

Sometimes it isn't just a crayon:

Using Play Therapy to Heal

WELCOME!!
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Play Therapy – What is it?

- According to Webster’s dictionary, play is defined as “to engage in sport or lively recreation; to exercise for the sake of amusement; to frolic.”
 - www.webster-dictionary.org/definition/play
- “In the context of play, children practice new roles, express emotions, try to make sense of experiences, and deal with both reality and fantasy. A Child’s play is influenced by parental factors, experiences with peers, available materials, school, and the media” (Knell, 1993, pg. 7).

Benefits of Play

- Therapists use play as a means to understand children because it is a reflection of the child’s feelings, thoughts, experiences, perceptions and even conflicts.
- Play helps children to process trauma and gain a sense of control over the event.
- Play can involve the use of the imagination. This can help a child to learn to overcome fears, learn social skills, control impulsivity etc.
- They can communicate things through play that might otherwise remain unconscious.
- Children do not have the ability to communicate themselves as effectively verbally. So play is a form of communication.

- Play is very non-threatening and neutral. As a result, it can help build the therapeutic relationship, lower defenses access information that you might not be able to access.
- Easier to engage children sometimes in play than talk because it is fun.
- It is unique often for the child to have an adult play with them in such a manner.
- It is a safe way to express emotions.

Age of Child	Language Development
6 months	Respond to name; vocalization with intonation; turns head; responds to tone (anger, friendly)
12 months	Uses one of more words with meaning; understands simple instructions; aware of the value of speech
18 months	Has vocabulary of 5-20 words (mostly nouns); repeats words; follows simple commands
24 months	Can name a number of common objects; can use at least 2 prepositions (in, on, under); combines a noun and a verb; vocabulary of 150-300 words; lack of control over volume and pitch; can use two pronouns (I, me, you);
36 months	Use of pronouns is correct; begins to use past tense and plurals; knows primary parts of the body; communicates three word sentences; vocabulary of 900-1000 words; 90% of what they say is intelligible; understands simple questions;

48 months	Knows names of familiar animals; can use four prepositions; can name common objects in books; can repeat four syllable words; begins to exhibit make-believe; understands commands that involve objects out of sight
60 months	Can now use descriptive words; begins to understand opposites (hard-soft); understands the numbers 1-4 or more; can count to 10; can define objects in terms of use; knows age; understands basics of time (morning, night); understands tomorrow, yesterday, today;

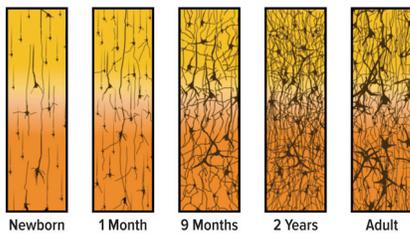
6 years	Masters the sounds f, v, sh, zh, th; speech is all intelligible and socially useful; can understand relationships; can tell a story about a picture
7 years	Masters the sounds s-z, voiceless th, ch, wh and soft g; understands opposites (boy-girl, short-long); understands alike, different, beginning, end; can tell time to the quarter hour; read and write many words
8 years	Can relate events; complex sentences; reading and writing simple compositions; control rate, pitch, volume; talk to an adult; understands time and numbers

•Neural Connections

- To Build Neurons You Need**
- Whole Real Food
 - Omega-3's and fatty acids
 - Amino acids
 - Water
 - Exercise or movement
 - Exposure to life experience

7 Senses

- Tactile or Somatosensory System - sense of touch
- Visual System - sense of sight
- Auditory System - sense of hearing
- Gustatory System - sense of taste
- Olfactory System - sense of smell
- Vestibular System - sense of balance
- Proprioception System - sense of body position



Newborn 1 Month 9 Months 2 Years Adult
Source: Correl, JI. The perinatal development of the human cerebral cortex. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; 1975

Building A Brain

- The newborn brain adds neurons over the first few years of life and grows at an amazing rate. It doubles in size in the first year, and by age three it reaches 80 percent of its adult volume. This growth is due mostly to neuron growth and new synapses being made.
- Connections are formed at a faster rate during these years than at any other time.
- By age three, the brain has up to twice as many connections as it will have in adulthood.

The Brain Has Priorities

- Move to learn
- Connect what is used
- Prune to be efficient

Pruning

• In a human fetus, almost a trillion neurons are produced. During the last month, they are produced at the unbelievable rate of 250,000 per second. Eighty-to-hundred billion of these neurons will be utilized by experience and become permanent, while the other 900 billion will be pruned – that is, carefully dismantled with the material recycled by the brain’s unique immune system. jonlieffmd.com



Source: www.uh3schilddisstitute.org C.A. Nelson, in Neurons to Neighborhoods, 2000

How do Neurons Connect?

The electrical signals (nerve impulses) carried by neurons are passed on to other neurons at junctions called synapses. The signal may be directly transferred at electrical synapses or, if there is no physical link between adjacent neurons, the signal is carried across the gap by chemicals called neurotransmitters. By using neurotransmitters, the nervous system can alter the way a message is passed on. Each neuron communicates with many others and this contributes to the amazing complexity of the brain. www.sciencemuseum.org.uk

What is The Synapse?

- When a nerve impulse reaches the synapse at the end of a neuron, it cannot pass directly to the next one. Instead, it triggers the neuron to release a chemical neurotransmitter. The neurotransmitter drifts across the gap between the two neurons. On reaching the other side, it fits into a tailor-made receptor on the surface of the target neuron, like a key in a lock. This docking process converts the chemical signal back into an electrical nerve impulse. www.sciencemuseum.org.uk

Neurotransmitters

- Your brain uses over 50 different neurotransmitter chemicals. Although electrical signaling between neurons is quicker and more energy efficient, chemical signaling is far more versatile. The signals carried by some neurotransmitters excite the target cell while others dampen down their activity, depending on the type of neurotransmitter released at the synapse and the receptors they reach. This is what sharpens the contrast between light and dark in the eye, for example. www.sciencemuseum.org.uk

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WHILE I'M FIVE
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How Do We Build Brain Connections?

- Exposure
- Experience
- Doing, thinking, mirroring
- Practice ~ and a lot of it

Synapse www.unc.edu

Optimal Brain Wiring

Receives good daily **nutrition**
 Enjoys a variety of **positive experiences**
 Has a rich **language** environment
 Is provided with adequate amounts of **sleep**
 Lives with **routines and predictability**
 Has opportunities to develop relationships with **nurturing** caring adults and other children
 Learns through lots of **time to play** and explore

Deborah McNelis braininsights.blogspot.com

We Learn Through Play

- Planning
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Inhibition
- Cognitive Flexibility
- Attention/Focus/Shift
- Creativity/Imagination



The Relationship

- Is respectful
- Is reflective
- Is understanding
- Is in the present
- Is in the moment
- Is safe
- Directs only when needed



What's your name and how are you feeling? What is
 your plan to have a good day?
 I plan to



Why Play?

- Build the brain
- Become a successful social animal
- Build creativity and imagination
- Intrapersonal, interpersonal and developmental growth
- Learn to think and problem solve
- Learn shapes, size, letters, numbers
- Learn narrative language

From Neurons To Neighborhoods

- Human development is shaped by a dynamic and continuous interaction between biology and experience.
- Culture influences every aspect of human development and is reflected in childrearing beliefs and practices designed to promote healthy adaptation.
- The growth of self-regulation is a cornerstone of early childhood development that cuts across all domains of behavior.

National Academy Press, 2000



CRISIS IN THE KINDERGARTEN

Why Children Need to Play in School

www.allianceforchildhood.org

Crisis in Kindergarten: Why Children Need to Play in School

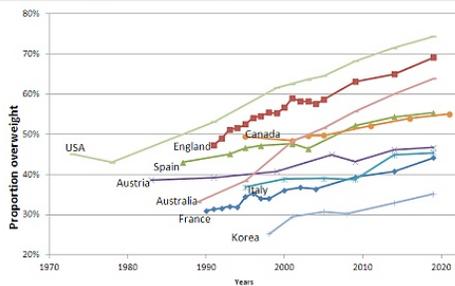
- Research shows that many kindergartens spend 2 to 3 hours per day instructing and testing children in literacy and math—with only 30 minutes per day or less for play. In some kindergartens there is no playtime at all. The same didactic, test-driven approach is entering preschools. But these methods, which are not well grounded in research, are not yielding long-term gains. Meanwhile, behavioral problems and preschool expulsion, especially for boys, are soaring.

<http://www.allianceforchildhood.org/>

Goodbye PE

- From 1991 to 2003, % of high-school students enrolled in daily PE classes in America plummeted, from 42 percent to 28 percent.
- 50% of America's youth meet the current evidence-based guideline ~ at least 60 minutes of vigorous or moderate-intensity physical activity daily. Source: HHS

Past and projected future overweight rates in selected OECD countries



Cognitive Development

- Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development and Play:
 - Sensorimotor Stage:
 - Birth to 18 months
 - Interact with environment using senses and motor skills
 - Play is primarily about exploring and manipulating objects
 - Children will put things in their mouth, shakes them, move them etc.
 - This is called Sensorimotor Play
 - Children will begin to build things and construct things. A child may build a tower. Through this kind of play they learn some of the rules regarding our physical world. They will learn that a tower with a wide bottom will stand whereas one with a narrow bottom will fall over.
 - This is called Constructive Play
 - (Rubin, Fein, & Vendeberg, 1983)

Piaget and Play (cont.)

- Preoperational Stage:
 - 18 months to age 6
 - Ability to use symbols – Thus they can pretend in their play. A child will use an item correctly such as using a cup to drink from. However, they will pretend to drink even though there is no liquid in the cup. Children will also feed a doll.
 - This is called First Pretend Play
 - Later into this stage, children will begin to use objects for other purposes such as a block to represent a car.
 - This is called Substitute Play
 - During the pre-school age, children begin to play roles such as playing the role of mother or father. They may assign a role to you as well. This is also when children might manifest an imaginary friend (Taylor, Cartwright, and Carlson, 1993).
 - This is called Sociodramatic Play
- (Rubin, Fein, & Vendeberg, 1983)

Piaget and Play (cont.)

- Preoperational Stage (cont.):
 - 18 months to age 6
 - Children begin to use rules in play or engage in game playing with rules such as board games. This is a sign that children are ready to move on to the next stage of development.
 - This is called Rule-Governed Play
- Concrete Operational Stage:
 - Age 6 to age 12
 - Logical Thought
 - Reversibility: Physical and mental actions can be reversed. This enables the use of clay for example to be so useful.
 - Class inclusion: Classifications. That things belong to a larger group. For example, a banana is a fruit.
 - Inductive Reasoning: Take your own experience and generalize it. This is why children are able to develop empathy for example.
- (Rubin, Fein, & Vendeberg, 1983)

Piaget and Play (cont.)

- Formal Operational Stage:
 - Adolescence
 - Manipulate and organize ideas
 - Hypothetical thinking
 - Individuals can now explore and search or the answer to a question.
 - Hypothetico-deductive Reasoning: the ability to use deductive reasoning (general to the specific), consider hypotheses and come to a logical conclusion
 - Enables true abstract thinking such as imagine they way they would want their world to be and how it compares to the world they are in now.
- (Rubin, Fein, & Vendeberg, 1983)

Types of Techniques

- Child Therapy is “a relationship between the child and the therapist, aimed primarily at symptom resolution and attaining adaptive stability” (Sours, 1980, pg. 275).
- Child Therapy seems to have begun, as a separate entity, in 1909 when Freud worked with Little Hans.
- About 10 years later, Melanie Klein and Anna Freud established the theory and practice of play therapy. This created the distinction between Child Therapy (working with children) and Play Therapy (using play for therapeutic purposes).
- All Play Therapy techniques have their roots in the following theories: Psycho-analytic, existential, behavioral and Jungian.

Psycho-analytic Play Therapy

- Play is important to build a relationship between the child and the therapist.
- Substitute for verbal communication.
- Analyze the transference.
- Gain insight through play in order to work through difficulties/traumas.
- Play is the child’s version of Free Association.
- Get at the unconscious.
- The goal is for the therapist to observe the play, understand it and communicate with the child about their play to create understanding and move towards a resolution.

Structured Play Therapies

- Goal oriented
- Emerged from the Psychoanalytic work
- Therapist active: sets the focus/course for play
- With children who are traumatized, purposefully help them recreate the event. “The goal of this type of play was to help the child assimilate the negative thoughts and feelings associated with the trauma by reenacting it over and over again” (Gil, 1991, pg. 30). Do not use this technique too soon in therapy. You want to make sure you have a strong therapeutic relationship established.
- Also useful to teach children how to express anger without the consequences that they usually experience (getting in trouble with parents).

Relationship Play therapies

- Created by Rogers, a non-directive therapist
- Main principal is the full acceptance of the child
- The therapeutic relationship is extremely important
- This determines if therapy will work or not and if the child will or will not make progress.
- Brings out in the child their own innate ability to solve problems as well as the ability to recognize that appropriate behavior feels better than inappropriate behavior.

Behavior Therapies

- Based upon Learning Theories
- Reinforcement and modeling are key
- This leads to the elimination of behavioral issues
- Focus is on the behavior and nothing else
- Techniques are used directly with the child during sessions or are taught to the parents in order for them to implement the techniques at home
- Very effective for behavioral problems that stem from a lack of parenting such as guidance, boundaries, rules and limit setting

Jungian Therapy

- The principles of Jungian Therapy were the basis for the development of Sand Tray Therapy.
- According to Dorra Kalff (1980) who is credited by some with creating Sand Tray Therapy, the sand tray represents the child's psyche.
- Kalff believed that the therapist should interpret the objects used and placement within the tray. By observing this, the therapist witnesses the child progress through various stages of healing.
- Please make note that contemporary theories pertaining to Sand Tray Therapy have changed.



Parents wish to
Learn How to PLAY
with their children

Cash Rich Time Poor

- In a 2009 IKEA study 45% of parents internationally felt they wished they had more time to play with their children.
- What does playing with your children mean?
- What can you do?

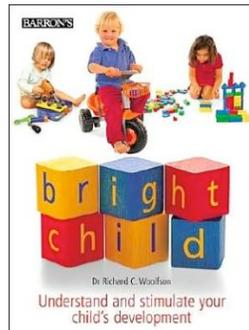
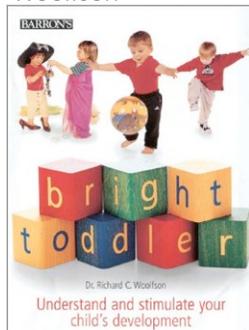
Assessment and Diagnostics

- When meeting with a child for the first time, go into the assessment as objectively as possible. Assume normalcy!
 - First, the previous diagnosis could be wrong.
 - It is so important to understand what is normal if we are to be able to see the difficulties.
- Work with the parents
 - This is often the first source of information.
 - Make sure to get concrete examples from the parents about the behavior for which they are concerned.
 - Find out all interventions that have been tried to date – formal and informal.
 - Get a full developmental history – this will also help give you an idea of the expectations of the parents.

Assessment and Diagnostics

- Obtain information from as many sources as possible.
 - Children behave differently in different environments and with different people.
 - You want to look for similarities and differences.
- Acquire assessment information from the child.
 - The child's experience and perception is vital.
- Always assess the readiness for treatment.
 - Do they seem ready to engage with you?
 - Are the parents' supportive?
 - This is useful information.

