and philosophical texts, and hermeneutic inquiry became philosophical in nature (Føllesdal, 2001; Ramberg & Gjesdal, 2005).

Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) expanded the purview of hermeneutics still further, arguing that it applies to all manifestations of the human spirit (Føllesdal, 2001). Dilthey defined hermeneutics as the attempt to understand the experience of life embodied in text (Richardson, Fowers, & Guignon, 1999). This definition is applicable to the interpretation of Sandplay texts, that is, the Sandplay world. Dilthey's work set the stage for an ontological hermeneutics as conceptualized by Heidegger (1889-1976) who applied it to the fundamentals of human life and existence (being-in-the-world). Heidegger used hermeneutic analysis as a means for deriving insight into human existence (Føllesdal, 2001) and to uncover the conditions underlying concepts of human understanding that are framed in abstract and detached terms (Sugarman & Martin, 2005), rather than reflecting lived human experience. For example, the Jungian concepts that Kalff applied in Sandplay—archetype, masculine and feminine, Self, ego-Self axis, transcendent function of the symbol—are all abstract terms that are difficult to translate experientially and relationally.

Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002), Heidegger's one-time student, adopted the idea of his teacher that, in interpreting, we must always presume situatedness (Burston & Frie, 2006). Situatedness is a prior ontological understanding outside our awareness (Malpas, 2014) similar to Heidegger's state of being thrown into the world. Gadamer rejected earlier attempts in hermeneutics to found understanding on a method or set of rules; his hermeneutics emphasized understanding as a dialogic practical situated activity (Malpas, 2014). In his chief work, *Truth and Method*, Gadamer (1982) proposed that when we want to understand a text, our reading is shaped by our anticipations or unconscious prejudices which are steeped in cultural and historical traditions. Gadamer warns:

A person who is trying to understand a text is always performing an act of projecting. He projects before himself a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text...the latter emerges only because he is reading the text with particular expectations in regard to certain meaning....A person who is trying to understand is exposed to distraction from foremeanings that are not borne out by the things themselves. (pp. 236-237)

In the context of Sandplay therapy and the interpretation of Sandplay images, the therapist must be aware of her situatedness and assumptions and must be open to the possibility that a picture may have a different meaning that is incompatible with them. In order to come close to understanding the meaning of a picture, we revise our anticipations of what is expressed in it until we find an interpretation that seems to us to be true or at least reasonable, and seems to be congruent with the patient's life—that is, until we have reached what Gadamer (1982) described as a “fusion of horizons.” In the context of Sandplay, the therapist's awareness of her own historical and cultural experience, how this may be projected, as Gadamer describes, and how it may influence her interpretation of the patient's narratives and pictures, are ongoing concerns. They may, however, be identified—in part but never completely—through reflection, psychotherapy, consultation or supervision. Sandplay therapists, like all humans beings, are always subject to the influences of their own situatedness.

Hermeneutics recognizes the interpretations of our own and other persons' lived experience as dynamic and fluid processes that are dialogic, contextual, and continually evolving. By contrast, in the Cartesian worldview in which Sandplay was developed, the Self and psychological processes are viewed as structures located in an enclosed, hierarchically arranged internal world. I suggest, however, that the symbolic approach in Sandplay in practice forms a bridge between these two philosophical outlooks.

5.3. Gadamer's Ontological Hermeneutics of Play

Gadamer (1982, 1998a, 1998b) suggests that any interaction between ourselves and objects to which we ascribe meaning, can be considered a play interaction. Rather than subjecting an object of interest to analysis and objectifying it, he says that we can understand more about the object and ourselves as well when we attribute to it a being of its own and engage in a “play” relationship or conversation with it. For Gadamer (1982, 1998b), the meaningful object may be considered something in its own right with something to say.

Gadamer (2004) expressly speaks about the nonlinguistic image as having something to say, and that it falls therefore within the purview of hermeneutic

understanding. He says: “the nonlinguistic says something present and contemporaneous, and our task is to understand the meaning of what it says and make it clear to ourselves and others” (p. 100). In this hermeneutic way of thinking, we can imagine the object of interest, the sandpicture, as something in its own right and always in relationship with the patient.

Using the perspective of a hermeneutical understanding in Sandplay, the therapist is less likely to lose sight of the close connections between the patient and her play. Although in training Sandplay therapists learn about the dangers of projection onto the patient’s image, possibly distorting its meaning, hermeneutics provides a philosophical foundation for understanding this. With such a reference point, the therapist may be more aware of her own inevitable projections of her experiences in making meaning of the image. By contrast, in an intrapsychic approach to the Sandplay process, understanding is contextualized in separation rather than relation. There is no underlying philosophical framework to guide the therapist-interpreter’s thinking about either the interactive relationship between the patient and her sandpictures, or her own interplay with the image and the patient.

Gadamer’s development of hermeneutical aesthetics provides the basis for his philosophy of play, to which I now turn. I will then discuss his hermeneutics of play in the context of Sandplay as a “play modality.” I will follow this with a discussion of the case material in Chapter 2 using a contemporary hermeneutic frame of reference to illustrate a relational and contextual understanding of the unfolding process.

5.3.1. The Hermeneutic Frame for Understanding Play

In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer (1982) describes and explores the ontology of play within the framework of his theory of hermeneutical aesthetics, which served as the launching discussion for hermeneutical understanding in the humanities. Gadamer’s goal in his chapter on play is to use his discussion as a “clue to ontological explanation” (p. 91) suggesting that working out an understanding of the nature of play using art (the image) as the medium provides a guide to how we can understand human experience in general. He developed his views as a counterpoint to the prevailing analysis of aesthetics that was modeled on Cartesian rationalism and the prevailing scientific

method. This perspective objectified art as something to be analyzed, to “overcome the uncertainty and unsureness of life” (p. 211), without regard for the possibilities lying in the *experience* of art—its ambiguity, nuance, and speculativeness. Gadamer’s (1998a) understanding was that art is integrated with life, “penetrating all the dimensions of our social life, through all classes, races and levels of cultural attainment” (p. 130). Art was from his point of view a legitimate subject for hermeneutical inquiry. He argued that the scientific method is not applicable in pursuing an understanding of aesthetics or any of the humanities, where the aim is to understand phenomena as they are, in their unique and historical concreteness (Gadamer, 1982).

