



# SAND TRAY NEWS

SAND TRAY TRAINING INSTITUTE OF NEW MEXICO

Spring 2010

Corrales, New Mexico

## Finding Our Way in Sand, Art, and Clay

A therapeutic environment that is rich with unformed materials, such as sand and miniatures, clay, paint, paper and pens, is often an invitation to clients to create something. The urge within to create form from the formless, giving expression to the wordless depths of our minds, is powerful. We see it in children when they come into therapy. Often, their hands are already in the sand before we can even say anything. Or at least, they are looking longingly at anything that seems like it could be formed into something other than what it already is. What part of our mind craves this kind of expression? And why are these materials such perfect media?

I once worked with a twelve-year-old boy, Jeffrey, who played intensely and creatively in the sand tray. He could easily form a scene from the miniatures and sand and then tell an imaginative story. Knowing his family history, and getting a

sense of his struggle to deal with his mother's life-threatening illness, I could see that his story themes were consistent with his actual situation. After working productively for several months in the sand tray, he noticed the clay area in my office, and asked if he could use it. The inexpensive natural gray clay that I had purchased at a pottery supply store was new to Jeffrey. His initial attempts were somewhat awkward, but he soon began working vigorously with the clay, punching it, slapping it on the table, stabbing and slicing, rolling it out, only to smash it together again into a big heap. At the beginning of each session, he worked the clay like this for about ten minutes, pouring all his energy into it, and then slowly he would begin to form objects. The first object he made was a giant ant (about 8 inches long) and then a pudgy little dog. After several more ses-

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### Brain-Wise Therapy Conference: Healing Experiences with Sandplay, Art, and Clay

**Bonnie Badenoch, PhD, LMFT and  
Theresa Kestly, PhD**

**Daytona Beach, Florida May 6-7, 2010  
Laguna Beach, California November 18-19, 2010**



Join us on either east or west coast for this conference on using sandplay, art, and clay for therapeutic healing purposes. Bonnie Badenoch, author of *Being a Brain-wise Therapist: Practical Guide to Interpersonal Neurobiology*, and Theresa Kestly, director of the Sand Tray Training Institute of New Mexico, combine their expertise to

present core principles of interpersonal neurobiology in therapeutic practice. Using clay and art materials, participants will explore how the implicit and explicit memory systems impact decisions in sandplay therapy with both children and adults. Case studies, hands-on experiences, dialogue, and self-reflection will help to make this learning personal, more concrete, and applicable to the every day challenges of clinical practice.

### Bonnie Badenoch Returns to New Mexico for More Brain-Wise Training and Case Consultation

Bonnie Badenoch, Ph.D. is returning to New Mexico in April to offer a case consultation day for clinicians, a workshop on attunement and attachment, and a co-presentation with Theresa Kestly, Ph.D. on healing experiences with sandplay, art, and clay. As many of you know, Bonnie presented compelling material on "Being a Brain-Wise Therapist" last October at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque. The conference was well attended, and the response from participants highly positive. We are delighted that Dr. Badenoch could come back for some smaller in-depth workshops in Corrales. The two small workshops are almost full, and we will soon be creating a waiting list. There is still space in the group consultation day on April 5, 2010 in Corrales, New Mexico. The group will be limited to 12 people, and you can get more details on our website: [www.sandtraytraining.com](http://www.sandtraytraining.com). Log on to the website, and then click on the "Bonnie Badenoch Training" page for description and fees.

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sions, he began to form grotesque monsters, aliens, and demons. Some of the images were frightening, even sickening, but Jeffrey seemed deeply satisfied with the process and his creations.

Meanwhile, any attempt on my part to engage him in conversation about how it was for him to be with his seriously ill mother was met with shoulder shrugging, an unfeeling expression, or some comment that everything was fine and it did not bother him that much. He really needed to display strength. His clay figures became increasingly expressive, however, as he moved from the grotesque images into more nurturing and energizing images. In one session, he made a plate of scrambled eggs with knife, fork and spoon, followed several weeks later with an automobile at a gas pump, filling up with fuel. After Jeffrey worked like this for several months in the clay, we finished therapy because his parents reported significant improvement both at home and at school.