Woolfson



At Home Play Schedules

- Free play (blocks, trains, cars, dolls)
- Art
- Puzzles
- Circle Time
- Lunch Time
- Story-Time
- Reading-Time
- Small manipulatives
- Cutting
- Writing-Time
- Playdoh
- Snack
- Sensory Play
- Math
- Outdoor Play

Simple Play Tips

- Organize your enrichment materials
- Make time to play throughout the day
- Play indoors and outdoors
- Watch and listen, no need to direct
- Repeat back what you hear
- Stay with the theme
- “I see that” “I hear that” “I wonder about”

Organization

- Bookcases
- Bookshelves
- Cubbies
- Hanging Organizers
- Plastic boxes, labeled
- Stackable Shelves
- Storage Bench
- Toy Bins

Activities

- Action Figures
- Age appropriate videos
- Arts and crafts
- Board Games
- Books
- Building sets
- Coloring Books
- Dolls
- Music
- Musical Instruments
- Party Supplies
- Pretend Play/ Dress Up
- Puzzles
- Sporting Goods
- Stuff Animals
- Trains/Automobiles

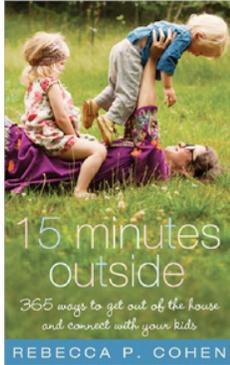
Play and Language Tips

- Slow down
- Be Present
- Get at eye level
- Experience floor level
- Listen with your eyes
- Elaborate only when needed
- Experience silence

www.playingwithwords365.com



Get Outside



A Few Novel Sites

- www.playingwithwords365.com
- www.growingajeweledrose.com
- www.teachpreschool.org
- www.teacherspayteachers.com
- www.aahperd.org/headstartbodystart/activitiesresources
- www.pinterest.com/kidlutions
- www.brightring.com

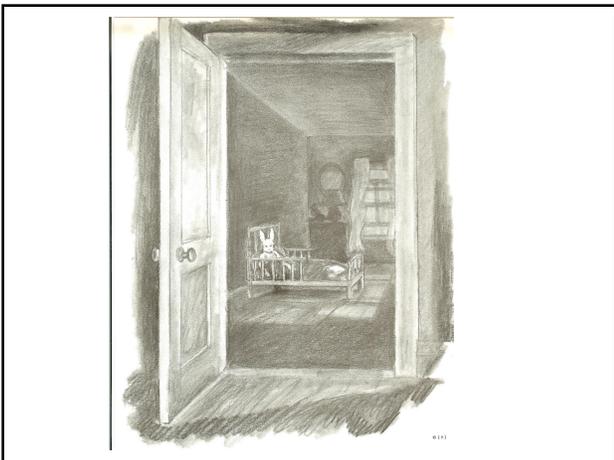
Projective Assessments

- Tools that are often vague and/or unstructured with the goal being for the child to project thoughts, feelings, experiences and beliefs onto the presented stimulus.
 - Thematic Apperception Test/Children's Apperception Test: The TAT uses human figures while the CAT uses animals depicted in human actions and situations.
 - Or use any pictures except for known books!
 - Rori's Story Cubes
 - Sentence Completion: Can be a useful means of collecting information about thoughts, ideas etc.



CAT examples

• Card 1 – The Three Little Chicks. That’s the title. The three little chicks sat down at the table and the rooster came over and said “what are you doing little chicks without your mother?” And the three little chicks looked at themselves and said “What are we doing without our mother?” And then their mother came over. She said “You’re getting ready to eat!” They said “We’re so glad we see you. We were wondering where you were”. The end.



CAT examples

• Card 9 – Once there was a big bunny and a little bunny. The little bunny said “Where is father?” Mother said “He’s at work” and the little bunny said “that’s where he has been all day!” The mother said “Yes, that is where he has been all day. But you need to sleep. So get in your bed and rest until Daddy gets home.” The end



CAT examples

• Card 10 – Client first said “I wonder what this one is about?”
• One night a little pup went to the bathroom and found toothpaste. Then he squirted it all around the bathroom. The mother said “What are you doing in there?” He said “I’m just going to the bathroom.” But he lied. His mother went into the bathroom and it was all squirted with toothpaste. She had to spank him but she felt all sad for what she did (than corrected herself and said he). He was thinking that if he was good he’d get a treat. But his mother said “You’re still not getting a treat for what you did to the bathroom. Go clean it up.” And so he did. The end

Non-Directive Techniques

- Also called Client Centered Play Therapy is based on the principles created by Carl Rogers (1951).
- The therapist-client relationship is key.
- The therapist is passive in that they do not guide the child/client in their play.
- The child is free to chose what they want to do and what toys they wish to play with.
- The child directs the process.
- The therapist observes and comments on what they are seeing.
- Interpretation is done after a significant amount of observation.
- Because these mediums do not have firm boundaries, they tap into the limbic system and thus can trigger emotions. These are also often called a wet medium.

SAND TRAYS

- This technique begins with a bin such as an under the bed storage container that is filled about a third of the way with sand. The play area should contain a number of small objects, figures, animals etc.
- The client is invited to create a world in the sand. This can involve creating patterns in the sand or placing objects in the sand.
- The individual may create scenes that are meaningful, experiences, fears, hopes etc.
- See what the client shares with you. This can often be a means of communicating with your things that can not otherwise be verbalized.

SAND TRAYS(cont.)

- Often a client may not even understand the symbolism of what they have created. But, the therapist can help the client understand the relationship between the world they have created in the sand tray and their own world.
- With individuals who have been abused , neglected or experienced some kind of trauma, the sand tray becomes an important medium to communicate because they may not want to communicate otherwise. Once familiar with the tray, this becomes a safe place and a medium they are comfortable with and will use to communicate with you.
- Often by using the tray repeatedly, the client will create worlds that allow for healing. They may never speak but can take action that enables them to heal.

SAND TRAYS & Adults

- This can be a very useful tool with adults who are struggling to verbalize feelings, experiences etc. This can also be useful if an adult have been traumatized. The therapist can work with the client including moving objects in the sand tray to represent real people or experiences. This can help the client feel a sense of control. Creating change in the sand tray world represents the change that the client can make in their own real world.

Sand Trays

- Great for individuals age 3 and older.
- The therapist is not there to interpret. Be careful to not make any assumptions. Listen and that can be with your eyes as well as with your ears.
- Children can learn to problem solve by the examples set using the sand tray.
- Children may play out their day and not the traumatic event that they have experienced.

SAND TRAYS

- The role of the therapist:
 - Guides – you need to help the client fully engage in the sand tray and really create a world. This can include helping the client build their world when first starting to use the sand tray. It can also include support and encouragement.
 - Integrate other techniques – this can include narratives, music etc.
 - Use this when other techniques are not working.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydG6Yngrp2Y>





Second Sand Tray

- Pt. depicted a house with a garden and the garden had a fence around it. In the garden were The Mom and The Dad. Outside of the garden were the cats and herself. Her sister was in their room. When asked to tell me about her world she told me the following:
- The lizard is trying to get into the house to find food. Her sister is looking in the mirror. She is in "our room". "The Mom" is lying down and taking a nap (she is in the garden in a lounge chair). "The Dad" is sitting down taking a picture of the tree. "I'm trying to water the tree with no leaves so it can get leaves". When asked why it did not have leaves, she said it was fall (the season). Bean (the cat) is washing Meatwad (the cat). The lizard is looking at the tree. Pisser (the cat) is looking at the lizard. The flag is blowing.

Sand Tray example explanation

- The lizard is trying to get into the house to find food
- Her sister is looking in the mirror. She is in "our room"
- "The Mom" is lying down and taking a nap (she is in the garden in a lounge chair)
- The Dad" is sitting down taking a picture of the tree
- "I'm trying to water the tree with no leaves so it can get leaves". When asked why it did not have leaves, she said it was fall (the season)
- Bean (the cat) is washing Meatwad (the cat)
- The lizard is looking at the tree
- Pisser (the cat) is looking at the lizard
- The flag is blowing.





Sand Tray example explanation

- The boy who created this sand tray has an interesting story. He is 11 and lives with his aunt and uncle.
- The yellow “noodles” are the secret entrance.
- It is his house and it is very well guarded with men, planes, helicopters etc. What is inside is very “valuable”.
- The other items are there because he liked them.
- Make note of the money tucked in the front of the house.
- He has an adult in his life who is significant and is Native American – note the tee pee and totem pole.





Did not talk, worked individually.

Explanations from each for what they added:

Mom:

- Ken doll with no arm is her son, Bryson, and he is missing something but only he can find out what that is.
- She feels like Wonder Woman after forgiving herself this week.
- The Hersey Kiss because she loves chocolate and is happy so it represents herself.
- 3 tigers (momma and 2 cubs) is the family with mom in front guiding and leading by example.
- Birds represent freedom to explore and create.
- Sea Shells because she misses the beach
- Cabbage Patch Doll represents her inner child that she is learning to nurture.
- Ethca Sketch represents the ability for all of them to create anything and what they each want their world to look like
- Self-esteem game is there because they all could use it but it is being created by the work they are each doing.

Jayda:

- Money represents working and the intent to make more.
- The watch equals time with is important (we live by it) and not important (summer and do not mark the days).
- Food represents diet and exercise which is important to all of them.
- The fence is there but has an opening because they are all taking down their fences.
- Flower represents each of them changing but it is facing her because she is changing so much with all that she has been doing including figuring out who she is (she is the doll with the pony tails).

Bryson:

- Spiderman is there because of the Xbox and his nickname on Xbox live is Spidey.
- Car represents Jayda driving
- Construction guy is there because they are all working such as he is working with his grandfather.

• 50 SANDTRAY THERAPY DIRECTIVES:

• Build a tray about...For school age children:

- Your family
- Your friends at school
- Your typical day
- One side being the best part of your world/other side being the worst part of your world
- One side as when you feel happy/other side when you feel sad
- You favorite things
- The scariest thing in your world
- How you calm down when you are feeling upset
- What each of member of your family does most often
- What you want to do when you grow up

- For teenagers:
- A timeline of your life
- Your happiest memory
- The hurdles you face now
- Your ideal future
- What love looks like to you
- The most important things in your life
- Marriage/commitment
- Your daily routine
- What you see when you look in the mirror
- Your worst nightmare (either imagined or an actual dream)

- For couples:
- Each person in the couple builds what his or her marriage feels like for them
- Their first date
- What the other person would say they need to change (3 things) such as make a tray about what your partner would say you need to change
- A fun day in the past
- Your biggest hurt from the relationship
- Hurdles you need to overcome for the relationship to be happier
- What you like best about your partner
- Each partner makes a tray about what they each like to do and then the couple brings those things together and makes a tray together about what they would be willing to do with the other person or shared interests
- Your family either nuclear or extended
- How each partner likes be shown care or love

- Adults:
- Your hope for the outcome of therapy
- Your one biggest struggle
- Your happiest childhood memory
- Your saddest childhood memory (could combine this with the happiest childhood memory)
- What shame means for you
- What it feels like to feel shame
- How others can show you love
- What would take to stand up for yourself
- The best day possible
- You family (kids, husband, parents, etc.)
- What you would want to do if today was your last day alive
- Your thoughts as your feet hit the floor in the morning

- Your motto for your life
- Three things you can do tomorrow to feel better
- What your mom/dad would say about you if they were to make a tray about you
- Your best/worst attribute or characteristic
- 5 things you tell yourself every day
- How your life would be different if _____ was not in your life/heart
- (i.e. depression, divorce, hatred, etc)
- Your feelings as you lay in bed at night
- Your favorite part of life

WATERCOLOR

- A wonderful free medium.
- Can be too much emotionally for some children given how this kind of medium taps into the limbic system.
- You can allow the child to free paint or ask them to paint certain things as well.

Color

- With any medium, it is important to remember that color can be very subjective. You want to pay attention to how the child uses and reacts to colors.
- Generally speaking,
 - Red = anger
 - Yellow = dependency
 - Brown and black together = anxiety/depression
 - Blue and green = controlled/self-restraint
 - Light or hard to see color = trying to hide something





Finger Painting

- For many children this can be a fun tactile sensation.
- Much freedom for expression
- Easily washes off as well
- Supply several colors
- Encourage the children to experiment such as use different colors and different movements
- You can make this more structured by having the child use cotton balls or other materials
- Have the child make a hand print and than turn it into something
- Be careful – for some children it is too stimulating. Because it is a less sophisticated medium, some children may regress when using it.

Clay

- Besides Play Dough you can use Plasticene, Scuply or others that never dry!
- Worry stones
 - Great for anxiety, focus, impulsivity
 - Refrigerate it – cold can be calming
- Life Beads
- Create a face – what do you show the world. Than create a fact of what they really feel. Lastly, you can have the child do a face reflecting what they want to feel.

Directive Techniques

- The therapist is active by setting up a play situation, structuring the activity/play.
- This is to purposefully trigger certain unconscious thoughts and feelings, challenge defense mechanisms, or go in directions that are perceived as beneficial.
- To simply draw is non-directive but to ask the child to draw something specific is directive.
- These mediums have firm boundaries and direction. Thus they tend to tap into emotions less than non-directive techniques.

I SPY

- This is a great technique that can be done just using what ever is in the play room or using the quilt (see photo). You can simply ask children questions:
 - I spy something that make me happy
 - I spy something that hurts
 - I spy something that scares me
 - I spy something funny
 - I spy something mean

DOLL HOUSE

- Do not intervene
- The child play freely
- Observe and interpret
- See how the child has the figures interact with one another
- What do the people do?
- How do they treat one another?
- Who does what and with or without whom?

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

- Ask the child what they want to be when they grow up?
- Ask them what they would have to do in that job?
- Ask them why they want to be that when they grow up?
- Have them draw or act out what they have told you. They can even role play with you.
- Interpret what you have been told and see how it fits with the other information you have about the child.

What animal am I?

- It can be fun to ask a child, if they can be any animal, what animal would they want to be?
- After they answer, than ask them why?
- You can even have them draw the animal or act out the animal.
- Important to interpret what they tell you and see how that fits into the other information you know about the child.
- Can even make the animal out of origami.
- Make it out of aluminum foil

Cool Shades

- It is amazing what wearing sunglasses in the play room can do for a child.
- It is as if they are no longer visible. This creates for them a greater sense of security and safety as if they are anonymous.
- This often enables them to feel less guarded and speak about things that are difficult or uncomfortable for them. If children are embarrassed about something, this can be a time when they are more likely to discuss it.

Telephone

- Having toy phones (cell or regular) can be a very useful tool. You have the child use one phone and you have the other. By sitting back to back, on the floor, you promote the ability to have a more intimate conversation. The children may communicate to you things that they might not otherwise be able to say if having to look at you face to face.

Role Playing (drama)

- By playing other roles, children can better understand other people in their world or process feelings by acting in the manner they wish that person would act.
- Role playing also allows children to experiment in a safe way. They can try different reactions and behaviors.

Puppets

- This enables the child to tell stories
- They will project onto the puppets situations or issues that they are experiencing
- You can simply have the child use the puppets or you can create a discussion, similar to using telephones, and engage in a conversation
- If you want to set up a puppet theater, this can be done simply by hanging a sheet that the child can hide behind. This creates greater anonymity and thus more of a sense of safety and security
- Can be finger puppets or larger
- Make puppets out of popsicle sticks
- You can have the child make puppets out of socks, old gloves etc.

- You can set up specific stories to act out with the child. Singer and Singer (2001) suggest the following:
 - Cat and Mouse
 - The cat is asleep and the mouse wakes the cat up
 - Boy and Girl
 - The girl asks the boy to play
 - Lost Dog
 - The boy is crying because he lost his dog

Draw a Dream

- If a child has nightmares, this can help them to be less afraid and even feel some control over the dream.
- In addition, toast with butter (carb) and oil relaxes the body
- This is a cognitive technique suggested by Baker and Salston (1993):
 - Before going to sleep, recognize that you may dream something distressing in the night.
 - When the dream occurs, write it down, talk it through with someone (if possible) and then rewrite the ending.
 - This is a way to enable the client to take control of the dream.
 - Then do a deep relaxation and go back to sleep.
- You can do the same thing but use drawings:
 - Have a child draw the dream with the outcome that they want. If they wake up having had the nightmare, the can pull out the picture and remind themselves of the alternative ending.

Fears/Nightmares

- Dream journal – write down a dream that the child wants to have tonight. Have them describe it as best as they can. Have them read it out loud to you. Have them read it to themselves before going to sleep.
- Doing journals around fears can help in a similar way. Have the child journal what they are afraid of. Then have them journal what things would be like if they did not have that fear. What do they need in order to not be afraid? Help them to see that they have those things. Have them read what things would be like without that fear whenever they start to feel that fear again.

Magic Wand

- I use the magic wand by pretending it is really a magic wand – what would the child want it to do/what would they wish for? Role play with them or have them draw the result.

Movement

- It is great to get children moving.
 - Touch toes
 - Reach for the stars
 - Jump like a kangaroo
 - Lie down and ride a bicycle
 - Skip
- Dancing
 - Most children enjoy music. The right music can reduce stress, improve mood etc. Many children can be self conscious as well and this can help to break that. Use children’s song or Harry Bellefonte for example depending upon the age of the child. Make it fun
 - Movement helps with Speech as well – great for speech therapy work!

Dance and Movement

- This is very useful, as we will discuss, with children who have been abused or experienced some kind of trauma
- You can help children to loosen up in counseling by taking the lead and moving. You can move individually or together.
- This can do much for helping the child to be more comfortable as well as engaging with you.

Music/lyrics

- Individuals, especially teens, identify a lot with music. The lyrics often express for them what they can not.
- Mood strongly impacts mood as well and we will gravitate to certain types of music depending upon how we feel and want to feel.
- Have children/teens bring in a song that describes who they are.
- You can use songs for them to describe how they feel.
- Use music as an intervention such as to build self-esteem.