In building his case for a hermeneutic, experiential approach to aesthetic understanding, Gadamer (1982, 1998a) first addresses the Cartesian separation of mind from body and instinct as a false duality:

It is by no means the case that everything accompanied by the conscious feeling of freedom is actually the result of a free decision. Unconscious factors, compulsive drives, and interests not only determine our behaviour, but our consciousness as well. (Gadamer, 1998a, p. 123)

Play, Gadamer said (1982, 1998a), is a human capacity tied to the nonrational instinctive and bodily responses we share with the animal kingdom. He argues that play shares common ground with Nature as an instinctive impulse, where Nature is a constantly self-renewing play. Human behaviour, thoughts, and feelings are not entirely the result of free choice. They are determined as well by unconscious elements also found in the natural animal world. Thus, he says, in playing, we also show that we are part of Nature. We share with the animal kingdom the instinctual, universal, and participatory capacity for play: “play is an elementary phenomenon that pervades the whole of the animal world, and, as is obvious, it determines man as a natural being as well” (Gadamer, 1998a, p. 123).

Following in the wake of Heidegger’s shift to an ontological understanding of phenomena and processes, Gadamer (1982) examined the experience of art and thus “the mode of being of the work of art itself” (p. 91). Rather than studying art on the assumption that it is without its own being, and has no effect on the human beings in contact with it—the artist who creates it or its audience—Gadamer maintains: “The work

of art has its true being in the fact that it becomes an experience changing the person experiencing it” (p. 92). Gadamer’s purpose in describing play in terms of how we encounter art is to describe how we experience meaning and becoming in all our encounters. I will elaborate this is a key idea for understanding the healing effect of play in my discussion of the case below.

In taking an ontological position vis à vis art, Gadamer (1998a) introduces the idea that play has its own being, acquiring a life of its own achieved through the actions of the player. He points to the reciprocal, transforming interaction between player and play, a pivotal concept of importance in understanding how change manifests in Sandplay. He rejects hallmarks of Cartesian rationalism: predictability, similarity, regularity and conformity (Gadamer, 1982). Only in this way, he maintains, could we come to know the fundamental conditions, the mode of being of play. Rather than disregarding the meaning that play actually brings to our relationship with art and life, Gadamer (1998b) preserves and celebrates play’s aliveness and its value in producing a product with something to say and having a special nature of its own.

The difference between animal and human play, according to Gadamer (1998a), is that human play is constituted by “intentionality of consciousness” (p. 124)—the specific rules and conditions that direct the player’s focus on the particular play process. The rules and conditions that constitute Sandplay are framed in the “free and protected space” of the therapeutic frame which is created by the therapist, which Dora Kalff (2003) believed was inviolable, and absolutely necessary if the patient was to experience change. She describes the “free space” (p. 7) as occurring in the therapeutic setting when the therapist is fully able to accept the patient so that the therapist, as a person, “is as much a part of everything going on in the room as is the patient himself” (p. 7). Kalff wanted to ensure that the patient had absolute freedom in determining what to construct, which figures to choose and how to use them. She defined protection in terms of limits: “the same limitations that are prerequisite for genuine freedom in the real world are present in the measurements of the sandbox which forms limits to what can be represented and provides a frame wherein transformation can take place” (p. 17). Freedom and limitations are thus intricately connected and are part of human traditions. Gadamer (1998a) observes: “A certain self-imposed limitation of our freedom seems to belong to the very structure of culture” (p. 124). His perspective on the rules and

conditions that define the intention of the play, underlines the necessity for the therapist to create the conditions in which play makes change possible. The intention of the patient is to play within these parameters, nothing more.

The ontology of play Gadamer (1982, 1998a) examines is comprehensive, and I will limit my discussion to elements I have found to be relevant in the experience of Sandplay, from both the patient's and the therapist's perspective. I have previously noted the instinctive, natural, and nonrational aspects and the intentional consciousness of human play in Gadamer's framework and how I see these factors as intrinsic to Sandplay. In his ontology of play, Gadamer identifies other factors that are inherent in play and Sandplay: the sacredness of the space where the play takes place; play's uniqueness and seriousness; its conversational and participatory nature; its "as if" quality; its continuity with life and culture. I will discuss these aspects below to show the hermeneutic aspects of Sandplay as a play modality.

The Sacredness and Seriousness of Play

Gadamer (1982) maintained that "the human game requires its playing field. The setting apart of the playing field—just like that of sacred precincts—sets the sphere of play as a closed world" (p. 96). In Sandplay, the playing field is the bordered, enclosed sandtray, within the larger therapeutic space protected by the therapist. The therapeutic relationship is likewise a psychological playing field for the patient-therapist to and fro verbal and nonverbal communications. Gadamer's (1982) reference to the field as a sacred precinct is relevant to Sandplay. Dora Kalff (2003) considered the sandtray to be a sacred space because it was where the patient could be healed spiritually through connection with the Self, as I have described. From this point of view, the sandtray and the therapeutic relationship are both sacred ground that is highly valued—one physical, one psychological. This is the esteem in which play in Sandplay must be held, because it is an intimate, personal expression of the patient's experience that has been entrusted with the therapist.

Gadamer (1982) elaborates on the seriousness of play when he states: "Play has its own relation to what is serious. . . . Play fulfills its purpose only if the player loses himself in his play. Only seriousness in playing makes the play wholly play" (p. 92). Similarly, in Dora Kalff's view (2003), the transforming effects of play do not begin until

the patient is absorbed in the play and is serious about that, not about playing in order to change, or choosing figures with the specific purpose of communicating an idea symbolically. The patient is immersed in diffuse consciousness while she plays. The mode of being of play does not allow the player to behave towards play as if it were an object: “the player knows well what play is...but he does not know what exactly he knows in knowing that” (Gadamer, 1982, p. 92). In other words, “ego consciousness” is temporarily sidelined. Just as in this context of aesthetics, the patient who plays does not analyze or objectify her playing or the sandpicture. The patient participates in a to-and-fro conversation with the text of the picture that is emerging; the therapist asks herself what the picture might be saying as it is constructed. Even as the process of constructing has ended, she continues to ask. An atmosphere of freedom not to know prevails.

The Uniqueness of Play

Gadamer (1982) describes a work of art as “something that has emerged in an unrepeatable way and has manifested itself in a unique fashion” (p. 126) through play. Similarly, in Sandplay, each sandpicture is constructed differently. Even if the same figures are used, how they are used and placed, or how the sand is shaped, is never identical. As a sandpicture comes into existence, it takes shape in accord with the meanings the patient is gradually piecing together. The picture is not only what the patient may describe as she creates it, or in her closing narrative from a Kalfian/Jungian perspective, it is also a symbol or collection of symbols of the patient’s unconscious experience.