Although I continued gently to test Jeffrey's willingness to talk about his mother's illness, he could not speak directly of his own deep emotions related to the abandonment that he likely experienced during her year-long course of treatment when she was physically unable to engage with the family. It was much easier for him to let the sand tray characters speak and act for him, and to vent his rage onto the clay as he punched, slapped, and shaped it into form.

While sitting with Jeffrey, it was helpful for me to remember from a neuroscience perspective how painful and frightening memories have an implicit aspect that is held in and expressed through the body, even when these memories are also explicitly, consciously known. This reminds me how important it is to make room for right brain processing through physical and symbolic activities, which are the language of that hemisphere. Even when these memories aren't processed with words, these releasing activities build connections between the limbic region where the pain is stored and the middle prefrontal circuits that provide regulation and comfort for the experience. With this in mind, I could better imagine Jeffrey's right hemisphere mapping the bodily expression of his anger and fear as he vigorously manipulated the clay. Neuroscience also tells us that these same regulating circuits are



strengthened when these activities take place with another person who is attuned. This helped me support him empathically and mindfully as I remembered how important it was to hold his energy, both positive and negative, with equanimity. I could be openly present to the grotesque monsters as well as the nurturing plate of scrambled eggs.

During the course of therapy, one of my favorite quotes by Carl Jung (1916/58) came to mind several times as I watched Jeffrey's hands manipulate the clay:

“Often it is necessary to clarify a vague content by giving it a visible form. This can be done by drawing,

painting or modeling. Often the hands know how to solve a riddle with which the intellect has wrestled in vain.”

It seemed that Jeffrey really needed to make visible and tangible in the clay his feelings of rage from his experience of abandonment. Yet, he needed to stay strong and socially acceptable in his family through verbal denial of his feelings. Unfortunately, the denial worked only to a point. Jeffrey would hold the feelings inside as long as he could, and then he would explode, causing more upset in the family. A riddle of sorts, it was a challenging dilemma for Jeffrey. He could not resolve the problem with words, but somehow his hands knew what to do with the clay. In the context of current neuroscience, the Jungian quote took on new meaning for me in terms of the "vague content" of implicit memories and non-verbal right hemisphere processing. It underscores the wisdom of including modalities in therapy that encourage clients to stay in their right hemispheres when they need to process feelings or integrate the implicit aspect of memories. Remembering the quote also helps me stay steady when I sense myself swimming in the waters of implicit memories that clients so often bring into therapy.

What I am learning from current neuroscience is just how natural and healthy this urge to create form from the formless is, clarifying vague content and releasing energies trapped in dissociated neural nets. Once these constraints are released, the brain's constant intrinsic push toward integration is free to pursue its natural path. I am finding that when I make nonverbal modalities available in therapy, it is vital to be present and open to the energetic direction the client brings. Sometimes the situation requires me to be quite still, and sometimes it requires me to actively engage. Either way, or anywhere along the continuum between these two responses, it is most helpful if I can be fully present. It is an opportunity for me to practice

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mindfulness in the deepest sense. My intention to witness Jeffrey's push toward wholeness with acceptance and equanimity activated parallel neural circuitry in his brain. The resonance circuits that tie us together mean that my calm state of mind supported his steadiness through even the most difficult parts of the process. In this often-wordless communication of safety, he viscerally experienced that whatever he created, beautiful or grotesque, I would remain present. That realization freed

his creative urge to bring form to the formless (or in neuroscience terms, the implicit to the explicit).

Sometimes it is a little scary when images emerge that we don't understand, or when the images created in the art-making process touch our own implicit memories. However, if we are able to stay in a mindful state, with our limbic and middle prefrontal circuits well connected, we will be able to hold these momentary upsets within ourselves and remain steady with our clients.