- Some great songs: "If I could be good" by Alanis Morissette
- "I am my own Invention" from the musical "Wonderland"
- "Beautiful" Christina Aguilera

The Floating Technique

- By Dr. Paul Foxman

- Practice Opportunities

- Face – Don't avoid your anxiety
- Accept – practice opportunities
- Float – relax through it
- Let time pass – it will pass

Deep breathing

- Lie down, bend knees and have feet shoulder width apart.
- Scan your body and identify the places that are tense.
- Place one hand on your stomach and one on your chest.
- Inhale slowly, through nose – feel hand on stomach move but not chest.
- Exhale through mouth
- Repeat at least five times prolonging exhale.
- Scan body again so evaluate tension.

Mindfulness

- “Paying attention with flexibility, openness and curiosity” (Harris, 2009).
- It is an awareness process and not about thinking. Paying attention to an experience rather than focusing on thoughts.
- Be open and curious.
- Being able to control your focus and direct it towards different aspects of your experience.

Mindfulness Exercise

- There are many varieties but all have the same key components to them:
 - Notice something – pick the thing you want to focus your attention on. This is about noticing your experience.
 - Let go of your thoughts
 - Let your feelings be

Mindfulness exercises

- One Minute Breathing
 - This exercise can be done anywhere at any time, standing up or sitting down. All you have to do is focus on your breath for just one minute. Start by breathing in and out slowly, holding your breath for a count of six once you've inhaled. Then breathe out slowly, letting the breath flow effortlessly out back into the atmosphere.
- Mindful Observation
 - Pick a natural organism within your immediate environment and focus on watching it for a minute or two. This could be a flower or an insect, the clouds or the moon. Don't do anything except notice the thing you are looking at. But really notice it. Look at it as if you are seeing it for the first time.
- Touch Points
 - Think of something that happens every day more than once, something you take for granted, like opening a door for example. At the very moment you touch the door knob to open the door, allow yourself to be completely mindful of where you are, how you feel and what you are doing.
 - <http://www.pocketmindfulness.com/6-mindfulness-exercises-you-can-try-today/>

Jedi Mindfulness



1. Define the "Force"

- In the *Star Wars*' movies, it becomes clear very quickly that the Force is an awesome power that everyone wants. But what exactly is the Force? When I work with kids, I provide them with my interpretation. The Force is the power we get from any emotion whether it comes from the light side or the dark side. From love, joy, and surprise to anger, sadness, and worry, nothing is "good" or "bad." These emotions are only messengers, and all are part of the Force.
- Very plainly, *The Force = The Power of Emotions*.
- Try this: Ask your child if he or she would like to go through Jedi training. Tell your son or daughter that their mission will be to decode the secret messages being sent by the Force (e.g., their worried thoughts, their angry feelings).

• 2. Wave Hello to the Dark Side

- If your child feels anxious, the way around the discomfort is straight through it. We must teach our children not to deny, avoid, or squash parts of their emotional experience. [Long-term avoidance of emotions](#) can actually spark and perpetuate depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. When we choose not to face our worry, we are left much like Darth Vader, enslaved by our pain.
- The alternative to avoidance is acknowledgement. I understand helping your child acknowledge his or her anxious feelings instead of shutting them down is not an easy choice. Sometimes it's easier to just say, "Don't worry so much. Please trust me, it'll be fine."
- As a parent myself, I completely understand this path. Sometimes we don't have the emotional bandwidth to support a child's chronic worry, especially when it seems our love and reassurance are not having a positive effect. Anxious emotions are often big emotions that can be uncomfortable for the entire family.
- All that said, when you parent an anxious child, you seek one thing above almost anything else for your child: inner peace. Toward this goal, acknowledgement is the stepping stone.
- Try this: Next time your children worry, tell them they are Jedi Knight and Jedis acknowledge the Force (an emotion) when they feel it. They can wave hello to their worry and say, "Hey, worry. I see you're back. I'm a Jedi. I understand you're trying to tell me something."

• 3. Lean into the Dark Side

- Leaning into the dark side takes training because, at first, it can feel messy and uncomfortable. Leaning in means allowing your child the space to physically feel where the Force or worry is flowing on the inside. Allowing discomfort to pass gets us a step closer to decoding the message from our emotion.
- Anxiety activates the sympathetic nervous system, and as such, feelings of worry are often felt in such places as the stomach, chest, and throat. Breathing with visualization can calm the nervous system and begin to kick a child's logical brain back into gear.
- Try this: Obi-Wan instructs Luke to close his eyes and, "Stretch out with your feelings"; Yoda says, "Allow the force to flow through you." When your son or daughter worries, have them close their eyes and ask them where they are feeling the worry or the Force flowing inside of their body.
- Now, ask your children to breathe into the place in their body where they feel the Force. While they take a deep breath, ask them to imagine what the Force actually looks like. What color is it? What consistency is it? Maybe it looks like a dark cloud. Once they have the visual, ask them to breathe the Force out.
- To support your child during this process, you can use phrases like, "I am here, and you are completely safe, my young Jedi. This feeling will pass."

• 4. Put the Light Saber Down

- Our range of feelings (light and dark) creates our emotional consciousness and gives power to the Force. Within this consciousness lie encoded messages. The problem is we usually miss the communication being sent by our emotions such as anger and worry because we are too busy reacting. Swift reactions cover up messages.
- Darth Vader tries to provoke these reactions in his son, Luke. Vader says, "So you have a twin sister? If you will not turn to the dark side, then perhaps she will." Luke feels very angry and even as a full Jedi Knight trained in the art of mindfulness, he does not pause to acknowledge or lean in to his anger. Instead, he reacts right away and begins to battle his father.
- When Luke regains his composure, he realizes that his anger is communicating that he wants to love and protect his family, including his father. Luke then decides the best way to teach his father about the light side is to show him compassion. So he turns his light saber off and tosses it aside.
- Now, this last step may seem way too esoteric for your child to grasp, but I've worked with children for years. Even at a very young age, they are incredibly sophisticated. If we communicate in their language, they get it.
- Try this: Let's teach kids their worry is trying to send them a message, but the message is encoded. As a Jedi, the way to get to the secret message is to be mindful when we feel worried. This means understanding worry has a purpose, acknowledging it, leaning into it, and then making a logical decision on how to proceed.
- <http://blogs.psychcentral.com/stress-better/2016/01/4-jedi-mindfulness-tricks-to-help-an-anxious-child/>

Yoga



Since I started doing Yoga I feel so much better.

Yoga

- Make it fun and create games
- **Magic Animal Sack.** This is the best tool for teaching yoga to kids under 3 years old; Can be done in a group setting as well. Toddlers cannot easily imagine the animals – they need to see them!

Get a big sack (or even an interesting pillowcase will do) and fill it with all kinds of animal toys or animal beanbags (you can get them very cheap at www.orientaltrading.com). Go around the circle and let each kid in his turn put his hand into your magical sack and take out a toy. Then, of course, do the pose or poses of this animal with the whole group.

After all the toys are out, you can do poses using the toys.

- **Simon Says.** This is a great way to warm up and to bring the focus to the classroom. In a circle, all of the kids need to follow the movements of the therapist exactly. There is no talking. The therapist can lead the kids through a sun dance and other movement flows and even add the sound of deep breath or animal sounds for the students to mirror. You can also let one of the students be the leader.

• Great website:
http://www.rainbowkidsyoga.net/articles/fun_ways.html

- More on Yoga for kids:
- Pick a quiet place to do yoga, and focus on breathing in and out through the nose.
- Hold the poses anywhere from 8 to 15 seconds. Since it takes time to get into the postures, counting should start once you are in the posture.
- Slowly increase the time spent in the poses once you get more proficient with them.
- Try to eat lightly before doing yoga, as many of the poses twist across your internal organs.
- Have FUN together as a family as you learn to find a sense of calm during the cold winter months.
- <http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-23064/12-kid-friendly-yoga-poses-to-inspire-a-happy-2016.html>

The Pretzel: Sitting tall in a cross-legged position, reach one arm across your body and rest it on your knee. Then stretch your other hand directly behind you. Count slowly to eight before switching sides.



Easy Pose: Simply sit cross-legged with your hands gently placed upon your knees with your palms facing upward. Take several deep breaths in and out of your nose as you begin to quiet and calm your body and mind.



Airplane: Lie on your tummy and gently lift your chest, arms, and legs off the floor.



Cobra: Lie on your stomach with your elbows bent close to your side. Then gently lift up your chest, keeping your legs straight behind you.



Elephant: From a standing position, fold forward and interlace your hands, swinging them side to side like an elephant trunk.



Jack-in-the-Box: Sit with your knees bent into your chest with your arms wrapped around them. Then, point your forehead to your knees and count to 3; next, inhale and lift your head, like a Jack-in-the-box popping up.



Otter: Lie on your belly with your arms out in front of you. Then slowly push up with your hands against the floor, straightening your arms and lifting your head and chest.



Yoga: Stand tall with your feet grounded into the floor. Slowly straighten your arms and lift them over your head, stretching up and making your body into the shape of the letter Y.



Lion: Kneel on your shins with your chest on your thighs. Then, on the count of 3, spring your body forward and roar like a lion!



Oyster: Sit tall with the soles of your feet together. Then slide your arms under your knees, touching your elbows to the floor with ease. Hold on to the sides of your feet as you slowly inhale and exhale through your nose, bringing your head gently toward your toes.



Volcano: Stand tall with your feet slightly apart, bringing your hands into prayer position in front of your heart. Next, inhale and push your hands to the sky, then exhale and move your arms to the side and then back to center, like an exploding volcano.



Eagle: Stand tall and then bend your knees. Bring your right leg over your left one and then cross your right arm under your left. Stay in this position for a count of 8 before switching sides.



More great yoga resources!

- Adapted from an excerpt from [The ABCs of Yoga for Kids](#), written by Teresa Anne Power and illustrated by Kathleen Rietz.
- <https://www.facebook.com/abcsofyogaforkids/photos>
- Also recommend:
- **5 Kid-Friendly Yoga Poses To Help Children Cultivate Patience**
 - <http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-22827/5-kid-friendly-yoga-poses-to-help-children-cultivate-patience.htm>
- **5 Kid-Friendly Yoga Poses To Help Your Child Avoid A Meltdown**
 - <http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-18351/5-kid-friendly-yoga-poses-to-help-your-child-avoid-a-meltdown.html>

• <http://childhood101.com/2015/04/yoga-for-kids/>

• Calm Down Yoga Routine for kids, perfect for helping children learn to manage big emotions. Complete with free printable poster.

Baby Buddhas Meditation

- From a great book called "Baby Buddhas"
- Sample:
 - The following is a partial printing of the Cleansing Breath Meditation, which teaches children that they can release negative feelings and thoughts and replace them with positive feelings and thoughts.
 - *Breathe in love.
Breathe out sadness.
Breathe in joy.
Breathe out madness.
Breathe in peace.
Breathe out badness.
All the sadness, madness and badness changes to bright white sparkles of love.*
- Baby Buddhas: A Guide for Teaching Meditation to Children Paperback – August 1, 2004 by [Lisa Desmond](#)

More Apps

- Insight Timer (meditations)
- Cognitive Diary CBT Self-Help (cognitive diary; articles)
- CBT Thought Record Diary
- Colorfy – Coloring Book Free
- Mandala Coloring
- Adult coloring book premium
- Anxiety Relief Hypnosis
- Social Anxiety Disorder
- Healing Sounds – Anxiety Relief
- Anxiety Free Hypnosis (Hypnosis, meditation; coaching)
- Headspace
- Smiling Mind (Age specific mindfulness)

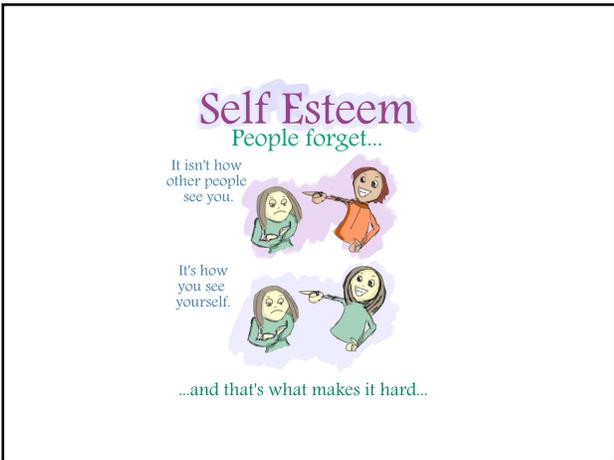
self-es·teem

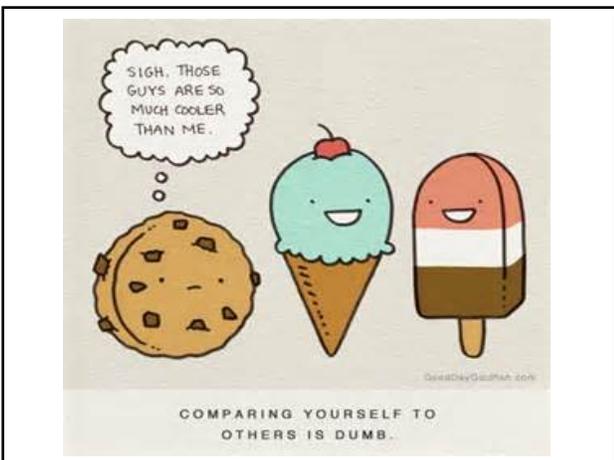
noun

1. confidence in one's own worth or abilities; self-respect.
"assertiveness training for those with low self-esteem"
synonyms: self-respect, pride, dignity, self-regard, faith in oneself, morale, self-confidence, confidence, self-assurance
"the best thing I ever did for my self-esteem was to divorce Roger"









11 Facts About Teens and Self Esteem

- Low self-esteem is a thinking disorder in which an individual views him/herself as inadequate, unlovable, and/or incompetent. Once formed, this negative view permeates every thought, producing faulty assumptions and ongoing self-defeating behavior.
- Among high school students, 44% of girls and 15% of guys are attempting to lose weight.
- Over 70% of girls age 15 to 17 avoid normal daily activities, such as attending school, when they feel bad about their looks. Brighten someone's day by posting encouraging messages on your school's bathroom mirrors. Sign up for [Mirror Messages](https://www.dosomething.org/us/campaigns/mirror-messages?source=node/803). (<https://www.dosomething.org/us/campaigns/mirror-messages?source=node/803>)
- More than 40% of boys in middle school and high school regularly exercise with the goal of increasing muscle mass.
- 75% of girls with low self-esteem reported engaging in negative activities like cutting, bullying, smoking, drinking, or disordered eating. This compares to 25% of girls with high self-esteem.

- About 20% of teens will experience depression before they reach adulthood.
- Teen girls that have a negative view of themselves are 4 times more likely to take part in activities with boys that they've ended up regretting later.
- The top wish among all teen girls is for their parents to communicate better with them. This includes frequent and more open conversations.
- 38% of boys in middle school and high school reported using protein supplements and nearly 6% admitted to experimenting with steroids.
- 7 in 10 girls believe that they are not good enough or don't measure up in some way, including their looks, performance in school and relationships with friends and family members.
- A girl's self-esteem is more strongly related to how she views her own body shape and body weight, than how much she actually weighs.

Mirror Messages

- **The Problem**
- By age 13, about 53% of American girls are unhappy with their bodies. By 17, it's 78%.
- **The Solution**
- Posting encouraging notes in bathrooms (a place that can trigger low self-esteem) can improve someone's self-esteem.
- Create and post encouraging notes in your school bathrooms to brighten your classmates' day and help fight against the body-shaming happening in the media during the election season.
- **What You Get**
- Sign up for ways that you can boost a strangers self-esteem where they need it the most. Especially given the body-shaming happening at the national level during the election, your words here matter so much!

SELF-ESTEEM FACTS

THERE HAS BEEN **an increase** IN SELF-ESTEEM ISSUES **AMONGST BOYS** WITH UP TO HALF OF MALE STUDENTS THOUGHT TO HAVE A LOW BODY IMAGE.