The picture embodies psychological aspects uniquely configured according to the situation of the patient who plays. No sandpicture manifests the same phenomena in the same way. Although the sandpictures come into being in their own distinctive contexts, they can be said to share a process of emergence and unique expression as Gadamer (1982, 1998a) describes. As the patient plays and becomes absorbed in her play, the picture takes shape of its own accord and not according to a plan or method.

The Conversational and Participatory Aspects of Play

When the patient plays in the sandtray, the therapist witnesses a silent conversation with each element chosen as the picture takes form. Gadamer's understanding of conversation offers insight into the changes that become part of this conversation (as cited in Palmer, 2001). He says, "Something plays back and forth between the human being and that which he or she encounters in the world" (Gadamer as cited in Palmer, 2001, p. 71). In the patient-figures/sand/water meeting, the patient experiences something—bodily sensations, thoughts, feelings and perceptions that may have been dormant. The placement of a figure, the movement of sand in a certain way, inspires another placement and perhaps another movement of the sand in response. A series of steps, one connected to the other, communicating, takes place. Communication, Gadamer (1998b) points out, "does not really acknowledge the distance separating the one who plays and the one who watches the play" (p. 24).

While this interaction between patient and materials is enacted, the therapist observes and, as Gadamer (1998b) defines participation, "plays along with" the patient. He says, "The act of playing always requires a playing along with. . . . Participation is an inner sharing in the play" (p. 24). Each time Eva stood at the sandtray I was very curious about what she would express and how she would express it. The empty space is very gradually, or sometimes quickly, taken up with objects that would at times surprise me. As she placed each object in the sandtray, I was playing alongside her, experimenting in my own mind with possible meanings, wondering what she would say the picture said when she had finished. In playing along, it was also important to keep an open mind. The unexpected could and would happen. As she played, and I watched and wondered, we were in the playing together.

The "as if" Quality of Play

Gadamer (1998a) identifies an "as if" quality as an essential feature of play. "Play intends something, and yet it is not what it intended. . . . It is not encountered in its own right, but stands for something else" (pp. 125-126). When the patient creates the sandpicture it is intended as something in particular. Eva decided she was ready to create a sandpicture for the first time in her third session. She said at the start of the session that she was "determined to do Sandplay," and carried through her intention with

choosing figures, preparing the sand, and then slowly placing figures in the sand. Her intention was to somehow arrange the figures in a way that was meaningful for her, but in doing this, the picture also stood for something else, as I described in the Kalfjian/Jungian interpretation of Chapter 3. Thus, from the point of view of both the patient and the observer-therapist, the sandpicture means something more than was intended. Even when the patient reviews the picture, she will experience it differently every time. The picture is never static. It is movement and meaning that is experienced variously as different observers at different times understand it differently, each bringing with them their own historical and cultural traditions.

The Continuity of Play with Life and Culture

Gadamer (1982) makes the distinction between understanding a picture in terms of its physical attributes, which he argues is inadequate, and understanding it in terms of its relationship with its creator. His point that aesthetics must recognize the continuity between art and everyday life and between the work of art and its creator is especially applicable in Sandplay:

If the aesthetic is mere appearance . . . then its power—like the terror of dreams—could last only so long as there was no doubt of the reality of the appearance, and would lose its truth on waking. The shift of the ontological definition of the aesthetic to the sphere of aesthetic appearance has its theoretical basis in the fact that the domination of the scientific epistemological model leads to the discrediting of all the possibilities of knowing that lie outside this new method. (p. 75)

A methodical approach to understanding a sandpicture by describing and analyzing it in terms of the appearance and arrangement of the objects in the sandtray would be useful for having an accurate recording of the objects taking up the space, and this is the first stage in the process of interpreting a sandpicture. An interpretation of the picture cannot stop there. If this were so, the picture would become isolated from the historical and social contexts in which its creator lives. These connections point to the meaning evolving for the patient, and with that in mind, the therapist may piece together an understanding of the patient's experience.

From the therapist's standpoint understanding of the nature of continuity can be the basis for intervention. For example, the picture may reveal unresolved early trauma

in implicit memory that is having a significant impact on the patient, or an experience the patient has discounted and has never processed may be unconsciously represented. In Eva's case, as I have shown in Chapter 3, there are many instances of continuity between her play and her life and the issues she faced. Eva's use of the motif of the frog prince appearing in the first and last pictures symbolized the dependence on others that she felt and resented. The change in its context depicted how her attitude toward dependence had shifted. In the first picture the frog prince is prominent and is the subject of her first comment, suggesting the importance of the issue for her. In the last picture he has become part of the landscape with other frogs and turtles who have now been identified as amphibious—an important symbol of her changed experience of herself and her belonging in the world.

The Symbol in Hermeneutics

Gadamer's (2004) remark that Goethe's statement, "everything is a symbol," was "the most comprehensive formulation of the hermeneutical idea" (p. 103) further suggests the hermeneutical quality of Sandplay. As the case interpretation in Chapter 3 shows, the symbol, defined as "an indefinite expression with many meanings, pointing to something not easily defined and therefore not fully known" (Jung, 1956, p. 124, para. 180) plays a vital role in a Sandplay process. The patient's play, which manifests symbols, and the therapist's symbolic attitude throughout the therapeutic and interpretive process, characterize Sandplay. Gadamer (2004) elaborates on his observation of Goethe's claim:

It means everything points to another thing. . . . "Everything" is not an assertion about each being...but an assertion as to how it encounters man's understanding . . . only because the universal relatedness of being is concealed from human eyes does it need to be discovered." From a hermeneutic view, the work of art expresses the symbolic character that belongs to all beings. (p. 103)

I interpret this to mean that everything we encounter contains countless germs of meanings waiting to be revealed through understanding. In Gadamer's (2004) view, every meaning discovered is a function of tradition experienced. This refers to how we make meaning as it is shaped by our traditions and the collectivity of our experiences of life and culture. We are embedded in these experiences, and cannot escape them, but

we can encounter them. Our belief systems, value systems, language, are all aspects of our embodied, embedded traditions. Much remains embodied and implicit until we encounter something or someone we want to understand. This encounter gives us the opportunity to better understand ourselves, which is an objective of the therapeutic process. In Sandplay, the patient awakens to previously unformulated meaning as she encounters the figures and materials. In the frame of therapeutic play, these figures and materials symbolize and reveal something about the player and therapist. The symbol acts as an agent of perspectival change. Gadamer (1998b) says this in another way: “The symbol is that other fragment that has always been sought in order to complete and make whole our own fragmentary life” (p. 32).