#### More Neuroscience Detail

For further study of the neuroscience terminology and concepts that I have used here in this brief article, the following references may be helpful. I am personally grateful for the rapid development of interpersonal neurobiology over the last decade because it has opened a new vista in my work with clients.

Theresa Kestly, Ph.D.



**BRAIN-WISE THERAPY CONFERENCE:**  
**Healing Experiences**  
**with Sandplay, Art, and Clay**  
**Bonnie Badenoch, PhD, LMFT**  
**and Theresa Kestly, PhD**  
**Daytona Beach, Florida - May 6-7, 2010**  
**Laguna Beach, California - November 18-19, 2010**

**Conference Description:** In this conference, we will have a conversation about how the principles of interpersonal neurobiology impact the play therapy relationship, beginning with some basic brain science that is fundamental to this specific relationship. Then we will plunge into the profound world of sandplay, art and clay, discovering how understanding the neuroscience that supports these experiential paths can reduce suffering while deepening the healing experience. We will use clay and art materials to gain a deeper understanding of how the implicit and explicit memory systems impact our play therapy decisions, moment by moment, as we work with clients of all ages and diagnoses. On this foundation, we can begin to bring the brain awareness into the play therapy room, in practical ways that strengthen emotional balance and foster hope for both client and therapist. We will use self-reflection, conversation, and case studies to make this learning more concrete as we discuss applications for play therapy. At the end of the two days, you may find that one of the most surprising outcomes of encountering this deep science is a remarkable increase in compassion for self and others.

**Conference Goals:** The conference will help participants to:

- Apply the knowledge of basic brain structure and function as well as the processes of early brain development to play therapy practice.
- Apply the understanding of implicit, explicit, and autobiographical memory with clients as they use art, clay, and sandplay therapy materials.
- Understand how to foster neuroplasticity in play therapy.
- Learn how to integrate mindfulness into play therapy practice.
- Apply the principles of interpersonal neurobiology to play therapy.

**Conference Fees:**

\$250 Early Tuition, postmarked 30 days in advance  
 \$270 Regular Tuition  
 \$230/\$250 Student Discount (with proof of full-time status)

**Registration:** See registration form, page 5

#### References

- Badenoch, B. (2008). *Being a brain-wise therapist: A practical guide to interpersonal neurobiology*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Cozolino, L. (in press). *The Neuroscience of Psychotherapy*, 2nd Ed. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Jung, C. G. (1916/58). *The transcendent function. Collected works, Vol. 8*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Siegel, D.J. (1999). *The developing mind: Toward a neurobiology of interpersonal experience*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Siegel, D.J. & Hartzell, M. (2003). *Parenting from the inside out*. New York: Penguin Putnam.
- Siegel, D.J. (2007). *The mindful brain: Reflection and attunement in the cultivation of well-being*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Siegel, D.J. (2010). *Mindsight: The new science of personal transformation*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Siegel, D.J. (in press). *The mindful therapist: A clinician's guide to mindsight and neural integration*.

#### Photo Note:

The adolescent photographed for this newsletter is not a patient. His parents gave permission to use the photographs to represent the process of working with nonverbal modalities in therapy.



## Conference Presenters

**Bonnie Badenoch, PhD, LMFT** is an in-the-trenches therapist, supervisor, teacher and author who has spent the last five years integrating the discoveries of neuroscience into the art of therapy. She co-founded the Center for Hope and Healing (CHH) in Irvine, California in 1991, and in 2004, joined Daniel Siegel's interpersonal neurobiology study group, subsequently becoming one of the founders of the nonprofit organization, Global Association for Interpersonal Neurobiology Studies (GAINS). Out of this study, combined with her 19 years of working with survivors of trauma and attachment struggles, came her book, *Being a Brain-Wise Therapist: A Practical Guide to Interpersonal Neurobiology*, published in 2008. Bonnie has a gift for translating the complexities of brain science into words and examples that allow people to internalize the principles so they can use them in the counseling room. Her article, "Brain to Brain: Applying the Wisdom of Neuroscience in Your Practice," is featured in the Sept/Oct 2008 issue of *Psychotherapy Networker*, and she presented Being a Brain-Wise Therapist at the March 2009 Psychotherapy Networker Conference.