80% OF FEMALE SURVEYED CLAIMED THEMSELVES TO HAVE A **poor body image** WHO LINKED TO NEGATIVE REMARKS MADE BY FRIENDS AND FAMILY

UP TO 85% OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION IS THOUGHT TO BE AFFECTED BY LOW SELF ESTEEM

75% OF GIRLS WITH LOW SELF ESTEEM REPORT ENGAGING IN RELATIVE ACTIVE/LEISURE ACTIVITIES: BULLYING, SMOKING OR DRINKING

SOCIAL MEDIA IS Emerging, NOT Replacing OUR SELF ESTEEM

The Real Truth About Beauty

25% Have considered plastic surgery (40% if it was safe and free)	60% Agreed that: "Society expects women to enhance their physical attractiveness"
47% Rated their body weight at "too high"	75% Wished that the media portrayed women of diverse physical attractive (age, size, shape)
48% Agreed that "When [she] feels less beautiful, [she] feels worse about [herself] in general"	76% Wished that female beauty was portrayed in the media as being more than just physical attractiveness

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

Body weight: 35% (light blue), 45% (pink)	Appearance of face: 17% (light blue), 12% (pink)
Body shape: 26% (light blue), 33% (pink)	Skin color: 14% (light blue), 11% (pink)
Height: 33% (light blue), 21% (pink)	Sense of style: 11% (light blue), 12% (pink)
Hair: 25% (light blue), 24% (pink)	Color of eyes: 15% (light blue), 4% (pink)
Skin complexion: 17% (light blue), 14% (pink)	Shape of eyes: 7% (light blue), 5% (pink)

Ages of women and girls: 18-64 (pink), 15-17 (light blue) back next





5 Things to tell yourself each day

- 1: Today will be my day
- 2: I am the best me there is
- 3: I know that I'm a winner
- 4: I can do it, I know i can
- 5: God will always be with me

Be positive and believe in yourself

www.DiversityofAbilities.com

SELF-ESTEEM TIPS

1. Develop a habit of recognition.
2. Realize it's your job to take care of you.
3. Remind yourself of the journey.
4. Don't dwell on your mistakes.
5. Pick up a hobby or learn something new.
6. Set appropriate, attainable goals.
7. Create baseline points and "brownie points".
8. Set aside quality time.
9. Love your recovered self.

Self Esteem Tips

- Read to build your brain
- Exercise to build your body
- Mediate/Pray to build spirituality
- Make new friends - build social skills
 - Eat Healthy
- Experience something new every day
 - Don't pity yourself
- Never stop looking for a challenge.

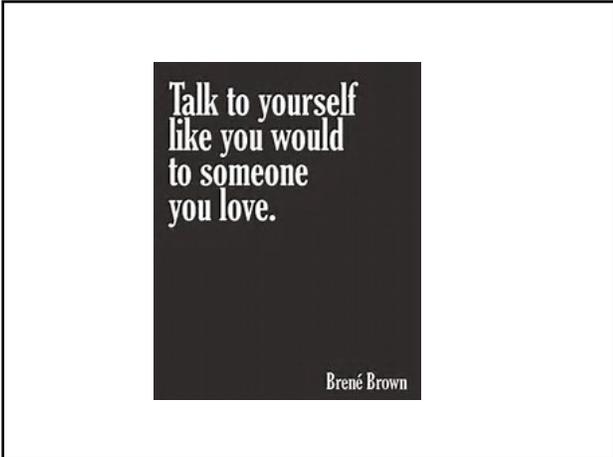
Facebook.com/LessonsFromSelfEsteem

15 phrases you should say to yourself every day to help you meet your goals:

- * **"I'm going to succeed at _____."** When you tell yourself you'll succeed at a specific task, you're contradicting the self-doubt that could otherwise hold you back.
- **"I've been successful in the past."** Rehearsing specific past successes helps build self-confidence when you need to stretch yourself and try new things.
- **"I can overcome my fear."** Acknowledging your fear is very empowering, and making a choice to overcome it will give you strength and confidence as you face it. Remember, fear only has power if you let it.
- **"That wasn't as bad as I thought."** Many times, the things we fear aren't all that bad—even when they actually happen. By reminding ourselves of this, we empower ourselves the next time we're afraid.
- **"I did something no one else was willing to do."** Big or small, there's something you've done that no one else was willing to do. By patting yourself on the back for it, you strengthen your ability to maintain good habits.
- **"It's my fault."** Taking responsibility for the things we did empowers us to apologize and make the situation better. Just don't blame yourself when it's not your fault!
- **"I got started!"** The first step is always the hardest, and celebrating it is something we all do too little of. Congratulate yourself on getting started—every step from here will be easier.
- **"You're awesome."** No one hears this enough, but it's true of absolutely everyone. We all have different ways that we're awesome, so take the time to remind yourself of yours!

- **"I don't care what other people think."** The truth is that most people think about you far less than you'd assume. So, every so often, remind yourself that other people's opinions don't matter. Be true to yourself.
- **"They're no different than I am."** When you start to judge others to lift yourself up, you're giving yourself a false sense of pride. Instead, admit that everyone is more like you than you realize, and you'll find yourself feeling less isolated and alone.
- **"I can do this!"** Right before you step into a difficult situation or take on a challenge, tell yourself you can do it. Because if you believe you can, you're right!
- **"This time is an appointment with me."** Many people don't make enough time for themselves. Instead, find a time you can set an appointment with yourself—to look over goals, hit the gym, or just rest. Then keep it!
- **"I'm not perfect—and that's OK."** Feeling like we have to be perfect before we can launch our business or take our next step in life holds many of us back from success. Take a second today to admit that you're not perfect, and that that's perfectly OK.
- **"That's not my job, but who cares?"** Being willing to step above and beyond your specific role is a great way to stand out and get noticed in your work and life. Even if no one knows it but you, you'll feel great knowing you made a difference.
- **"You're good enough, right now, just like this."** We all want to improve, move forward, and accomplish more. However, sometimes we just need to remind ourselves that we're good enough, right now, today. You'll feel relief and a sense of peace as you accept yourself for who you are.
- Talking to yourself may sound like an odd thing to do, but it's extremely effective. Most people have an ongoing monologue in their minds already—success is just a matter of making yours more positive. By saying these 15 things to yourself every day, you'll be well on your way to being successful, accomplishing your goals, and getting more done.

• <http://www.inc.com/sujan-patel/15-phrases-you-should-say-to-yourself-every-day-to-be-successful-accomplish-your.html>

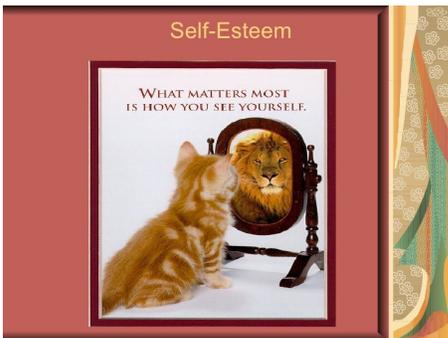


- Listen to others and yourself
- Give to others – it feels good
- Stand up for yourself
- Make choices that are good and right for you
- Do not ignore your own needs and feelings
- No should, woulds or coulds
- Move on – LET IT GO
- Have fun
- Be around people you love and you love you – and you know it
- Build others up
- Accept compliments

- DO things you love
- Be creative
- Stop trying to be perfect –
 - YOU CAN'T
- It is ok to say “no”
- Do things that make you feel good.



- Take care of yourself – Eat well, be active
 - Challenge yourself – Get out of your comfort zone
 - Stay away from negative or contaminating people
 - Use visualization and positive thinking – see yourself
 - Integrity – what are your morals and values? Life by them. Do what you believe to be the right thing to do.
 - Be responsible for yourself – no one is to blame for anything you do or say. Own it.
 - Forgiveness – for yourself and others
 - Reconcile – work out conflicts.
- Sherfield, R. M. (2004). *The everything Self-esteem Book*. Avon, M.A.: Adams Media.



Ways for Parents and School staff to Connect with Children

- 1. Compassion – Listen, empathize, validate. No feeling is wrong
- 2. Clear Communication – Speak honestly, from the heart and use clear words so that they understand your emotions
- 3. Creativity – Try new things, encourage exploration, have fun
- 4. Consistency – Be consistent (predictability); say what you mean and mean what you say
- 5. Challenge – Be positive about problem in approaching them and the solution. Learn from mistakes and challenges

- 6. Cheerfulness – Enjoy life so they learn from you, be optimistic and upbeat
- 7. Confidence – Trust in your own beliefs and talents. Children will learn from your example. Trust in their beliefs and talents as well
- 8. Calmness – Breathe. Try to be calm. Teach good coping skills in order to enable children to do the same
- 9. Clear Agreements – Establish clear rules and agreements that everyone understands (home, classroom etc.). Try to be positive rather than punitive. Be clear
- 10. Commitment – Commit to being true to yourself so that child will have faith in you and learn to do the same for themselves. Same for honesty

Loomans, D. (1994). *Full Esteem Ahead*. Tiburon, CA. : H. J. Kramer, inc.

How to help your students:

- Praise the student in a specific but genuine way.
- Show the student tangible evidence of his or her progress.
- Showcase his or her accomplishments.
- Help the student to feel important in class.
- Engage the student in conversation about his or her interests.
- Help the student to handle adversity.
- Encourage and foster a sense of belonging.
- Inform parents and the child's successes.

• http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/shore/shore059.shtml



Development of Drawing

- Stages of Development for drawing:
 - Children begin to scribble around ages 2 and 3.
 - By age 4, children begin to become more organized, using single lines. Use circles
 - Ages 4-7 children do not necessarily draw what is actually seen. They draw what they know to be there or present so may show people through walls.
 - Over the years they are able to draw rough, simple structures to represent people and animals.
 - Ages 7-12 children draw realistically, what is visible. Human figures are realistic as well.
 - Around age 11 children often express a preference to trace the art of others.
 - Between ages 11-14 often children prefer to draw geometric shapes rather than people. There is usually a strong usage of color.

Symbols in Drawings/Art work

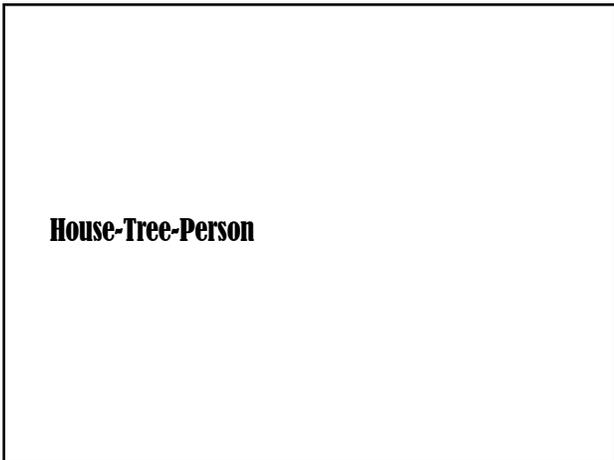
- Balloons = need, desire for dominance in family
- Beds = sexual or depressive themes especially if figures are all in bed(s)
- Bicycles = common activity
- Brooms = symbol of mother figure, household cleanliness
- Butterflies = search for love and beauty
- Buttons = dependency, unmet needs
- Cats = ambivalence with mother, conflict, competition
- Circles = schizoid if preoccupations with circles
- Clowns = inferiority
- Cribs = jealousy of sibling

- Dangerous objects (knives, hammers etc.) = anger
- Drums = displaced anger
- Flowers = need for love or love of beauty
- Garbage = issues with birth of new sibling, competitive, feeling guilty about rivalry
- Heat (sun, fires) = need for warmth and love
- Hanging lights on suspended chain = disturbance in the family, possible sexual issues
- Horses = common for girls
- Jump rope = protection from others if self is jumping; rivalry if someone else is jumping
- Kites = escape, freedom
- Ladders = tension

- Lawnmowers = for boys, competition
- Leaves = dependency
 - Collecting Leaves = collecting warmth
 - Burning them = needs not met
- Logs = hyper masculinity
- Moon = depression
- Motorcycles = power, dominance
- Paintbrush = extension of the hand, often associated with punishing figure
- Rain = depression
- Refrigerators = deprivation and depression, cold
- Snakes = phallic symbol, sexual tension
- Snow = depression and suicide
- Stars = deprivation, pain

- Stop signs = attempts at impulse control
 - Stoves = nurturance and oral needs
 - Sun = stereotypical in young children
 - Darkened sun = depression
 - Figures leaning towards it = need for warmth
 - Figure far away = rejection
 - Trains = needs for power, usually in boys
 - Vacuum = unmet dependency, power, control; if mother using than she is seen as powerful
 - Water themes = fantasy; depression
 - Figure floating in water = depression
- Burns, R.C. & Kaufman, S. F. (1972). *Actions, Styles and Symbols in Kinetic Family Drawings(K-F-D): An Interpretive Manual*. New York: Brunner/ Mazel.





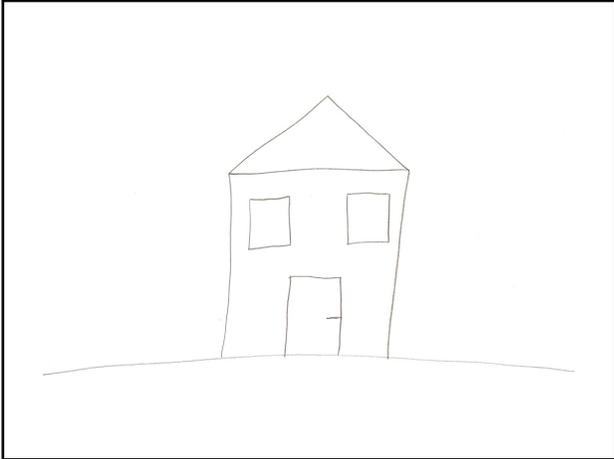
House

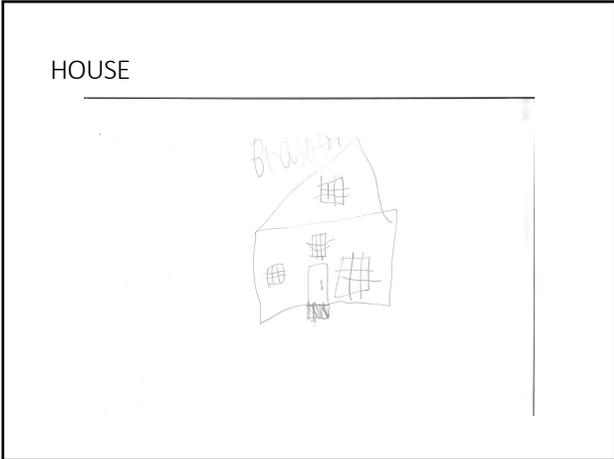
- This can be useful in order to assess family issues. You are looking for the overall feelings of the household.
- Usually only includes the exterior unless you request otherwise.
- Chimney = warmth and affection
- Emotional Indicators (Oster & Montgomery, 1996):
 - 1. Details
 - A. Essentials (normal drawing)
 - At least one door, one window, one wall, a roof, a chimney
 - B. Irrelevant (e.g. shrubs, flowers, walkway)
 - Needing to structure environment more completely, which is sometime associated with feelings of insecurity or needing to exercise control in interpersonal contact.

- 2. Chimney – Symbol of warm intimate relations, sometimes seen as a phallic symbol of significance.
 - A. absence of chimney
 - Lacking psychological warmth or conflicts with significant male figures
 - B. overly large
 - Overemphasis on sexual concerns and/or possible exhibitionistic tendencies
 - C. smoke in much profusion
 - Inner tension
- 3. Door
 - A. above baseline, without steps
 - Interpersonal inaccessibility
 - B. absence of door
 - Extreme difficulty in allowing accessibility to others
 - C. open
 - Strong need to receive warmth from external world
 - D. very large
 - Overly dependent on others
 - With lock or hinges
 - defensiveness

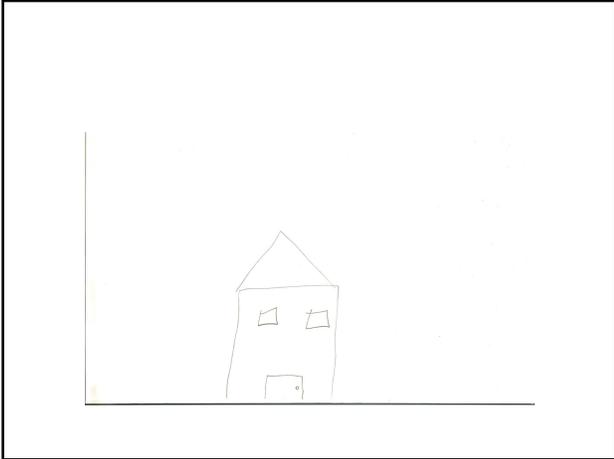
- 4. Fence around the house
 - Need for emotional protection
- 5. Gutters
 - Suspiciousness
- 6. Perspective, from below
 - Either rejection of home or feelings of an unattainable desirable home situation
- 7. Perspective, from above
 - Rejection of home situation
- 8. Roof
 - A. One-dimensional (single line connecting two walls)
 - Unimaginative or emotionally constricted
 - B. Overly large
 - Seeks satisfaction in fantasy

- 9. Window(s)
 - A. Absence of window(s)
 - Hostile or withdrawing
 - B. Present on ground, absent from upper story
 - Gap between reality and fantasy
 - C. With curtains
 - Reserved, controlled
 - D. Bare
 - Behavior is mostly blunt and direct
- 10. Shutters
 - A. closed
 - Extreme defensiveness and withdrawal
 - B. Open
 - Ability to make sensitive interpersonal adjustment
- 10. Walkway
 - A. very long
 - Lessened accessibility
 - B. Narrow at house, broad at end
 - Superficially friendly





- Patient stated that this was my house, the therapist.
- His favorite room in the house was the attic because you “there is so much you could put up there”. When asked about what could be put up there the patient replied “old stuff”. Asked him about what kinds of old stuff and he stated “I don’t know”. Further attempts to get him to elaborate failed.