5.3.2. A Hermeneutic Perspective on the Clinical Case

From a hermeneutic perspective, the transformation of meaning experienced by Eva in the process of play is understood as emerging in a shared historical cultural and social context with her therapist. Eva did not play in a vacuum, nor did she work out her anxieties about loss of identity and adaptation alone. The changes in her experience of herself and her relationships were generated in the context of the dialogue inherent in her play with symbolic material and our verbal and nonverbal interactions, and were tested in her everyday experiences. Gadamer uses play to describe how we encounter and understand something of meaning. In Sandplay, play is the patient’s mode of understanding herself, through her meaning-making using play materials. Sandplay may be said to concretize Gadamer’s observations because it uses play as the modality for understanding and change.

Eva’s sandpictures both reveal and conceal her experience, which is constituted in the objects she chooses, in each picture as wholes, and in all of the pictures together, in the process as a whole. Each of these aspects played a part in coming to an understanding of her process, as I show below. The experiences represented and encountered in the pictures changed each time a picture was constructed. Each object, each picture, and the whole series, had something to say. The revealed aspects were those she talked about in her narratives. The concealed aspects were hidden from her understanding and emerged slowly through her encounters with the images and their components.

Rather than being deliberately constructed and planned out ahead of time, each picture anticipated the next in the process of encountering and understanding. In a hermeneutic approach, every meaning discovered is a function of tradition experienced (Gadamer, 1982). In the context of Sandplay, her traditions—her historical, social and cultural life—are the arbiters of meaning and the choices she makes. This contrasts with the intrapsychic focus on the development of the individual's internal experience of the Self in relation to ego. In my view, a contextual approach to the discovery of meaning through play is as essential as the reality that we are all embedded in our history. With an appreciation of our fundamental embeddedness and contextualization, we can understand more of the patient and ourselves as therapists and interpreters of the patient's experience.

For the purposes of illustrating a hermeneutic approach to the case, I will emphasize Gadamer's interpretation of play as relational (conversational and participatory), and contextual (having continuity with life and culture). I discuss Eva's background and our first encounter, and follow this with a hermeneutic understanding of how I arrived at a preliminary interpretation (since interpretation is never finished). I will refer to developments in the individual images about Eva's experience of duality and her resolution in the experience of being amphibious—of living as though two different beings in one.

As I have described in Chapter 2, Eva was the victim of a life-changing disease that felt like an attack on her being. Her athletic ambitions and status had been thwarted and her self-identity as an elite, accomplished athlete and independent woman were suddenly and permanently changed. This experience of loss had unfolded within the context of Eva's relational experiences in her family growing up, religious convictions she had adopted, her experiences of herself as energetic and capable; and her social experience at school, at work, and in competition.

At our first encounter by email, Eva stated her physical situation and her objectives for therapy, told me what she knew about me and inquired as to whether I would be willing and able to take her. She displayed initiative and foresight, following through on the referral and wanting to make sure it would be possible for her to get to my office via public transportation, among other details. I noticed Eva's care for herself,

her efforts to ensure some predictability and to encounter few surprises. When we met face to face, I again felt her caution. This time she seemed hopeful that I would care for her too, although for now I would be kept at a distance. It became quickly evident why this was so.

Eva's early relationships were infused with parental anxiety and depression, emotional distance and threats of violence, mixed with positive support and caring. Her experience of relationships as unsafe, uncaring and confusing had shaped her own patterns of relating, described by her as tentative, unaffectionate and lacking trust. Following her diagnosis, Eva experienced a shift in her parents' usual behaviour toward her. Instead of being emotionally distant, they had showed her care and compassion. This change, however, still left Eva with the question of whether it was based on her worthiness as Eva, or on a narcissistic need to protect what belonged to them. Later in Eva's process we looked at the relationships and emotional patterns of interaction in her family, extending back to her grandparents. A theme of loss pervaded both parents' families, in the form of divorce, the death of a loved, physically disabled child, and lack of emotional continuity and availability. Eva's parents had not experienced the feeling of relationships as safe, secure and reliable, and had been unable to consistently create such experiences in their children.

Eva's focus on wanting to be seen as competent, her perceptions of lack of regard from others, her need to feel needed, and her need for others to have high expectations of her, pointed to her embeddedness in experiences with significant others of not feeling seen, not feeling regarded as important or worthy, and feeling unable to create reciprocal relationships. When in Session 2 Eva talked about her anxiety, her general lack of focus and desire to be free of having to ask others for help, she associated these feelings with bodily sensations of "heaviness," "bigness," "toxicity," "potential overwhelm," and "sabotage." As I understood this, she was describing embodied early experiences which had been revived in association with her newly vulnerable and dependent psychological situation. As I have shown in Chapter 3, Eva's sandpictures provide a vital, otherwise unavailable link to her nonverbal, unconscious world of experience. In the language of hermeneutics, the picture is a world and a text authored by Eva whose understanding is embedded in her particular psycho-social-historical experience.

Gadamer's observation (1998a) that play is continuous with life and culture suggests that in Sandplay we are witnessing the patient as embedded in her contexts. As Eva built the images, each object she chose had meaning for her that was itself constructed from the historical social and cultural contexts of her experiences. The experience of having her physical ability compromised, something that drastically changed her life, was in turn embedded in the other, historical experiences I have already noted. Her relationship to loss was shaped by how she and those around her had dealt with it in the past, and whether she had experienced some sense of acceptance of her own past losses. I wondered what these might be, and what their meaning was for her.

Unavoidably entering into our relationship was my own experience of loss. Was I adequately prepared to help someone who was changed by illness? In my own life, the early loss of my mother, also to cancer, and the losses of friends and extended family as a result of immigration were part of my experience. I felt that I could bring an understanding of loss as a part of life, not necessarily explicitly, but in how I could be with her. Without sharing my personal information, my familiarity with loss and the feelings surrounding it would communicate that I was not afraid of what she might present.

Questions about the nature of the historical social and cultural contexts and their mutual effects within the therapeutic relationship are important to ask. Bringing a hermeneutic understanding to the therapeutic process means that they are more likely to be asked. In the intrapsychic frame, where the focus is on internal process, raising them may not be a priority. Hermeneutic thinking expands the possibilities for understanding the patient and the therapist's role in coming to it.