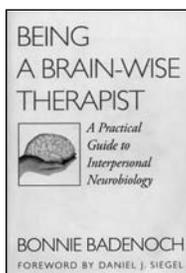


**Theresa Kestly, PhD** is a psychologist, educator, consultant, and a registered play therapist/supervisor with the Association for Play Therapy. She is an international presenter, and she maintains a private practice with specialties in play therapy and sand tray therapy in Corrales, New Mexico working with children, adults, families, couples and small groups. Theresa served as a senior staff psychologist at the Albuquerque Family and Child Guidance Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico where she specialized in child, adolescent and family therapy, consultations with the Indian Health Service, and consultations with the Albuquerque Public Schools. She supervised psychology, counseling and psychiatry trainees as an adjunct faculty member at the University of New Mexico, and she served as the first president of the New Mexico Association for Play Therapy. Theresa is the founder and director of the Sand Tray Training Institute of New Mexico where she provides large-group seminars and small-group intensive training for psychotherapists in child and adult sand tray therapy.



### Donna Hanna-Chase, MA Offers New Workshop in Laguna Beach

Check our website for details on Donna's new workshop, "Integrating Sandplay and Art Making." Donna is a board-certified registered art therapist with in-depth experience in sandplay. This hands-on workshop will take place at the Aliso Creek Inn on November 6-7, 2010.



If you have not already read Bonnie's book on being a brain-wise therapist, give yourself a treat and settle in for a poetic description of the practical applications of interpersonal neurobiology in clinical practice. It is definitely a 5-star book, and it is an important resource for every therapist who is serious about incorporating the rapidly developing neuroscience of the last decade. Dr. Daniel Siegel sums it up accurately in the introduction to her book:

**"Being a Brain-Wise Therapist is filled with the wisdom of a seasoned front-line therapist who writes like a poet and understands science as if she were a full-time academician."**

— Daniel Siegel, M.D.

## Registration Information

**Early Fee:** Must be postmarked 30 days prior to conference.

**Full-Time Student Discount:** Deduct \$20.00 from fee for each 2-day training. Send proof of full-time status (12 or more units) with your registration. There is no student fee for the consultation day with Bonnie Badenoch, April 5, May 5 or November 17, 2010.

**Registration Fee:** Includes continental breakfast, refreshments, instructional handouts, and certificates (except for psychologists). Psychologists may order a certificate at the conference site for a \$10 fee (Co-sponsor is an APA approved provider). In the unlikely event of conference cancellation only the paid registration fee will be refunded.

**Confirmation:** An email confirmation letter will be sent to you with information and directions to the workshop or conference.

**Refunds:** Registration fees are refundable (less a \$40.00 administrative fee) if written notice is post-marked no later than 30 days before the conference. Refunds require a minimum 6-week processing time. Registrants may transfer/sell their enrollment to another qualified person at any time. Transfer fee is \$40.00. The fee for the Bonnie Badenoch consultation day on April 5, May 5 or November 17, 2010 is nonrefundable.

## Two Ways to Register

-  By telephone: 505-898-1177  
VISA/MC
-  Mail completed registration form and payment to:  
Sand Tray Training Institute,  
PO Box 800, Corrales, NM 87048

## CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

The Sand Tray Training Institute of New Mexico provides continuing education credits for most mental health professionals in New Mexico, Florida and California. At the national level, we are an approved provider for the **National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)** and the **Association for Play Therapy (APT)**. You can find specific details on our website: [www.sandtraytraining.com](http://www.sandtraytraining.com).