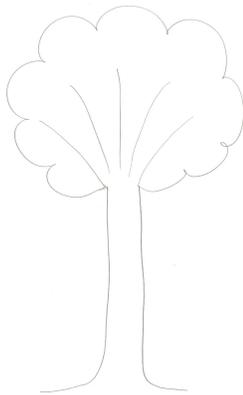
- Client stated that this is her mommy’s house
- She said that she, her “sister”, her mom and David (father figure) live there
- She said that her favorite room is “my room” because it “has our beds so we can sleep”
- There was no room that she did not like

Tree

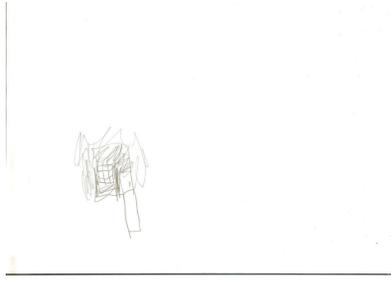
- The tree represents other potentially unconscious feelings usually towards the self.
- It is easier to project feelings onto an inanimate object.
- Emotional indicators (Oster & Montgomery, 1996):
 - 1. Extremely Large
 - Aggressive tendencies
 - 2. Tiny Tree
 - Feelings of inferiority and insignificance
 - 3. Faint Lines
 - Feelings of inadequacy, indecisiveness
 - 4. Tree composed of just two lines for trunk and looped crown
 - Impulsivity, variable

- 5. Exaggerated emphasis on trunk
 - Emotional immaturity
- 6. Exaggerated emphasis on crown
 - Inhibited emotionally, analytic
- 7. Exaggerated emphasis on roots
 - Emotional responses shallow, reasoning limited
- 8. Scar, knothole, broken branch
 - Associated with trauma, e.g. accident, illness, rape (time determination in relation to length or tree)
- 9. No ground line
 - Vulnerable to stress
- 10. Ground line present, no roots
 - Repressed emotions
- 11. Shading, excessively dark or reinforced
 - Hostile defenses or aggressive behaviors

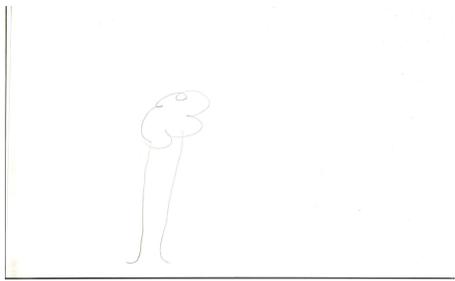
- 12. Fine, broken lines
 - Overt anxiety
- 13. Knotholes
 - A. Small or diamond-shaped
 - Related to vagina
 - B. Small and simple
 - Sexual assault or initial sexual experience
 - C. Outline reinforced
 - Shock impact greater
 - D. Circles inside
 - Experience in past and "healing"
 - E. Blackened
 - Shame associated with experience
 - F. Small animal inside
 - Ambivalence surrounding childbearing



TREE



- When asked what kind of tree the patient had drawn, he stated "a tree house" and proceeded to ask his mother for one.
- He went on to say that he wanted one with a bed in it, a TV and an Xbox so that he could sleep out in the tree house.



- Client stated that his was an apple tree
- She said it was in Arizona
- She said that the tree “feels good” because it “has water”.

Persons

- A more direct method than the tree. Evoke conscious feelings about the self including body-image and self-concept.
- Can project emotions onto a person that they may not otherwise be able to express.
- Emotional Indictors (Oster & Montgomery, 1996):
- 1. Arms
 - Use to change or control surrounding environment
 - A. folded over chest
 - Hostile or suspicious
 - B. held behind back
 - Wanting to control anger, interpersonal reluctance
 - C. omitted
 - Inadequacy, helplessness

- 2. Feet
 - Degree of interpersonal mobility
 - A. Long
 - Striving for security or virility
 - B. Tiny
 - Dependency, blunted feelings
 - C. Omitted
 - Lack of independence
- 3. Fingers
 - A. Long and spike-like
 - Aggressive, hostile
 - B. Enclosed by loop or single dimension
 - Wish to suppress aggressive impulses

- 4. Head
 - A. Large
 - Preoccupation with fantasy life, focus on mental life
 - B. Small
 - Obsessive-compulsive, intellectual inadequacy
 - C. Back to viewer
 - Paranoid or schizoid tendencies
- 5. Legs
 - A. absent
 - Constricted, possible castration anxiety
 - B. size difference
 - Mixed feelings regarding independence
 - C. long
 - Striving for autonomy
 - D. short
 - Emotional immobility

- 6. Mouth
 - A. overly emphasized
 - Immaturity, oral-aggressive
 - B. very large
 - Orally erotic
- 7. Shoulders
 - A. unequal
 - Emotionally unstable
 - B. large
 - Preoccupied with the perceived need for strength
 - C. Squared
 - Overly defended, hostile toward others

Person

- Additional Emotional Indicators (Oster & Montgomery, 1996):
 - 1. Poor integration of parts in the figure:
 - Low frustration tolerance and impulsivity
 - 2. Shading
 - Anxiety (the greater the shading, the more intense the anxiety)
 - A. shading of face
 - Seriously disturbed, poor self-concept
 - B. shading of arms
 - Aggressive impulses
 - 3. Line Quality
 - Sketched – insecurity, uncertainty
 - Light – poor self-concept
 - Reinforced – anger; vulnerability of defenses

- 4. Figure slanting more than 15 degrees
 - Instability, mental imbalance
- 5. Small size
 - Extreme insecurity, withdrawal, depression, feelings of inadequacy
- 6. Large Size
 - Expansiveness, positive mood
- 7. Transparencies
 - immaturity
- 8. Visible teeth
 - Oral aggressiveness, sarcasm
- 9. Short arms
 - Tendency to withdraw, turning inward, attempt to inhibit impulses.

- 10. Long arms
 - Ambition for achievement or acquisition, reaching out toward others
- 11. Big hands
 - Acting out behavior
- 12. Hand cut off
 - Troubled, inadequate
- 13. Profile figure
 - Evasiveness and paranoia; withdrawal
- 14. Disheveled hair
 - Sexual concerns; confusion
- 15. opposite sex drawn first
 - Sexual identity problems; strong emotional attachment to opposite sex.
- 16. elaborate belt or other emphasis on waist area
 - Sexual conflict; covert tension

Emotional Items in Drawing

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Poor integration of parts | • Big hands |
| • Shading of face | • Hands cut off |
| • Shading of body and/or limbs | • Legs pressed together |
| • Shading of hands and/or neck | • Genitals |
| • Gross asymmetry of limbs | • Monster or grotesque figure |
| • Slanting figure | • 3 or more figures spontaneously |
| • Tiny figure | • Clouds |
| • Big figure | • No eyes |
| • Transparencies | • No nose |
| • Tiny head | • No mouth |
| • Crossed eyes | • No body |
| • Teeth | • No arms |
| • Short arms | • No legs |
| • Long arms | • No feet |
| • Arms clinging to body | • No neck |

Koppitz, E. M. (1968). *Psychological Evaluation of Children's Human Figure Drawings*. New York: Grune & Stratton.

Serious Indicators in Drawings

- Explicit drawing of genitals
- Concealment of genitals
- Omission of genital area
- Omission of central part of figure
- Encapsulation of drawing
- Fruit trees added
- Opposite sex drawn first

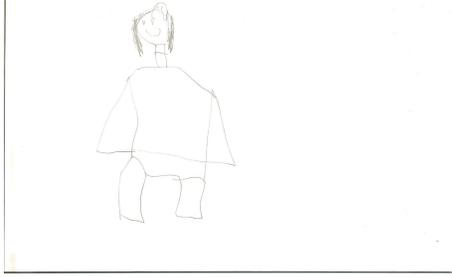
- (Peterson & Hardin, 1997)

PERSON – drew male first



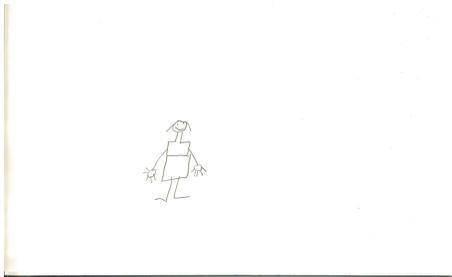
- When asked to draw a picture of a person, he first asked if he should draw a boy or a girl.
- He first drew this figure.
- He stated it was his father who was sad. When asked why his father was sad, he changed the name of the figure in the drawing to a character with whom I was not familiar. He did say that the character was bad. He said that the character was sad because he had not attacked anyone.

PERSON – female second



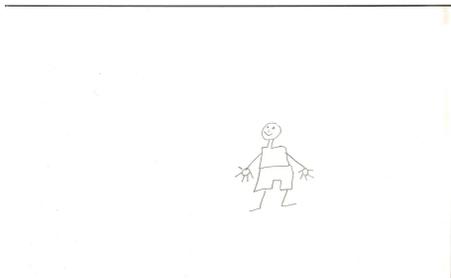
- Next he drew this figure and stated that it was his mother.
- He said that she was happy because “I was listening in school” – a big part of why he presented for counseling.

Person – female first



- Client stated that this was her mom
- Her mom is age 30
- She stated that her mom is “happy”. She is happy because “she has me, my sister and David”

Person – male second



- This is Gary who is bald
- Client stated that he is kind of an uncle. Mom interjected that he used to rent a room from them a couple of years ago and is a good family friend. She was surprised though because client had not seen him since last Christmas which was about 9-10 months earlier.
- Client stated that he is feeling “happy” because “he met us”.

Family Drawings

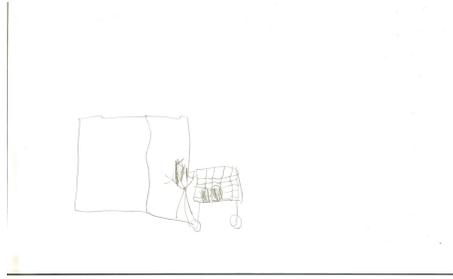
- This not only helps to assess the feelings associated with the family but can also help to reveal the individual's place within the family.
- If the child puts themselves larger or closer to the parent(s), they may view themselves as more important than any siblings.
- If a child feels isolated from the family, they may draw themselves on a different side of the page away from everyone.
- If omit self = rejection (more common with adopted children)
- Common to draw passive positions such as watching TV or sitting at the table eating.
 - Look at the table – is it bare?

- If omit siblings, can be representative of competition.
- Look for the proportions with which each member is drawn = dominance
- Facial expressions of each family member
- A variation can be asking the child to draw their family in a circle. Look for:
 - How close are the parents to one another?
 - What barriers are there to communication?
 - Who is in the center?
 - Is the child smaller or larger compared to other drawings?
 - Are there alliances as seen by proximity?

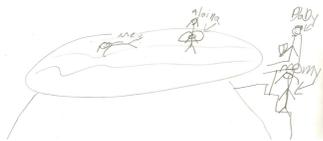
Actions between Figures

- Ball = rivalry, anger
- Self not playing with ball = jealousy towards figure with the ball
- Whole family playing ball = willing to engage with family
- Getting dirty = bad or negative feelings
- Mother cooking = most common; meets child's needs
- Father reading, paying bills or playing = most common and normal
- If all stick figures = regress, resistant
- Barriers = rivalry

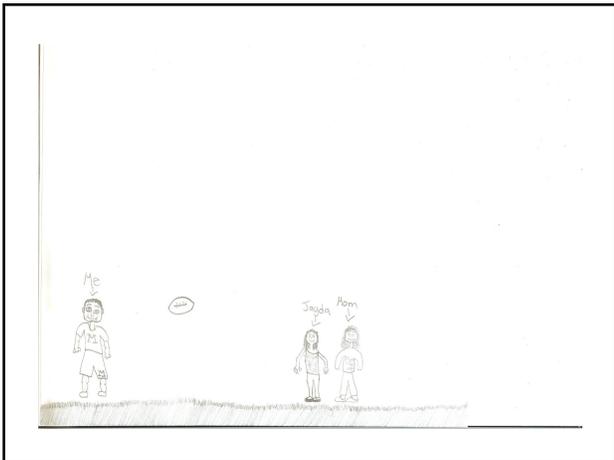
FAMILY

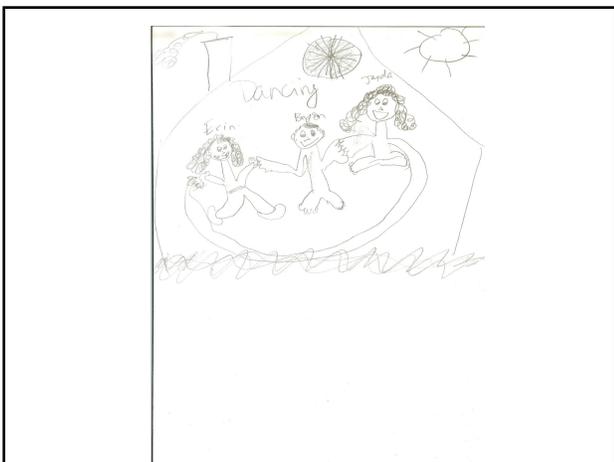


- When asked to draw a picture of his family doing something, this is the image he drew.
- At first when he said he was finished, there were no people in the drawing.
- I asked him if he were done, he said “yes” and then said “wait” and took the paper back.
- He then inserted what he stated was his mother. He explained that his mother was grocery shopping. When asked he went on to explain that he was at school, his father was at work and his sister was at school.
- A concern with this patient is his need for attention and his father’s lack of involvement.



- Client stated that this is a picture of her family at the pool
- She said that she is swimming
- Her sister is in the inner tube, floating. She added that it is a Princess inner tube
- Her Dad, David, is reading a book about cars
- Mommy is getting into the pool
- She said that they family is "happy" because "we got to go swimming in the hot tub. It's cool and hot".





More Family drawings:

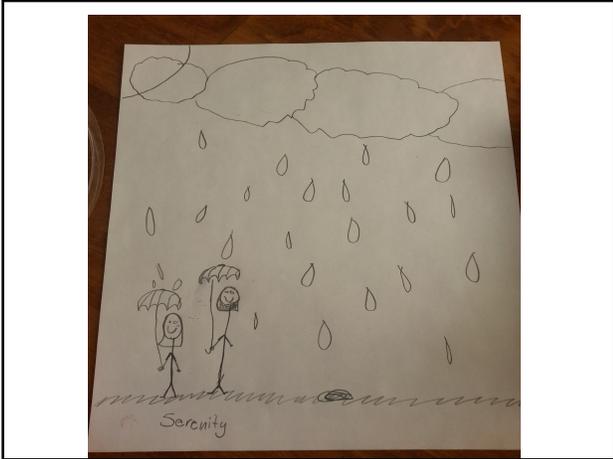
- Draw your family as animals
- Draw your family as furniture
- Draw your family as buildings

Parent-Child drawing

- This is another type of drawing that is based in Object Relations Theory.
- Object relations theory would instruct the child do complete a mother-child drawing.
- Using this with either parent can not only reveal interesting information about the self but of course about the relationship.

Draw a person in the Rain

- The idea behind this drawing is that you can elicit interesting feelings of self-expression by having the child place themselves in a usually perceived as unpleasant environmental situation –rain.
- Has been found to be a good measure of stress.
- The amount of rain drawn is an indicator of the amount of stress the child is feeling.
- Their ability to cope with the stress is measures by what is drawn to protect them from the rain.



School Drawing

- Self doing academic work = academic achievement
- Self doing other things = lack of academic achievement
- Recess, lunch = favorite time of day
- Large number of peers = lesser academic achievement
- Lack of people = avoiding social interactions
- Large self = positive academic achievement
- Large teacher = feeling inadequate in school
- Emphasis on details of room or building = need for structure, avoiding social interactions
- Bird's eye view = distant and socially isolated

- Outdoor picture of school = often dislike school
- Apples = dependency; oral needs; issues with authority in school
- Chalkboard = writing on them may indicate feelings towards academics; inadequacy in school
- Clock = structure, order, pressure
- Principal = issues with power, structure, rules; may imply need for male figure
- School bus = avoidance, dislike, conflict, isolated for other children

• Prout, H. T. & Celmer, D. S.(1984). *A validity study of the Kinetic school drawing technique*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

If resistant to drawing...

- Often older children and teenagers are resistant to drawing.
- Ask the individual to draw a story with you. You and the child each take turns drawing a line. This helps to break resistance because the emphasis is on the interaction between the client and the therapist rather than on the client drawing.
- When done, talk about the drawing and what you have created.