Thinking about the images as Eva's encounters with herself, each one would have something to say and would add to understanding of the whole process. As can be seen in the series, each encounter with an image sets in motion the emergence of a new one as Eva integrated new understanding. Each picture is the context for the next, and their continuity is depicted in the amphibious otter's steady clockwise movement around the centre. The theme of experiencing herself as being in two different worlds was the context of her life and showed the continuity of her play with her life. The seemingly

insurmountable problem of working out how to integrate this was worked out in the series of pictures. The opening statement about the relationship of the “frog prince” and the other amphibious creatures with the centre was set out at the beginning. It was a clear statement about the context of her work and the importance of this for her. Pictures 2 and 3, are similar in the ongoing thematic statement, but Picture 3 shows the emergence of something new. Pathways provide a means for getting around, the canoe has a paddler, a game of hide and seek, or “unity in diversity” as she called it, suggest momentum is building, in her determination to find a way. Picture 4 is a breakthrough, a completely different experience of life as balanced and peaceful, and new. Picture 5 shows how she has integrated her experience with the notion of being amphibious, knowing how it is to be in both worlds, and seeing this as a strength.

The connection of sandpictures to the patient’s life is necessary for the meaning of the pictures to make practical sense. Sandplay therapists may sometimes become lost in the process of interpreting symbols out of context, overlooking that the pictures have been created by a person embedded in specific contexts that must be attended to. With a hermeneutic understanding as a foundation, this continuity with life and culture becomes central to the analysis of the therapeutic process of change and understanding.

5.4. Conclusion

In this discussion I have shown that Sandplay as a play modality demonstrates Gadamer’s hermeneutic understanding of play as the dynamic, reciprocal mode of being we engage in when we make meaning of our encounters—with ourselves, others, and the world. I have emphasized the relational and contextual features in Gadamer’s analysis of play in my hermeneutical interpretation of the Sandplay case. I have argued that for the therapist to understand the dynamics in the therapeutic relationship and the patient’s sandpictures, she must take into consideration the embedded social and cultural history of both the patient and herself. These contextual dimensions are inescapable. As such, they constitute both the patient’s and therapist’s participation in the change process.

I have presented this introduction to Gadamer's hermeneutical understanding of play as an alternative to the intrapsychic model. An intrapsychic understanding is depicted as internal, somehow separated from our social and cultural histories. This approach leaves out historical social and cultural aspects of experience that significantly contribute to the change process and the dynamics within the therapeutic relationship. A model for understanding experience as situated in contexts can provide Sandplay therapists with a guide to this way of understanding. In my final Discussion I will propose how this approach may be integrated into the Sandplay process.

Discussion

In my critique of the utility of the intrapsychic model as a philosophical reference point for Sandplay therapy, I have examined Jungian, *yin-yang* and hermeneutical perspectives on understanding the patient's experience. I have used the Jungian individuation theory of change as a starting point and identified the theory's intrapsychic aspects. I have maintained that the intrapsychic tradition is built on a Cartesian belief that objectivity is possible in the interpretation of meaning. Hence the separations inherent in understanding from an intrapsychic viewpoint: between subject and object; inner and outer; self and social world; and between psychological phenomena, conceptualized as contained structures that communicate with each other from separate vantage points.

In contrast to the intrapsychic approach, I have suggested that Sandplay is a process of meaning-making that is a fundamentally relational and participatory endeavour. In the pursuit of meaning, several relationships are at work, all of which interact at all times: between patient and therapist, patient and sandpicture, and therapist and sandpicture. In this mixing of minds and images, neither psychological isolation nor objectivity are possible, for patient or therapist. In addition, the Sandplay process is itself part of the larger social, cultural and historical contexts in which both the patient and the therapist participate.

I have suggested that to some degree the intrapsychic model unnecessarily complicates the process of understanding meaning in sandpictures. It takes a giant leap of imagination to see psychological structures in the often complex experiences represented in the sandtray. It is easy for therapists to make assumptions that are a far cry from the patient's life experience. Understanding sandpictures is a hermeneutic exercise. It is a back and forth process of working out a fit between meanings in the pictures individually and as part of the whole sequence. These meanings must also be continuous with the patient's life as they understand it, as it has been revealed in the

therapeutic relationship. This asks that the therapist be comfortable with not knowing, nuance and speculation, in the mutual therapeutic process of meaning making. Ultimately the therapist can only come close to the meaning that even the patient can never grasp once and for all.

Building on the Jungian theory of the tension and union of opposites, I have introduced the concept of complementary opposites in *yin-yang* thought. Kalff had not investigated (in writing at least) the *yin-yang* perspective and I found it to be an important contrast to the Jungian view that opposites are in conflict. In the process of interpreting this case from a *yin-yang* perspective, the significance of Nature in Sandplay has become all the more evident. I was aware of patients' use of Nature in constructing their scenes. I had not, however, understood the change process in Sandplay in terms of how change occurs in Nature. This is a useful way to teach how the images depict developmental changes and transitions, which always overlap and are not easily identifiable phases. Images of boundaries and isolation prevalent in intrapsychic thinking anticipate an idea of change as clear cut rather than processual. A *yin-yang* view of opposites as emergent, mutually influencing and transformative, is a more substantive way to think about change.

Both Jungian and *yin-yang* theories identify as their premise that difference mediates change, but they do so on the basis of unique standpoints and traditions. In keeping with an intrapsychic point of view, Jungian/Kalffian theory understands that psychic change requires the energy created by two opposing forces (Samuels et al., 1986). *Yin-yang* thought goes to the source of Daoist understanding that all phenomena interact according to the processes found in Nature and the cosmos. On this view, human change is in harmony with the laws of the natural world. The Sandplay case illustrates visually and symbolically the patient's implicit connection with the natural world. The case is an example of how Nature is used in Sandplay by patients, young and old, almost without exception. Gadamer's analysis of play also acknowledges the instinctive, natural roots of play. The predominance of the natural world in Sandplay creations in general suggests the foothold humans have in Nature and the importance of Nature in all facets of life. It points to the place of Nature as a possible place for healing.

I have illustrated the significance of the symbol in Sandplay. As it mediates the change process, the symbol breaks through the bounds of intrapsychic thinking into the realm of hermeneutics. The symbol's possible meanings are determined by the historical social and cultural contexts of each individual who encounters it. Understanding the meaning of a symbol is a hermeneutic experience of understanding in contexts. Aspects of the sandpictures, the pictures as wholes, and the series of pictures become symbols through the internal conversations the picture elicits in the patient. The therapist participates in this experience but both make their own meanings that emerge within their own historical contexts.

