

# How Sand Tray Therapy Help in Overcoming Various Mental Disorders?

Shairley Shanghai\*

*Department of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab*

## Corresponding Author\*

Shairley Shanghai

Department of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab

E-mail: [sleyshanghai43@gmail.com](mailto:sleyshanghai43@gmail.com)

**Copyright:** 2021 Shairley Shanghai. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

**Received** 29 March 2021; **Accepted** 12 April 2021; **Published** 19 April 2021

## Introduction

Individuals who have undergone a traumatic event such as violence or a disastrous incident can benefit from sand tray therapy, also known as sand play therapy. While sand play therapy is most often used for children, it can also be beneficial for teens and adults.

Sand trays are used by psychotherapists to assess, diagnose, and treat a variety of mental disorders when using this therapy. Sand tray counselling has also been shown to help improve emotional expression while reducing the psychological distress that may arise from sharing stressful events or experiences, according to research.

## What It Involves?

Play therapy and art therapy are combined in sand tray therapy. To build a play world, the therapist gives the client a tray or box filled with sand and a selection of miniature toys. Toys can range from farm animals and dinosaurs to people and automobiles. Trees, walls, gates, doors, and structures are also popular.

Clients can construct a world that reflects their internal problems or disagreements, according to those that provide this form of therapy. Following the sandplay, the therapist and client usually talk about what they saw—the toys that were selected, how they were organised, and any symbolic or metaphorical meanings.

Following the conversation, the client may decide to rearrange the toys. Talk therapy, other forms of play or art therapy, or other types of treatment may be used in sand tray therapy.

## How It Helps?

Dora Kalff was inspired to create sand tray therapy after meeting with Margaret Lowenfeld, a British child psychiatrist and inventor of World Technique. Buddhist contemplative practises inspired Kalff's Jungian-based theory.

The idea behind this therapy is that if a therapist has a comfortable environment for the client, the client can use the sand tray to solve their issues on their own.

Sand tray therapy has also been shown to reduce the effects of many mental health conditions while also increasing resilience, according to research. Since sandplay therapy is unstructured, clients are able to undergo recovery as a result of the therapeutic process.

Sandplay may also aid therapists in delving into the meanings that clients create and attribute to their experiences by keeping track of their interactions with the toys, or symbols, that they want to play with.

Sandplay therapy is most often a pleasurable sensory activity that allows for the normal expression of emotions. Person, community, or family therapy will all benefit from it.

## What to Expect?

The therapist can include a sand tray and then look for common themes that suggest insecurities or aggressive behaviour, as well as resilience and positive emotional speech, when sandplay therapy is used as part of a treatment plan.

Sand tray sessions can last anywhere from 30 to 60 minutes and can be scheduled weekly or biweekly. Your therapist welcomes you as you arrive for a session and hands you an empty sand tray and miniatures so you can get started.

The therapist can request that you photograph your sand trays so that you can track the changes in the scenes you create over time. At the end of each session, they could spend some time talking about your sand tray.

For example, your therapist could talk about what it means if the domesticated animals in your sand tray are kept in cages while the more dangerous animals, such as tigers, snakes, or dinosaurs, are allowed to roam freely. You may be able to find some sense in the sand tray if you work together.

It's quite likely that there will be very little debate. Instead, the therapist will simply provide you with a comfortable environment in which to function.