- Another technique that can work is having the individual just scribble draw on a piece of paper.
- Then have the client look at the paper and see what picture they can make if they erase some lines.
- This often helps to break down inhibitions and resistance.
- It also helps clients who have done counseling before and are expecting the usual. You are working with them do to something different.

Social Skills Training for SAD

- When treating someone with Social Anxiety Disorder, it can often be very useful to also work with them on learning/improving their social skills. Many of these skills are more challenging for people with such anxiety.
- Because of the anxiety, the client may also not have learned the skills that are basic for some of us.
- Social Skills are tricky – there is not one set that works great. What works in one setting may not be appropriate in another.
- (Anthony & Swinson, 2000)

Social Skills (cont.)

- Eye Contact
- Body Language (open posture, appropriate space and distance etc..)
- Tone and volume
- Conversational Skills (not putting self down, telling others about yourself, open ended questions etc..)
- Public Speaking Skills
- Interview Skills
- Dating Skills (asking, questions, good topics etc..)

Social Skills (cont.)

- Assertiveness Skills – I find that this one is huge for many people with anxiety (ask for things, stand up for self)
- Conflict Skills – also very challenging for people with anxiety (how to deal with others and a disagreement)
- Listening Skills (really listening and not thinking about what you are going to say next)
- Other Skills (what is imposing, not violating privacy, reasonable requests for help etc..)
- (Anthony and Swinson, 2000)

Non-verbal Communication

- Often when we feel anxious, especially with SAD, our body language can convey that we want to be left alone – we shut ourselves off.
- Research shows that the greatest amount of communication in a conversation, is non-verbal with statistics ranging from 75-90%.
- THAT IS A LOT
- If we are conveying we are closed off but that is not how we feel, this adds an additional challenge.

Texting is a brilliant way to miscommunicate how you feel, and misinterpret what other people mean.

Non-Verbal Behaviors:

Closed:

- Leaning back (sitting)
- Standing far away
- Avoiding eye contact
- Speaking quietly
- Crossing arms
- Clenching fists
- Serious facial expression
- Sitting hunched
- Timid tone of voice

Open:

- Leaning forward (sitting)
- Standing closer
- Maintaining eye contact
- Easily heard volume
- Arms uncrossed
- Hands open & relaxed
- Smiling
- Confident Tone
- Sitting up straight

(Anthony and Swinson, 2000)

Social Skills and Communication

- While working with a client to teach the skills, you must also deal with the anxiety underlying the issues:
 - Address fears
 - Resolve irrational thoughts
 - Deal with catastrophic thoughts
 - Rejection
 - Self-esteem

- Easy examples:
 - Rubbing the palate
 - Squeezing the center of the palm
 - Squeeze tip of each finger
 - Inch worm down the finger

- Why? Stimulates serotonin and effects adrenals and reduce anxiety

Board Games

- There is very little research about the effectiveness of using Board Games in Play therapy.
- Often it is used for observational purposes.
- Games can be useful to talk with kids while playing in order to have them more relaxed and their guard down.
- There are games created for the purpose of using in therapy such as the Talking, Feeling and Doing Game, The Ungame, The Social & Emotional Competence Game (which can be supplemented with The Social & Emotional Competence Card Game – formerly known as My First Therapy Game), Character Challenge, and The Self-Esteem Game: The Game Where everybody is a Winner!

Board Games (cont.)

- It can be interesting to note which game a child selects. In doing so, children are exhibiting for us aspects of their personality.
- Electronic games are making their way into the therapy room. I find that this does not lend itself for therapy work. It absorbs too much of the child's attention. It is also hard to break the rules or manipulate the game.
- In addition, it is recommended by Bellinson (2002) that we as the therapist not cheat either. By this, she means that we should not alter our actions in order to allow the child to win.
- Discuss cheating with a child but do not try to control their behavior.

Board Games (cont..)

- It is so important to talk with children while playing and use their actions as a means of addressing other issues.
 - A child may rush you to go when it is your turn.
 - If cheating, talk about their ability to win.
 - Why is it hard to sit still?
 - Is the child taking their time to think before moving?
 - Address the level of competitiveness.
 - Talk about the determination to win
 - What does it mean to lose?
 - Being considerate of the other person such as taking turns who goes first.

- According to Reid (2001), there are 10 therapeutic “elements” to using games in therapy sessions:
 1. Therapeutic Alliance: Puts the client and therapist on a equal playing field.
 2. Pleasure: They have fun but they see you having fun with them.
 3. Diagnosis: Learn about the child’s social and emotional skills. We can learn to understand
 - Cognitive strategies
 - Response to feedback
 - Drive to mastery
 - Sense of competence
 - Self-control
 - Attention span
 - Frustration tolerance
 - Competitive drive
 - Willingness to follow rules
 - Ability to deal with pressure
 - Reaction to success and failure

Bow, J. N. & Quinnell, F. A. (2001). “Therapeutic Uses of Fine Motor Games” In Schaefer, C. E. & Reid, S. E. (Eds.) (2001). *Game Play: Therapeutic Use of Childhood Games*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

4. Communication: Although some reduce conversation, it is good to discuss rules, goals, strategy and use therapy games.
5. Insight: The therapist can observe and comment on the behavior of the child. The therapist can communicate connections between observed behaviors and things that the therapist has learned about the child.
6. Sublimation: Requires sublimation of impulses and desires.
7. Ego Enhancement: The child can learn to master impulses. They can also learn to plan, strategize, and work towards a goal.
8. Reality Testing: The manner in which a child reacts to the game and rules can give as an idea if their judgment and expectations are grounded in reality.

- 9. Rational Thinking: Games that require skills also require rational thinking to succeed.
- 10. Socialization: Most games are hard to play without being social. It is a great way to help children develop social skills.
 - Reid, S. E. (2001). "The Psychology of Play and Games." In Schaefer, C. E. & Reid, S. E. (Eds.) (2001). *Game Play: Therapeutic Use of Childhood Games*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

- According to Yorke (2012), game play facilitates therapy in many ways including:
 - Forming a positive relationship with a caring adult: empathize with them while we play and we build a relationship.
 - Increase expectation of change/inspiring hope: We bring an enthusiastic attitude to play with the child. We convey fun. Be convey faith and hope and this also conveys that things can change and they can change.
 - Catharsis and labeling of feelings: The emotions that arise during play are processed. This is analogous to previous experiences.
 - Corrective emotional experience: Play will trigger a variety of feelings. We will usually react differently than the other adults in the child's life. We accept them and help to process them.
 - Insight and working through: Games that are meant to be used in the therapy session help children to connect with and communicate feelings. Insight is not needed and issues can often be addressed indirectly.

- Learning alternative problem solving: Learn new skills directly and indirectly
- Development of an internal structure: We can empathically connect with the child during game play. This can help them to develop a strong and positive sense of self.
 - Yorke, G. (2012). The Use of Board Games in Play Therapy. *Play Therapy*, 7 (3), 20-23.

- To ensure that play is therapeutic, Yorke recommends the following:
 1. Resist the urge to win: We may be competitive. Be aware not to take advantage of a child's incompetence. Maintain a therapeutic attitude.
 2. Resist the urge to let the child win: It is reality that people will win and lose. Children need to learn to do both. Losing teaches frustration tolerance, can motivate the child to try harder, and teaches how to be a good sport. We can learn a lot about a child who has a hard time losing.
 3. Stay alert for opportunities to interpret and teach: Children usually let their guard down during play. Observe, interpret and interact especially with therapeutic games.
 4. Role play new skills: Therapeutic games often present coping and problem solving skills. Practice them immediately after they come up in the game with the child.
 5. Engage in therapeutic conversation: Address issues and concerns as they arise.
 - Yorke, G. (2012). The Use of Board Games in Play Therapy. *Play Therapy*, 7 (3), 20-23.

Rule Breaking

- Styles of Rule Breaking (Bellinson, 2002):
 - Look for the answer or at your cards
 - Repeatedly throw the dice until get the number they need
 - Actually pick up the die and put it on the number
 - May try to hide what they are doing
 - Pretend they made a mistake like miscounting the number of spaces moved
 - Do they cheat long enough to be ahead or until the end of the game?
 - Understand the behavior and try to interpret it – is it consistent with what they do at school, home etc.?
 - Children who cheat earlier in a game are often more needy

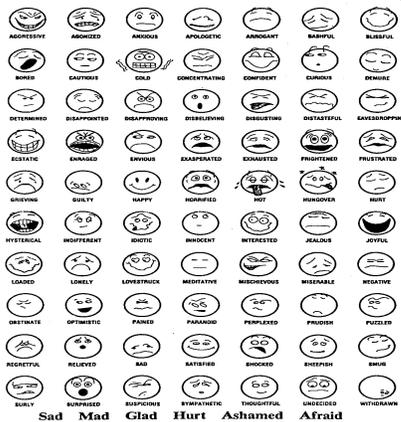
Rule Breaking

- Most children who understand rules start by following them.
- Children will often then test you.
- We need to know the rules of a game so that a child does not catch us off guard by saying the rules are one way when in reality they are another.
- Sometimes children will make new rules that are their own and will follow those – this is being creative.
- When a child pulls out a game, ask them how they want to play.
- Rather than alter our moves, give children choices such as “If you move there, you leave a double jump for my checkers.” Or, “I know the [Clue] answer, should I say it or keep playing?” (Bellinson, 2002. pg. 75).

Feelings Faces and Emotions

- Many children will not respond when asked how they feel about something.
- Offering pictures of faces that depict simple emotions from which they can choose better enables the child to express feelings.
- You can ask children to tell a story about a certain face that you select for them.
- Young children often do not understand that you can have two conflicting emotions at the same time such as love a parent while being very mad at them – hence why children yell “I hate you”!
- Use the cards to model the presence of multiple feelings as well as the communication of feelings.
- Have the outline of a head – have child draw the face with the emotion.

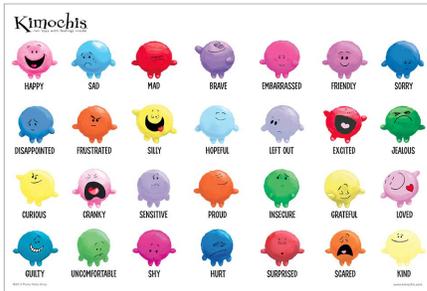
- Also, using a mirror, model for children how to express an emotion and than have them do it.
- Use story books that depict certain emotions as well.
- Look at the picture and have the child identify what the emotion is. Then have them talk about a time that they felt that emotion. You can use this to help them in regards to empathy – have them tell a story of when someone they know felt that emotion (Phil).
- Make a Feelings Mask – the face is how they feel. You can also do a two sided mask where on one side is how people see them and the other is how they really feel.
- Emotions Hangman
- Emotions Charades
- Great website: <http://consciousdiscipline.com/>
- And <http://www.momendeavors.com/2015/06/printable-emotions-sorting-game-disney-pixar-inside-out.html>
- <http://jamonkey.com/inside-out-emotions-wheel-printable/>



Sad Mad Glad Hurt Ashamed Afraid

Kimochi Dolls

- Kimochi (KEY.MO.CHEE) means “feeling” in Japanese. These wonderful plush toys help parents, teachers, and children learn to be better communicators, and to express their feelings. Using Kimochi characters, kids can get in touch with their own emotions in a fun and comfortable way. When kids can communicate their feelings, they cultivate confidence and character!
- Pack #1 = Jealous, Loved, Grateful, Scared, Shy, and Blank
- Pack #2 = Kind, Hurt, Sorry, Uncomfortable, Friendly, and Blank
- Pack #3 = Sleepy, Surprised, Embarrassed, Guilty, Excited, and Blank
- Pack #4 = Happy, Mad, Sad, Brave, Left Out, and Blank



Make it real

- For many children, coping with intangible issues is hard such as illnesses or irrational thoughts.
- Have the child draw what it is and make it real.
- This way the child has something that they can get mad at rather than some abstract intangible concept.
- Example: D and his cancer.

Collages

- Collages can be used for many reasons. Making a collage of a safe place helps a lot of children in regards to relaxation. It can also be very helpful with children where there is abuse and/or domestic violence.
- I have stacks of magazines from which an individual can make a collage.
- If encouraging journaling, I give the individual a notebook and have them put the collage of their safe place on the cover.
- You can also do a collage of how they want to see themselves or other goals you are working towards.

Anger (OCD)

- Have children draw what makes them angry
- Draw safe ways to get/express their anger
- If you need to make it more fun, draw a volcano and in the volcano write what makes them angry.
- Also you can draw a bomb and on the fuse, write what makes them angry.
- Role play so children can practice what they can do when they get angry – purposefully role play situations where the child typically gets mad.
- Have the child draw up to four people in their life and what they do/look like when they are angry.

- Have the child draw where they feel their anger or what their anger looks like – make it go away by drawing over the picture such as covering it with a crayon.
- Use foam noodles – like from a pool. Have sword fights.

ADHD

- Impulsivity: How do you make Time Out Fun?
 - A short break to stop and think
 - In sports it is used to stop the action and allow the team to regroup then go back to playing. Usually teams use this when things are not going well.
- Example: Vince and Football
- Allowing children to have a fidget toy can be very useful. This can help to keep their hands busy and thus they focus better.
- Mouse Trap
- Run Yourself Ragged:



Depression and self-esteem

- Often children have self-esteem issues because they are being bullied or picked on in school.
 - Talk with children about where their feelings are and have them draw a picture of their heart with the feelings they have written in it.
 - Then talk to the child about how they have a shield. Not only can they hold that shield and see it in their mind which will protect them from the hurtful things others say and do – have the child draw the shield in session as well.

Trauma/PTSD (cont..)

- If play remains totally repetitive over time (8-10 times), intervene:
 - “Ask the child to make physical movement such as standing up, moving arms or taking deep breaths. Physical movement can free up emotional constriction.
 - Making verbal statements about the child’s posttraumatic play, suspending the self-absorption and rigidity of play.
 - Interrupting the sequence of play by asking the child to take a specific role, describing the perceptions and feelings of one of the players.
 - Manipulating the dolls, moving them around, and asking the child to respond to ‘what would happen in...’.
 - Encouraging the child to differentiate between the traumatic event and current reality in terms of safety and what has been learned.
 - Videotaping the posttraumatic play and watching the tape with the child, stopping it for discussion for what is observed (Gil, 1991, pg. 74).

- There needs to be a resolution.
 - Do not hesitate to take an active role.
 - Use guided imagery of deep relaxation exercises to help debrief.
- If the play seems totally unorganized, it may be too non-direct and need more structure.
- According to Perry and Hambrick (2008), in order for children who have experienced trauma to build trust and bond with you, often experiences need to be repeated – this can be done with music, dance, movement etc.
 - Perry, B. D. & Hambrick, E. P. (2008). The neurosequential model of therapeutics. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 17(3), 38-42.
- Other techniques include:
 - Therapist using a puppet and telling a story in which the main character experiences the same kind of traumatic event as the child.
 - Use material that relates. For example, a child that was raped in a park – you might have them color a picture of a park, play with dolls in a park scene, make a park in the sand tray etc.

Play Therapy with families and couples

- Drawings can help for many of the same reasons previously discussed.
- Drawings can be used as an assessment/evaluation tool as well as a therapeutic tool with families and couples.
- For the first drawing, have each family member do a free drawing – promotes an opportunity to introduce self to therapist and express self.
- Then have them each do a family drawing. This enables the therapist to see the differences in how each member perceives the family.

- **Ball Play**
For example, in a [group therapy session](#), a therapist might have a group take turns throwing a ball around, and anytime someone catches the ball they have to say something that makes them happy.
- **Plush Doll Play**
For example, the therapist might present the client with a few stuffed animals (or ask the client to bring their own) to help comfort the child during a therapy session.
- **Medical Play**
For example, a client who has just undergone a stressful medical procedure might do a play examination on one of their stuffed animals, so they can feel a sense of control.
- **Baby Doll Play**
For example, a therapist might use a baby doll to model positive, nurturing behaviors for the client, or might let the client play with the doll to see what the client's instincts are. If the client starts mistreating the doll, it is possible that the client is being mistreated by their own parents (though of course, it does not necessarily mean that).

- **Baby Bottle Play**
For example, a young client who has just had a new baby sibling enter their life might feel unhappy about their new position in the family. The client's parent can then play with a baby bottle as if the client was a baby again, so the client is less resentful of their new sibling.
- **Toy Telephone Play**
For example, the client and the therapist might each have a toy phone, and the therapist can ask therapy-related questions on the phone. The client might be more comfortable indirectly answering questions like this, and if they feel uncomfortable they can just hang up.
- **Magic Wand Play**
For example, the therapist might give the client a magic wand and tell them they can make three wishes. At least one of the wishes is likely to relate to a real-life problem the client has.
- **Bubble Play**
For example, the therapist might simply let the client run around blowing bubbles and popping them for stress relief reasons or to help a child bond with other children in a group session.