Gadamer's hermeneutics provides another alternative to the intrapsychic model. He says that our encounter with something to which we give meaning is a play experience. It is not an objective analysis separating us from the meaningful encounter. I have discussed how Gadamer's description of play applies in this context of Sandplay. It describes how both patient and therapist can better understand themselves through the medium of play. Gadamer's description of play's dynamic between interpreter and picture (both patient and therapist are interpreting and attempting to understand) confirms the experiential nature of Sandplay. As I have shown, this applies both to understanding the picture and how the therapist facilitates understanding within the therapeutic relationship.

My critique of the intrapsychic perspective as a model for the experience of Sandplay would be incomplete without suggesting an integration of the ideas I have identified as describing the Sandplay experience. I recognize that proceeding in this manner and seeking to combine elements of such varied philosophical frameworks is inevitably fraught with theoretical challenges. Moreover, practitioners and philosophers who are true to each individual perspective may balk at such an integrationist viewpoint. Nevertheless I believe it can be a fruitful exercise and I hope to demonstrate the degree to which the process of integration can be helpful to the contemporary Sandplay therapist.

My rationale for working out an inter-perspective integration is my desire to address how Sandplay therapists can, to the greatest degree possible, build trust within the therapeutic relationship based on the patient's feeling of being understood. Other

factors, such as the therapist's consistency with the rules governing practice—length of session, policy on fees, phone calls between sessions, support during crises—and general reliability, also build trust, and these too need to be felt by the patient. Trust in the therapist's ability to understand, however, is essential to the patient's feeling of security in the therapeutic relationship and her willingness to bring forward difficult material for processing. Some patients are embedded in social and cultural experiences that make them sensitive to signs of instability in the relationship and may knowingly or not block the flow of self-revelation. The therapist's confidence in the theoretical and philosophical basis of her practice also builds trust. The patient can sense the therapist's confidence and responds to the security this brings into the room. Thus the philosophical and theoretical basis for practice makes its way into the therapeutic relationship and significantly influences the possibility for change.

I conclude this dissertation by proposing an integration of three aspects of the three perspectives I have discussed: (a) a symbolic understanding of the sandpictures and the process as a whole; (b) understanding that mutually influencing, emergent processes are occurring in the images, between patient and therapist, and between sandpicture, patient and therapist; and (c) understanding that both patient and therapist are embedded in social and cultural contexts and how this is manifested in the images and in the relationship. I am suggesting that the therapist engage in all three ways of understanding as fundamental to building the therapeutic relationship. I will suggest next how these aspects communicate the therapist's understanding in building an emotional environment that supports change.

1. Understanding that the sandpictures and the patient's verbal and nonverbal comments and narratives are symbolic—that they stand for something else. This understanding connects the therapist with the patient's unconscious process. Although this process of understanding takes place over time and in the context of the patient's life, the knowledge as it is acquired gives the therapist a sense of the dimensions of the process and reveals experience that the patient cannot express verbally. Understanding implicit, embodied memory revealed in the sand provides information that the therapist may use as the basis for verbal interventions and the patient's further elaboration. Thus, the symbolic understanding is an invaluable way to learn more than can be learned verbally about the patient's experience at the centre of therapy. It communicates implicitly or explicitly that the therapist is capable of understanding and helping the patient to understand.

2. Understanding that mutually influencing, emergent processes are occurring in the images, between patient and therapist, and between sandpicture, patient and therapist. With this awareness, communicated in the therapist's verbal and non-verbal interactions with the patient, the therapist attempts to create a relationship with the patient in which power differentials are minimized. The patient who has experienced relational trauma or has had difficult experiences in relationships can re-frame her role and responsibility within a relationship that validates her emotional experience. The therapist allows herself to be influenced and notices how she is influenced, in her relationship with the patient and the sandpictures. The therapist's understanding of the process as emergent through mutual influencing implicitly, and perhaps explicitly in conversation, communicates that the therapist trusts the process, and takes responsibility for playing a part in how the process unfolds.

3. Understanding that both patient and therapist are embedded in social and cultural contexts and how this is manifested in the images and in the therapeutic relationship. Attending to the patient's unique historical social and cultural experiences, the therapist develops an understanding of the mix of beliefs, values and experiences that come together in the therapeutic relationship. The relationship may be strengthened by the therapist's sensitive consideration of these contexts, and how they may, or do, influence each other. Understanding the contexts in which the patient has lived, the therapist will be aware of their manifestation in the sandpictures. This helps the therapist in her process of understanding the sandpictures and builds the patient's trust that she can be seen in the relationship. In the process of inquiry into the patient's historical contexts, the therapist may discover themes that are or will be depicted in the sandpictures. The therapist's knowledge of context and use of this knowledge in the therapeutic process creates an emotional context of mutuality and trust for the development of understanding and the possibilities for change.

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Appendix A.

Developmental Theory in Sandplay

Sandplay's model of development is discussed in terms of the ego-self relationship, the "ego-self axis" in Jungian terminology. The self in Jungian psychology is our whole potential; the who-we-are, potentially, and is defined as wholeness, or the total personality. The self is teleological, i.e., the self has a goal, which is self-realization.

We can think about the self as originally containing all the psycho-somatic potential of the individual (Michael Fordham, 1905 to 1995, child analyst, developmental analytical psychologist). The self as our potential emerges from the time of birth in an ever-changing interactional, intersubjective process with the environment. The self is defined as an archetype of order, organization, and unification. It is the centre of the conscious and unconscious psyche-soma, as the sun is the centre of the solar system.

The ego, according to Jungian theory, organizes the conscious mind and is composed of conscious perceptions, memories, thoughts, and feelings. The ego plays the important function of gatekeeper to consciousness, acting as a filter of experiences, and selecting only a small proportion of them to be realized in awareness.

Jungian theory says that the child is whole at birth. Through her relational experiences as she develops and matures, her ego slowly forms and differentiates as separate from but in relationship with the self. The self is understood to be the source of nourishment, the ground the ego must have connection with in order for the personality to be in a state of equilibrium (rather than troubled in some way, or "one-sided" as Jung described it). When the ego has become lost from its mooring in the self, and a relationship with the self has not been established or has been damaged, play with sand, water, figures, in a free, nondirective, protected environment can promote a connection to the self and strengthen the relationship between self and ego. This process *relativizes* the ego (the ego is no longer the sole source of knowing) and strengthens it at the same time, because it is in line with the natural development of the personality.

