
ABSTRACT

The effect of sandplay therapy in a school setting: The significance of bathing in sand

TSUJI, Eiko

Public School Counselor

This paper examines the process of three years of treatment, done primarily through sandplay therapy, for an elementary-school-aged boy with a history of maternal abuse. The author utilized sandplay therapy in an educational setting as the coordinator of a special needs education at the school of the subject to build a relationship with the child and a double-layered therapeutic environment in the therapist-client relationship and the boundaries of the sandbox. The subject underwent therapy for one hour each week. He harbored a deep anger that manifested itself in him scattering the sand and throwing it at the therapist. However, the subject also took to lying down and bathing in the sand, which appeared to bring him a measure of peace and enable a relationship with therapist to be built. After this event, the subject's behavior changed, becoming less violent, and he began creating pictures in the sand that expressed feelings of safety. Throughout this treatment, the subject showed signs of recovery from the psychological damage caused by his past abuse.

Key Words: sandplay therapy, abuse, bathing in sand, formal education