- **Block Play**
For example, the therapist might construct a wall of building blocks and allow the client to throw a ball to knock the blocks down. This can help the client release anger.
- **Balloon Play**
For example, the therapist might ask a group of children in a [group session](#) to keep a balloon up in the air for as long as possible, to foster bonding and to break the ice in a group session.
- **Bop Bag Play**
For example, the therapist might give the client a phone book, and ask them to tear pages out of the book, crumple them up, and throw them into a trash can. This can help the client understand how to "throw away" angry feelings.
- **Sensory Play**
For example, the therapist might let the client play with shaving cream by spreading it around, sculpting it, and even pretend shaving, so the client can creatively express themselves and feel more relaxed and in control.

• **Metaphors and Storytelling Techniques**

- **Concrete Play Metaphors**
For example, a therapist might present dozens of toys to the client, then ask them to pick out toys that represent family members. This can help the therapist see what the client thinks and feels about their family members.
- **Turtle Technique**
For example, a therapist might give a client a turtle puppet, and explain that when the turtle is upset about something it stops, goes into its shell, closes its eyes, and takes three deep breaths. The client can then play out this process with the turtle puppet, and this can help the client learn anger-management techniques.
- **Emotion Thermometer**
For example, the client might be presented with an "emotion thermometer" showing a range of emotions from 0 (with a smiling face) to 10 (with a frowning face) and asked to list events that make them feel like they are on different points on the thermometer. This might sound like, "What types of things make you feel like a smiling face? What about a frowning face? What about a medium face?"

- **Storytelling**
For example, the therapist might ask a client to tell a story starting with "Once upon a time". The story might reveal some of the client's fears and hopes, among other things.
- **Externalization Play**
For example, the client and therapist might work together to create a character that represents one of the client's problems, such as a dragon that represents the client's fear. The therapist can then ask questions about the problem without directly addressing the client's fear, by externalizing the problem to the dragon.
- **Bibliotherapy**
For example, the therapist might find a story or book that involves a problem similar to the client's problem, and that provides a solution to this problem. While reading this story with the client, the therapist might ask questions relating the story to the client's life, such as, "have you ever felt this way?"

• **Role-play Techniques**

- **Role-Play**
For example, the therapist and client might role-play a situation the client is anxious about, such as the first day of school, so that the child can work out what they feel anxious about and possibly realize they do not need to be anxious at all.
- **Costume Play**
For example, the therapist and client might pretend that the client is being crowned the new king or queen of a land. The therapist can then ask what the new king or queen wants to do with their power, to figure out what the client likes and dislikes.
- **Mask Play**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to make two collages (masks) out of magazines. One mask (the "outside mask") is how they think the world sees them, and one mask (the "inside mask") is how they see themselves. This can reveal a lot about how the client thinks of themselves and the world.

- **Superhero Play**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to draw a superhero with superpowers that the client would like to have. The therapist can then help the client figure out how their [personal strengths](#) can be as useful as these superpowers.
- **Puppet Play**
For example similar to the concrete play metaphors example, the therapist might present the client and the client's family with dozens of puppets, then ask the client and the client's family to each choose a puppet to represent them. The client and the client's family then tell a story using the puppets, and the therapist interviews each family member about the story then discusses the story with the whole group. This can reveal certain family dynamics that the client is unable or unwilling to directly discuss with the therapist.

- **Creative Arts Techniques**
- **Color Your Life**
For example, the therapist and client might work together to figure out which colors represent which feelings (such as blue for sad, red for angry, yellow for happy, etc.). The therapist can then ask the client to draw a timeline of their life, using the colors to represent feelings. The therapist can also ask the client to draw different aspects of their life, such as school or sports.
- **Clay Play**
For example, the therapist might give the client a ball of clay and let them do whatever they want with it. The client might simply use the clay as stress relief, or they might sculpt things that are important to them or troubling them that they can talk about with the therapist.
- **Free Drawings**
For example, the therapist might simply give the client paper and some crayons (or any drawing materials) and ask them to draw a picture. The therapist can then ask open-ended questions about the picture once it is completely done.
- **Trauma Drawings**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to draw a [traumatic experience](#) in the client's past, such as an earthquake. The client can then crumple up the paper and throw it away to feel some sense of control over the traumatic event.

- **Mandala Drawings** For example, the therapist might give the client a mandala template (some of which can be found [at http://www.mandala-4free.de/en/index.htm](http://www.mandala-4free.de/en/index.htm)) and ask the client to color it in. The client can then make their own mandala and color in it if they wish.
This can help foster creativity and relaxation.
- **Serial Drawings**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to draw a picture (nondirected) every session. After the picture is drawn, the therapist and client can talk about it, with the therapist not taking notes so it is clear they are present. These drawings over time might show the client's state of mind as the therapy process progresses.
- **Collage**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to collage a nightmare they have been having on the inside and outside of the box. The client can then play with the box to become less scared of it.

- **Painting**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to finger paint whatever they want, after which the therapist can ask the client to tell a story about the painting.
- **Dance/Movement Play**
For example, the therapist might have a client simply play with a hula hoop, so that they focus and relax, which might put them in a better state of mind for a therapy session.
- **Draw a Family**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to draw a picture of their family. Once the picture is drawn, the therapist can ask which drawing is which member of the client's family and discuss whatever the client wants to discuss about the drawing. The ways various family members are drawn can be revealing.
- **Family Sculpting**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to use clay to sculpt their family members, including the client themselves. Once each family member has a clay figure, the therapist might ask the client to place them in relationship to each other, which can show the therapist how close or far from each family member the client feels themselves to be.
- **Musical Play**
For example, the therapist might present the client with a number of toy instruments and simply ask the client to make up a song or play along with another song. This can help the client express themselves, [build self-esteem](#), and improve the therapist-client relationship.

• **Imagery and Fantasy Techniques**

- **Guided Imagery**
For example, a therapist might ask the client about a nightmare they have been having, then explain to the client that nightmares are like movies, and tell the client that they can change the nightmare if they do not like it. The therapist can then work with the client to figure out a happier ending for a nightmare, in an attempt to retrain the client's brain to feel more control.
- **The World Technique**
For example, the therapist might give the client a tray half-filled with sand, and dozens of toys, including people, fantasy figures, and scenery. The therapist then allows the client to build their own world without providing any guidance or judgment. The therapist then asks the client questions about the world, still without providing any guidance. The idea is that the world the client builds might involve themes the client deals with in real life so that the world can be an opportunity to work through some of these issues.
- **Dollhouse Play**
For example, the therapist might give the client a dollhouse and some dolls representing their family members. The therapist can then ask the client to model four different everyday scenarios in their real house: bedtime, dinnertime, playtime, and cleanup time, to figure out more of the client's family dynamics.

• **Adaptive Doll Play**

For example, the therapist might give the client a few dolls to represent themselves and their family members and ask them to play out a scenario that is similar to a real problem the client is having. The therapist can then help the client figure out ways the client can respond to these scenarios so that they have more positive outcomes.

- **Rosebush Fantasy Technique**
For example, the therapist might ask the client to close their eyes, imagine that they are a rosebush, and describe this rosebush to the therapist, including where it is, who cares for it, and any roots, thorns, or flowers it might have. The client can then draw the rosebush and tell its story to the therapist, at which point the therapist can ask which parts of the rosebush and its story the client identifies with. The therapist might find out that one of the rosebush's roots relates to a past experience the client had but was not yet ready to talk about in previous sessions.

• Family Relations Technique

For example, the therapist might put a number of mailboxes in front of the client, one for each family member and one for "Mr. Nobody". The therapist then gives the client "mail", which consists of strips of paper that read things like "loves me", "hates me", "protects me", "hurts me", and asks the client to put these pieces of mail in each appropriate mailbox (so if the client thinks their dad loves them, they would put a "loves me" paper in their dad's mailbox). This can help the therapist further understand family dynamics.

• Worry Dolls For example, the therapist might give the client a set of Guatemalan worry dolls or help the client make their own. The therapist can then ask the client to assign a worry to each of these dolls, put the dolls in a box, and leave the dolls in the therapist's office so that the dolls can worry about the client's issues instead of the client having to worry about them. In future sessions, the therapist can bring these dolls out one-by-one to discuss these worries and how the client is dealing with them.

• Tea Party Play

For example, the therapist might throw a tea party celebration for the client, to commemorate progress the client is making during therapy sessions or achievements the client has reached outside of therapy. This [positive reinforcement](#) can help raise the client's level of self-esteem and can help the relationship between the therapist and the client.

• Game Play Techniques

• Communication Games

For example, the therapist and client might play "The Talking, Feeling, and Doing Game". A turn of the game might look like this: the client draws a card that says "Make believe that something is happening that is scary. What is happening?" and if the client does what the card says, they get a chip. During the game, the therapist can see how the client reacts in certain situations and advise them on how to react in these situations.

• Find more <https://positivepsychology.com/communication-games-and-activities/>

• Self-Control Games

For example, the therapist and client might play "Simon Says", where the client has to do what the therapist says (such as jumping on one foot), but only if the therapist started their sentence with "Simon says...". This can promote paying attention and self-control, as the client has to pay attention to what the therapist is saying and only do what the therapist says in certain situations.

• **Strategy Games**

For example, the therapist might simply play a familiar strategy game with the client, such as chess, checkers, or pick up sticks. This can help the client focus and feel happier, as well as foster a bond between the client and therapist. These games can be especially useful during early therapy sessions if the client is uncomfortable with the therapist or the idea of therapy itself. Since they are strategy games, the client can also feel a level of control and mastery.

• **Cooperative Games**

For example, the therapist might play a cooperative game with the client, such as a game like Max the Cat, where players have to help a mouse, bird, and chipmunk get home before Max the cat eats them. Playing cooperative games like this can help the therapist-client relationship, and can also help the client build social skills, especially if they have trouble working together with their peers.

• **Chance Games**

For example, the therapist might play a game with the client that is mostly determined by chance, such as the board game Candy Land or the card games War and Go Fish. Like the other types of games mentioned above, these games are familiar and can help the client ease into a therapy session, as well as help the client build a relationship with their therapist. Since these games are mostly determined by chance, they also offer the client an opportunity to cope with unexpected losses that they could not have avoided and give therapists the opportunity to walk the client through these situations.

• **Squiggle Game**

For example, the therapist might close their eyes and draw a random squiggle on a piece of paper, then ask the client if the squiggle looks like anything or makes them think of anything. The client can then draw their own squiggle and ask the therapist if they think it looks like anything. The therapist and client take turns drawing random squiggles for each other to see if they can find anything in the squiggles. This game can help the client feel more comfortable in a therapy session, and can also work as a sort of Rorschach test for the therapist to find out more about how the client thinks.

• **Other Techniques**

• **Desensitization Play**

For example, a therapist might help a client work through their fear of the dark by desensitizing them to darkness. This might be accomplished by having the client and their parents play fun games at night in a gradually darker room so that by the end the client is still having fun despite being in the dark. This can show the client that there is nothing to be afraid of.

• **Laughter Play**

For example, the therapist and client might take turns trying to make each other laugh in any way they can (without touching each other). The client's parents can also play a tickling game with the client for the sole purpose of making the client laugh. Laughter causes lower levels of stress and can improve relationships, so either of these options are useful since an improved parent-child relationship and an improved client-therapist relationship are both beneficial.

- **Stress Inoculation Play**
For example, the therapist might have the client play out a future stress-causing situation, such as an upcoming class presentation. The client can use toys to work out what might happen during the presentation, and the client might realize that the situation is not as scary as it first seemed. The therapist can also offer coping strategies for the client based on the client's fears about the presentation.
- **Reenactment Play**
For example, the therapist might recreate a stressful event for the client, such as a car accident, using toys in the playroom. The client can then freely play with the toys in a nondirected manner to gain a sense of control over the situation and start losing some of those lingering feelings of trauma and fear. These recreations often need to happen multiple times over multiple sessions for optimal results.
- **Hide-and-Seek Play**
For example, a therapist might create hiding spaces in the playroom so they can play hide-and-seek with the client, and then act sad until they find the client, at which point they should react happily. This shows the client that the therapist cares for them and wants to find them and play with them. Of course, it is also beneficial simply by being a fun activity the therapist and client can bond over.

- **Magic Tricks**
For example, the therapist might ask the client if they want to see some magic, show them a magic trick, and then show the client how to do the magic trick themselves. This is a fun activity that can help the bond between the therapist and client. Showing the client how to do the trick themselves can also give the client a feeling of control and mastery, which can raise their levels of self-esteem.
- **Feeling Faces**
For example, the therapist might decorate their playroom walls with "feeling faces", or faces that demonstrate different feelings such as [happiness](#) or anger. The therapist can then start off the therapy session by asking the client to point to a face that they identify with at the time, which can give the therapy session some direction. They can also be helpful for clients to show how they are feeling throughout the session without having to use words.

- **Suitcase Playroom**
For example, a therapist might create a "suitcase playroom", which is simply a suitcase filled with the toys and materials necessary for play therapy. This is helpful for play therapists who do not have dedicated playrooms. The play therapist can then open up the suitcase to start each session and pack it up at the end of each session. This is not only practical for smaller therapy spaces, but also shows the client that the therapist cares for them since they are going out of their way to bring all these toys for the client.
- **Play Therapy Rituals**
For example, a therapist might start every session with the client in the same way, perhaps by saying hello, asking the client to remove their shoes, and then starting the squiggle game. This predictability can show the client that play therapy is a safe space for them and can raise their levels of self-esteem and feelings of control. Rituals can also take place at the end of each therapy session so that the client knows that every session will end with a free drawing.

• Some of these techniques are designed to help children get rid of their aggression, while others are meant to be escapist fantasy games. Other techniques on this list involve representational play, where children can detail their problems to the therapist without doing so explicitly. Some are simply meant to help children pay better attention to things around them. This wide variety of techniques underscores how valuable play therapy can be to all sorts of children since there is a technique for just about every type of play a child might prefer. These examples were all taken from Cangelosi & Schaeffer (2016), and there is plenty more information about these techniques in the book for anyone who is further interested.

• Useful and Fun Toys For Child-Centered Play Therapy

• Child-Centered Play Therapy (CCPT) is a type of play therapy most often used with young children, that involves nondirective play sessions where the child takes the lead and the main role of the therapist is to acknowledge how the child is feeling and what the child is doing, as well as ensure the child's safety (Swank et al., 2015). The main job of the therapist during CCPT is simply to supervise the child's playing and allow the child to express themselves however they please, rather than leading the therapy session. It is therefore important to have a wide variety of toys that appeal to a large range of children's playing styles.

• According to the Center for Play Therapy at the University of North Texas, toys for this type of play therapy should be durable, easy to use, and allow for creative expression of a wide range of feelings. These toys can be categorized as "real-life and nurturing" toys, "acting-out, aggressive, scary toys", and "creative expression and emotional release toys". Some of the toys they recommend include:

• Representative toys, like dolls, a bendable doll family, doll bed, clothes and accessories, pacifiers, nursing bottles, and doll furniture, hand puppets.

• Toys for a play kitchen or grocery store, like a fridge, a stove, a pitcher, pots and pans, dishes, plastic food, egg cartons, empty fruit and vegetable cans, rags or old towels, play money and cash register.

• Toys for pretend adventures, like toy soldiers and army equipment, toy guns, rubber knives, fireman's hats and other hats, masks, trucks, cars, airplanes, tractors, boats, zoo and farm animals.

• Toys for creative, non-directed expression, like play-doh, clay, pipe cleaners, paint, paintbrushes, easels, chalk, and construction paper.

The full list from the Center for Play Therapy at the University of North Texas can be viewed <https://cpt.unt.edu/about-play-therapy/recommended-toy-list>

• **Play Therapy and Games for Adults**

- While play therapy might sound like it is for children (since we usually associate playing with childhood), it is also extremely useful for adults. According to Schaeffer (2002):
- *“play is a wholistic experience in that it invites our total being into the process”.*
- Schaeffer goes on to say that play can raise our self-esteem, nurture stress release and allow insight into things going on in our lives. These are all qualities which are clearly helpful for adults along with children, yet most people still think of play as something for children. The idea of play therapy for adults is not to force adults to play, but to offer them the opportunity to work through feelings that they do not have the words for. Some types of play therapy which Schaeffer recommends for use with adults include dramatic role play and sand play.

- Play therapy has also been used successfully in a case study involving elderly adults in nursing homes (Ledyard, 1999). This study found that play therapy led to decreased **levels of depression** and increased levels of self-esteem, among other benefits. These benefits, of course, would be desirable for any population, furthering the idea that play therapy could be as useful for adults as it is for children. The idea of play therapy for children is that playing is the “language” of children, but this does not mean that adults would not be able to express difficult ideas while playing as well.