Another way to understand the developmental process is in Fordham's theory of integration/deintegration. He named the primary, original, self an *integrate*. In its

interaction with the environment, the *integrate* of the self spontaneously *deintegrates* into parts that activate or are activated by the child's experience of her/his environment. Through a continuous process of *deintegration and reintegration* (consolidation) through sleep or reflection for example, the self-structure is modified, leading to the ongoing development of the ego.

Developmental processes can appear out of order, indistinct, repeat themselves, or occur simultaneously. The client may return to any experience of psychological development, regardless of chronological age, in order to rework the process with accessible resources.

Dora Kalff based her theory of development on the ideas of Erich Neumann (Jungian analyst, 1905-1960), whose expertise was in the archetypal development of the child and culture. Neumann understood the self as the directing centre of the personality, unfolding during the course of life in relationship to the environment. The child's develops through the following processes:

Please note that 'Mother' refers to mother, mother-figure or nurturing figure.

1. Mother-Child Unity, following birth.

The child has little perception of a separate body or of individuality – which does not develop until about age one year).

The mother-child unity is foundational. It influences the individual's experience of security or insecurity in all relationships. The relationship of the child to him or herself is determined by the quality of this relationship. Neumann theorized that because the child's early experience of the mother is archetypal, the infant is open to other positive, nurturing influences, and can have a positive experience of the maternal in a relationship with such things as trees and gardens, for example.

Disturbances in the mother-child unity can occur as a result of early difficulties experienced by the child, including physical illness, which may prevent the child from experiencing a sense of comfort and safety.

Because the child does not in this phase have an experience of her body as separate she experiences these disturbances as the loss of the mother. The experience of loss of mother, e.g. through abandonment, is experienced as a rejection by the self/body. Loss of mother = loss of contact with the world.

Sandplay imagery of the mother-child unity:

- feeding, eating and support/nurturing themes
- quiet, natural scenes with pairs of animals or human mothers and babies

If the child has experienced distress at this point in its development, the sandpictures may show symbolic imagery of themes of hunger, gnawing and devouring.

2. Mother-Child Relationship

Toward the end of the first year the child's psyche begins to differentiate from the mother/mother figure and forms a relationship with the mother. The child begins exploration and learning and begins to polarize the world into opposites, initially simple ones like good and bad, and becoming more complex as the child matures. The child learns patterns or pairs of opposites such as up/down, front/back, in/out, creating a structure for understanding how the world works.

Sandplay imagery of the mother-child relationship:

- themes of pairs showing a new aspect or new presence (symbolizing the new duality of the mother-child).
- the negative may manifest in wicked, abandoning mothers and witches
- themes of lack of support, death and loss.
- the child experiences deep grief at acknowledging this experience.

3. Constellation of the Self

At about age 3, if the child has experienced 'good enough' mothering, the child undergoes a natural psychological process of centering – an experience of completeness and being the centre of the world. It is a foundational experience for the child, from which healthy ego development can evolve.

The self may be touched many times, in many ways during a sandplay process. It often appears in the form of circles, but not necessarily. Dora Kalff observed that the self-manifestation in sandplay was primarily distinguished by its *numinous* energy.

Following the separation from mother's self and constellation of the child's self, the process of ego-development proceeds, where the child begins to develop an "I". Up to this point, the child is very slowly differentiating from her experience of parental figures.

4. Ego development

In Jungian theory the ego is the centre of consciousness. Dora Kalff identified three processes or phases in the emergence of the ego, based on how they presented symbolically in the sand pictures. The work of the ego is to become both independent from and in relationship with the unconscious, the parents/authority figures, and the collective.

a) animal-vegetative (typically seen in initial pictures of 6 year olds)

- plant symbols are at first most prominent, with their passivity and earthiness, denoting the processes of growth. Animal symbolism indicates an active, rather than passive development, when the child moves from a phase of having an urge, to wanting and acting on that wanting. The range of the child's activity increases.
- rich with life and primal energy
- trees and plant life, animals (prehistoric, wild, domestic)
- forests and jungles
- plants and earth

b) battle/conflict (typically seen in initial pictures of 9 year olds)

- emergence of opposites in images of warring sides, or teams facing each other in direct opposition
- light vs dark, masculine vs feminine, good vs bad, this side against that side, or individual fighters (hero against an evil one), etc.
- conflictual interactions with authority figures (parents, teachers, police)
- introduction of regulating figures in the form of literal controls, such as fencing

- boys tend to create images expressing a relational style of conflict; girls tend to create images expressing a relational style of nurturing
- the child may engage the therapist as an adversary in a drama, or create an adversarial relationship in which they test limits, by for example, allowing sand to spill over the sides of the tray.
- a later development within this phase may consist of a joint creation initiated by the child
- the negative and positive approaches of the child to the therapist usually alternate with some regularity as the child develops
- the hero appears at the end of this process – someone who can go on the hero's journey and the quest

c) socialization and adaptation to the collective

(typically seen in initial sand pictures of 12 year olds)