• **Types of Play Therapy for:**

• **Autism**

- Play therapy seems like a natural fit for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), especially those with communication issues. LEGO® therapy is one specific type of therapy that is often used for ASD, and it has been found to be very effective (Lindsay et al., 2017). LEGO® therapy involves three people: a supplier, a builder, and an engineer, with each person playing a specific role which encourages communication. The specific benefits of LEGO® therapy include improved:
 - *“social interactions, social initiations, adaptive socialization, play, communication skills, social competence, social confidence, ASD-specific behaviours, belonging, family relationships, coping, making new friends, independence, and inter-personal skills”.*
- Another play therapy intervention being used with children with ASD is Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). PCIT involves a Child-Directed Interaction (CDI), where “parents are taught and coached to ignore negative attention-seeking behaviors; to provide attention for positive behavior; and to refrain from criticism, commands, and questions” and a Parent-Directed Interaction (PDI), where “parents are coached to give clear, direct, and age-appropriate commands and to consistently reinforce child compliance” (Zlomke et al., 2017).

• **Trauma**

- Play therapy has increasingly been used with children who exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). One such case involves two children who were traumatized by the effects of Hurricane Katrina in the Southeastern United States in 2005 (Dugan et al., 2009). One of these children showed fear around water, such as during bath time or when thunderstorms would appear, and also refused to sleep by himself.
- In his first play therapy sessions, he exhibited themes of control, safety, and aggression. After a few sessions, he started showing nurturing themes in his play, as well as trauma re-creation where he "drowned" characters in the sandbox. By the eighth session, the child was able to enjoy himself at a water park without being scared of the water, and after a few additional sessions, he was able to sleep by himself again.
- The success of this play therapy can partially be attributed to the repetitious nature of the play, where the child was able to desensitize himself to the source of his trauma. The child also indicated a higher level of independence, perhaps due to the fact that he could choose how to work through his issues in play therapy. This type of repetitious play therapy is especially valuable for young children who might not be able to recover as well in a traditional [cognitive-behavioral therapy](#) program.

• **Anxiety**

- Child-Centered Play Therapy (CCPT) has been found to be effective in treating anxiety in six- to eight-year-old children (Stulmaker & Ray, 2015). Specifically, 12-16 individual half-hour sessions of CCPT over eight weeks reduced self-reported anxiety symptoms in children more than sessions where children just colored with a counselor. This is promising, since anxiety is "considered one of the most current and pervasive childhood disorders, with a poor prognosis if left untreated", and traditional methods of treating anxiety do not always work with children (Stulmaker & Ray, 2015).
- Cases of [childhood anxiety](#) highlight the importance of play therapy. By providing therapy in a lower-pressure environment where even young children can understand what is going on, play therapy can be an invaluable [resource for parents](#) and schools. The Stulmaker & Ray study also claims that play therapy can be a preventative factor in childhood anxiety, on top of being an available intervention for existing anxiety.

• **ADHD**

- Play therapy has been increasingly used in cases of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), since one of the challenges that can come with childhood ADHD is difficulty playing with other children (Wilkes-Gillan et al., 2014). One such study by Wilkes-Gillan et al. in 2014 focused on children who had already undergone a play therapy program with a licensed therapist. In this study, children underwent a seven-week program which involved parent-led home sessions and three clinical therapist-led play therapy sessions.
- The study showed evidence of increased prosocial behavior during playtime, especially in the clinical, therapist-led sessions. Parents also reported that seeing their children in the therapist-led sessions helped them lead the parent-led sessions. This study shows that there is a promising future for parent-led play therapy sessions for children who have ADHD.

- In Schools
- The Stulmaker & Ray (2015) study shows the value of play therapy in schools, especially since play therapy had a preventative effect on anxiety and worry levels. Another study showed that 26 sessions of Child-Centered Play Therapy (CCPT) led to increased academic achievement long-term in normal functioning first-grade students (Blanco et al., 2017). Interestingly, these improvements in academic achievement differed from child-to-child, with some improving more in math and others improving more in reading, for example. This indicates that play therapy has individualized effects on each child, which makes sense since the way a child plays is unique to them.
- Since one study focused on preventing anxiety symptoms and the other focused on academic achievement in normal functioning children, this indicates that play therapy can be extremely valuable for schools, since it can be applied to all children. Play therapy is also valuable for schools since it can easily be implemented, as most schools have school psychologists and all children enjoy playing in some way or another. Most importantly, play therapy is effective with extremely young children in a way that other therapies are not (Stulmaker & Ray, 2015).
- <https://positivepsychology.com/play-therapy/>

- Have couples and families use the emotions poster to help express feelings – positive and negative. Give them a copy of it to take home.
- Do scribble drawings and have them each make it into a picture. Next have the family do one together.
- All of these promote discussion.

Group Play Therapy

- Using Board Games:
 - Watch the dynamics
 - If you do not intervene if rules are broken or stretched, than you are sending the message that it is ok to cheat. However, if you do than you are policing which is not therapeutic either.
 - Use games where no one wins but everyone plays.
 - Use the cards from Talking, Feeling and Doing game without the board.

Group Play Therapy

- Charades
 - No teams and no points
 - One child acts something out
 - Write what you think it is on a piece of paper or guess and discuss
 - Assign things that the children can relate to such as (Bellinson, 2002):
 - You are taking a test and the teacher calls your name and claims you were cheating
 - You won the lottery
 - You are walking down the street when a stranger walks up to you and says "hello"

Groups

- Drawings can be great methods for communication in the group treatment setting.
- Often drawing is an easier means of communication for adults in a group setting.
- Can be used individually or as teams.
- When beginning a group, self-portraits can be a great way to do introductions.
- A unique tool is to have each member add to a drawing, pass it, add to it and pass it. Another is a group mural. All helps to develop group cohesiveness.
- The younger the group members, the more detailed the instructions need to be.

Groups

- Using emotion cards: put on various pieces of paper, different difficult situations – personalize them to the group. Have members randomly select a situation. Then they have to pick the emotion card(s) that correspond to the feelings they would have if in that situation. You can do this by having them draw the feelings as well. The therapist can give a situation to the group as whole, too.
- Draw an emotion card (unseen) and make up a story that could evoke that emotion. You can also have group members share a true personal story for that emotion.
- Use the emotions cards and play telephone except use facial expressions.
- Emotions charades is great for social skills groups.

The Play Therapy Space

- There are no hard and fast rules to setting up a play therapy space. However, you want the child to have choices, for it to be comfortable and to appear fun.
- What a child selects to play with can be very telling. Here is a list of toys and perceived meanings similar to dream interpretation:
 - Airplane = escape, distance, speed, freedom
 - Animals (wild) = aggression, fear, survival, power, strength
 - Animals (domestic) = protection, family, compliance, dependency
 - Baby bottle = regression, nurturing, dependency, babies, siblings
 - Ball = interaction, relationships, trust, competition
 - Binoculars = perspective, finding, searching, intimacy

- Blanket = regression, security, protection, boundaries
- Blocks = defenses, boundaries, construction, limits, rigidity, closure, structure, barriers, protection
- Boats = support, balance, security, balance
- Books = secrets, past, future, present, identity, knowledge
- Box = secret, hidden, control, boundaries, containment, gift
- Broken toy= loss, defeat, adjustment
- Camera = evidence, change, memory, knowledge
- Cars = mobility, power, escape, conflict, safety, protection, travel, defense
- Chalk/Dry Board = environment, world, creation, emotional expression, integration, creativity
- Clay = aggression, manipulation, creation, self-esteem, expression, pressure

- Costumes = communication, fantasy, impulses, disguise
 - Gloves = avoiding, distance, safety, control
 - Hats = identity, expectations, fantasy, power, denial
 - Masks = relationships, communication, anonymity, fantasy, impulses
 - Sunglasses = hiding, avoidant, distant, safety
 - Wigs = relationships, communication, anonymity, fantasy, impulses, disguise
- Dinosaurs = past, history, death, power, extinction, fear, survival, loss
- Doctor's Kit = healing, repair, respect, power, life/death, pain, body image, crisis, change
 - Syringe = intrusion, violation, pain, healing, fear, contact
 - Stethoscope = internal feelings, validation, undisclosed
 - Thermometer = internal feelings, need for help, crisis
 - Blood Pressure = internal issues, anger, state of mind, internalized feelings, need for change
 - Operation = crisis, intervention, intrusion, risk, control, vulnerability, healing

- Dishes/Cooking = nurturing, security, attention, neglect
- Dolls = self-identity, regression, sibling, competition, friendship, closeness
- Family Figures = authority, power, nurturing, protection, perpetrator, competition
 - Male = issues with father, modeling, male figures (teacher, brother etc.)
 - Female = Issues with mother, modeling, female figures (sister, aunt, teacher etc.)
 - Girl = self, sister, identity, image, friend, peer, social
 - Boy = self, brother, identity, image, friend, social
 - Baby = nurturing, sibling, competition, regression, needs, past
- Finger Paints = contact, involvement, impact, grounding, regression, security
- Flashlight = control, secrecy, fear, searching, dependency
- Games = control of life, competition, compliance, structure, resistance, change, competency, cooperation
- Grooming = self-image, self-concept, change, thoughts, caring

- Guns = aggression, control, anger, hostility, power, death, pain, protection, boundaries
- Keys = secret, control, containment, unknown, boundaries
- Kitchen Set = home, nurturing, care, neglect, sibling conflict, family
- Knife = utensil, aggression, power, defense, protection, sexual, pain
- Lights = control, power, secret, escape, hiding, denial, change
- Magic Wand/Crystal Ball = fantasy, wishes, goals, change, desire, future
- Mirror = self-image, self-concept, memories, past, change, thoughts, validation
- Models = consistency, completion, motivation, focus, persistence, goal, validation
- Money/Poker Chips = security, power, control, loss, cheated
- Monster Figure = fear, secretive, power, fantasy, aggression, conflict, revenge, attack
- Musical Instruments = self-expression, internal, communication, creativity, contact
- Paints = distance, expression, inaccessible needs, view of world

- Pillow = bed, safety, territory, throne, parent, aggression, relaxation
- Playing Cards = money, control, power, secret, spontaneity
- Puppets = relationship, communication, anonymity, fantasy, impulses, disguise
- Puzzles = problem solving, decisions, completion, accomplishment, integration, solving
- Sand = construction, destruction, environment, community, feelings, change, creativity
- Bo Bo Doll = aggression, conflict, perpetrator, power, revenge
- Shark = aggression, fear, perpetrator, power
- Soldier = conflict, attack, aggression, force, life/death, struggle
- Sword = aggression, distance, conflict, defense, protection, power
- Tape Recorder = self, relationship, evidence, existence, validation, consistency, control, observation
- Teddy Bear = warmth, nurturing, security, companionship, self, protection

- Telephone = communication, distance, safety, control, power, disconnect
- Tinker Toys/Legos = structure, construction, completion, closure, goal attainment
- Tools = resources, change, construction, security, authority, confidence, decisions, problem-solving
- Water = flexibility, freedom, enuresis, anxiety, sadness, depth, internal, regression, unconscious.

AREAS OF CAUTION!!

- Be prepared to work with the family/parents. You need to assess their function and dysfunction. Especially in cases of abuse, there will be individual, family, couples etc. work that is likely needed.
- With children you want to work with any other possible resources and people in the child's life. This promotes success. Work with the school, grandparents, foster parents, Child Protective Services, pediatrician etc.
- Have realistic goals especially for lower functioning families.
- Remember the environment that they child lives in. If you are working with a child to learn to speak up for themselves knowing that this will result in punishment at home, you are setting the child up for failure.
- Sometimes coping skills for dealing with the dysfunctional family is the most vital thing you can help a child learn.

AREAS OF CAUTION!!

- Acting out and Sexualized behaviors
 - Be careful using touch – you can be miscommunicating or making the child uncomfortable
 - Talking/using emotions cards can be very useful in order to help the child to learn to associate proper feelings with experiences.
- Selecting the right medium
 - For some children with tactile issues, some mediums such as play dough and finger painting can be too stressful
- Countertransference:
 - Always be aware of our feelings. It is common for children to evoke strong responses in us as we watch them suffer perhaps because of talking to police etc.
 - Watch so that no behaviors arise outside the therapeutic boundaries. With abused children especially, boundaries as very important. We need to make sure to strictly adhere to them no matter how much a child may unknowingly pull on our heart strings.

AREAS OF CAUTION!!

- Children who have been abused:
 - "Any plan for the treatment of child abuse must be designed to create a safe environment for the child and to modify the potentiating factors underlying the maltreatment...An effective treatment program must deal specifically with the parental abuse-proneness, the characteristics of the child that make him vulnerable, and the environmental stress that triggers the abusive interaction" (Green, 1988, pg. 859).
 - When the child is still living with the abuser, it is good to assess what triggers the abuse and work with the parents in order to address these.
 - If the parents are working with their own therapist, collaborate with that therapist.
 - Be prepared to provide other resources and information from shelters and safe houses to other resources for families experiencing abuse.

AREAS OF CAUTION!!

- Take care of yourself. It is so important to practice good self-care. Working with children involves a great many elements and can be very draining. Make sure to take care of you so that you are at your best when taking care of others.

Resources

- Association for Play Therapy
 - <http://www.a4pt.org/>
- The Child Anxiety Network
 - www.childanxiety.net
- Children's Center for OCD and Anxiety
 - www.childocdandanxiety.org
- National Institute of Mental Health
 - Bethesda, MD
 - (301)496-4812
 - www.nimh.gov

Resources

- Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy
 - New York, NY
 - (212)647-1890 or 800-685-AAABT
 - mailback@aabt.org
 - www.aabt.org/aabt
- American Psychological Association
 - Washington, DC
 - (202)336-5700
 - Public.affairs@apa.org
 - www.apa.org
- American Psychiatric Association
 - Washington, DC
 - (202)682-6000
 - mbennett@psych.org

i want more!

If your brain is primed for learning more, here are some helpful resources:

- Arrowsmith-Young, Barbara (2012). *The Woman Who Changed Her Brain: And Other Inspiring Stories of Pioneering Brain Transformation*.
- Barkley, Russell (2012). *Executive Functions: What They Are, How They Work, and Why They Evolved*.
- Bialer, Doreit & Miller, Lucy Jane (2011). *No Longer A SECRET: Unique Common Sense Strategies for Children with Sensory or Motor Challenges*.
- Biel, Lindsay and Peske, Nancy (2009). *Raising a Sensory Smart Child: The Definitive Handbook for Helping Your Child with Sensory Processing Issues*.
- Buzan, T., & Buzan, B. (2010). *The Mind Map book: Unlock your creativity, boost your memory, change your life*.
- Campbell, Don & Doman, Alex (2012). *Healing at the Speed of Sound: How What We Hear Transforms Our Brains and Our Lives*.
- Das, J.P & Naglieri, Jack (1994). *Assessment of Cognitive Processes: The PASS Theory of Intelligence*.
- Dawson, Peg (2009). *Smart but Scattered: The Revolutionary "Executive Skills" Approach to Helping Kids Reach Their Potential*.
- Dawson, Peg (2010). *Executive Skills in Children and Adolescents, Second Edition: A Practical Guide to Assessment and Intervention*.
- Eaton, Howard (2010). *Brain School*.
- Eide, Brock & Eide Fernette (2012). *The Dyslexic Advantage: Unlocking the Hidden Potential of the Dyslexic Brain*.
- Greene, Ross (2010). *The Explosive Child: A New Approach for Understanding and Parenting Easily Frustrated, Chronically Inflexible Children*.
- Ito, Masao (2011). *The Cerebellum: Brain for an Implicit Self*.
- Kozlil, Leonard & Budding, Deborah (2008). *Subcortical Structures and Cognition: Implications for neuropsychological assessment*.
- Medina, John (2009). *Brain Rules: 12 Principles for surviving and thriving at work, home, and school*.
- Meltzer, Lynn (2010). *Promoting Executive Function in the Classroom*.
- Reno, Tosca (2011). *Just The Rules: How to eat right*.
- Siegel, Dan (2012). *The Whole Brain Child*.
- Webb, James et al (2009). *Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnosis of Gifted Children and Adults*.

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Books

- Axline, V.A. (1981). *Play Therapy: The Groundbreaking Book That Has Become a Vital Tool in the Growth and Development of Children*. New York, NY: Ballantine.
- Crenshaw, D.A., Stewart, A.L. (Eds.) (2016). *Play Therapy: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Kenney, L., Comizio, R. (2016). *70 Play Activities for Better Thinking, Self-Regulation, Learning & Behavior*. Eau Claire, WI: PESI Publishing & Media.
- Mullen, J.A., Rickli, J.M. (2013). *Child-Centered Play Therapy Workbook: A Self-Directed Guide for Professionals*. Research Press. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Nemiroff, M.A. (1990). *A Child's First Book about Play Therapy*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association (APA).

• THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

• I truly hope that you have found this presentation informative and useful. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

• Sincerely,
• Christine

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