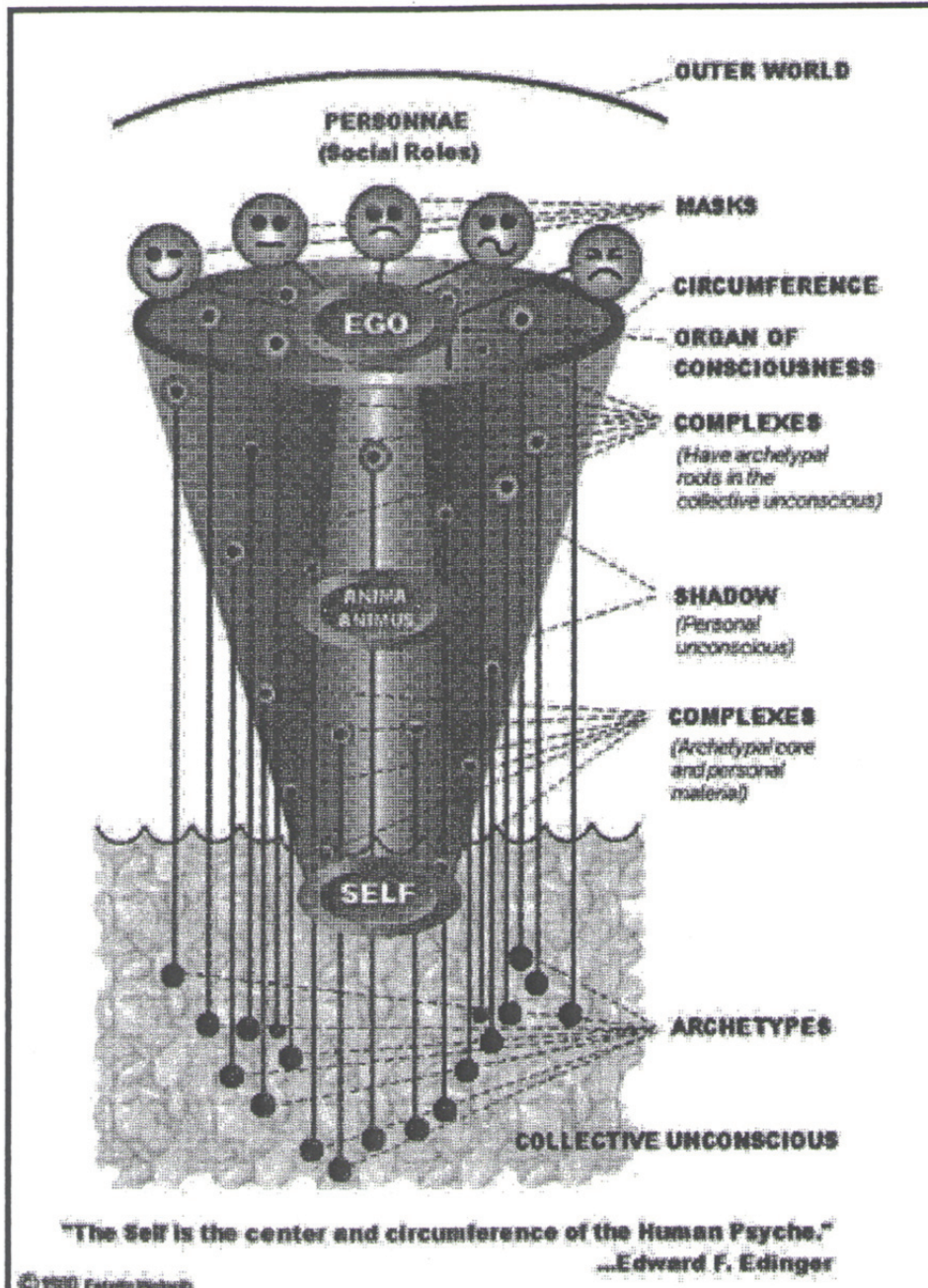
- the child's ego is able to adapt to the positive and negative aspects of the larger societal group and becomes a member
- less use of literal controls, such as fencing, and more use of symbolic controls, such as police officers, generals, presidents
- use of complex patterns and themes of control, such as mountains to conquer or streams to control or navigate
- building of communities such as towns, cities
- mythic fantasy with knights, heroes, dungeons, princes/princesses

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Appendix B.

Diagram of the Psyche



Note. Weinrib (2004); used with permission from Temenos® Press.

Appendix C.

A Précis of *The Frog Prince* by The Brothers Grimm

A princess playing with her favorite golden ball loses it in a spring and cannot retrieve it. A frog who lives in the spring offers to help her if she will agree to love him and allow him live with her, eat from her golden plate, and sleep in her bed for three nights. Desperately wanting her ball back and thinking that the frog would never follow through, the princess lies to him saying she will grant him his wishes. He recovers her ball and she runs back to the castle, leaving him behind.

While she is eating dinner with her father the king the next evening, the frog arrives at the castle and reminds the princess to keep her word. When the princess tries once again to renege on her promise, her father sternly warns her she must be true to her word. The frog returns the next night, sits next to her, eats off her plate, and sleeps on her bed once again. On the third night the princess becomes so exasperated and disgusted with him she throws him against the wall. This violent act transforms him into a prince. She marries him and they live happily ever after.

Appendix D.

Zhou Dunyi's Commentary on the "Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate" (Wang, 2005)

Ultimate void is the supreme ultimate. The supreme ultimate moves (*dong*) therefore generates *yang*. When movement reaches its extreme, it generates rest (*jing*). Rest generates *yin*. When rest reaches its extreme, it will return to motion. Motion (*dong*) and rest (*jing*) alternate and become the root of each other. Thus the distinction between *yin* and *yang* is made and two forms (*liangyi*) are established. The transformation of *yang* with the unity of *yin* generates water, fire, wood, metal, and soil. As these five forces (*wuqi*) are diffused harmoniously the four seasons run their course. The five elements (*wuxing*) are one *yinyang*. *Yinyang* is the one supreme ultimate: the supreme ultimate is rooted in ultimate void. Five elements are generated with their own character. The true inherent quality of the ultimate void is the core of *er* (*yinyang*) and *wu* (five elements); their profound unity gives rise to all emergent things. The way of *qian* (heaven) makes male and the way of *kun* (earth) makes female, the interaction of these two *qi* generates and transforms the myriad things ("ten thousands of things"). The myriad things engender and renovate, there are boundless changes and infinite transformations. Only those people who also receive these fine qualities become the most spiritual beings. Human physical form thus is generated and human spirit (*shen*) develops knowing. The arousing and the mutual interaction of five moral *xing* (*ren*, benevolence; *yi*, righteousness; *li*, propriety; *zhi*, wisdom; *xin*, trust) yield the distinction between good (*shan*) and bad (*e*), and thus all the human affairs begin. The sage attends to *zhong* (focus) *zheng* (correctness) *ren* (benevolence) *yi* (righteousness) and takes *zhujing* (extending equilibrium, quiescence, tranquility, rest) as the most fundamental. (Zhou Danyi provides an interpretation here: "*Zhujing* refers to having no desire *wuyu*"), and through these the sage sets up the ultimate standard for human being (*lirenji*). Therefore the virtue (*de*) of the sage is in harmony with heaven and earth; his brightness (*ming*) is identical with the sun and moon; his order (*xu*) is aligned with four seasons and his control of fortune and misfortune (*jiexiong*) corresponds with the spiritual beings. *Junzi* (the superior person) cultivates himself and it results in good fortune. *Xiaoren* (petty person) acts contrary to these qualities and it results in bad

fortune. Therefore it is said that The way of the established heaven is *yin* and *yang*; the way of established earth is soft (*rou*) and hard (*gang*) and the way of established human being is *ren* benevolence and *yi* righteousness. It is also said: if we investigate the original beginning and returning to the final end we will understand the matter of life and death. Great is the *Yi* (The Changes). It is the most excellent!