To obtain detailed descriptions of topic workshops or a current schedule:  
(505) 898-1177 ■ [www.sandtraytraining.com](http://www.sandtraytraining.com) ■ e-mail: [sandtray@comcast.net](mailto:sandtray@comcast.net)



# TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR SAND TRAY THERAPY

## Conference and Workshop Registration Form

2010 Training Schedule (Revised February 5, 2010)

Schedule Updates and Registration Details: [www.sandtraytraining.com](http://www.sandtraytraining.com)

Information: [sandtray@comcast.net](mailto:sandtray@comcast.net) 505-898-1177

Name (as you want it on certificate, including title and/or degrees):		
Street or PO Box:		
City:	State:	ZIP:
Email:	Work Phone:	
Home Phone:	Cell Phone:	

### TO REGISTER

- (1) Circle Workshops and/or Conference You Want by Location & Date (2) Circle Corresponding Fees.  
 (3) Verify Space Available: 505-898-1177 or [sandtray@comcast.net](mailto:sandtray@comcast.net)

### 2010 CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOPS

Circle Corresponding Fee

CORE & TOPIC WORKSHOPS (See Website for Descriptions)	CA	FL	NM	Early Fee Postmarked 30 days in advance.	Regular Fee
	Laguna	Daytona	Corrales		
Level 1	November 8-9	May 10-11	April 14-15 September 15-16	\$250	\$270
Level 2	November 11-12	May 12-13	April 17-18 September 18-19	\$250	\$270
Level 3	November 29-30	May 19-20	September 22-23	\$250	\$270
Level 4	December 1-2	May 22-23	September 25-26	\$250	\$270
Level 5			October 28-29	\$250	\$270
Level 6			October 21-24	\$500	\$540
Level 7		May 17-18	TBA 2011	\$250	\$270
Level 8			TBA 2011	\$250	\$270
Level 9			TBA 2011	\$250	\$270
Level 10			April 22-23	\$250	\$270
Sandplay & Art - D Hanna-Chase	November 6-7			\$250	\$270
Brain-Wise Workshop - B Badenoch			April 6-7	\$280	\$300
Brain-Wise Workshop B Badenoch and T Kestly			April 9-10	\$280	\$300
Brain-Wise Conference B Badenoch and T Kestly	November 18-19	May 6-7		\$250	\$270
Group Consultation - B Badenoch*	November 17	May 5	April 5	\$200*	\$250*
Sandplay & Spirit			TBA 2011	\$250	\$270
School & Clinic Groups			TBA 2011	\$250	\$270
Storytelling, Play & Sand			TBA 2011	\$250	\$270
Group Consultation or Therapy			see brochure or website	see brochure or website	

Confirmation of registration will be sent by e-mail.

Student Discount: [www.sandtraytraining.com](http://www.sandtraytraining.com)

\*Note: Consultation Group - B Badenoch (Limit: 12 participants)

Payment ONLY for Consultation Group: Make check out to Bonnie Badenoch and mail to Sand Tray Training (address below) - no credit cards, no refunds. All other payments to Sand Tray Training.

### TOTAL FEES

### Payment Amount and Method

\$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Check Payable to: Sand Tray Training	MAIL TO: Sand Tray Training PO Box 800 Corrales, NM 87048
\$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Master Card	
Credit Card #:	Expiration Date: _____ / _____
Verification #: (3-digit code on back): _____	Card Holder's Name:
Signature:	Card Billing ZIP:

California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBSE Provider #PCE 2942); Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling (Provider Number: #50-1741 - Exp. 3/2011); the National Board for Certified Counselors, NBCC (#5972) and the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners (#CS5455); APT Approved Provider 99-052.



# SAND TRAY

## TRAINING INSTITUTE OF NEW MEXICO

P.O. Box 800 • Corrales, New Mexico 87048  
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*If you receive more than one copy of this newsletter, please give one to a friend.*

### INSIDE

- Earn Play Therapy CEUs
- Other CEU Approvals — See Inside
- Brain-Wise Therapy Conference in Laguna and Daytona
- Donna Hanna-Chase — New Workshop in Laguna Beach
- Registration Form
- Finding Our Way in Sand, Art, and Clay

Current Occupant or

## Bonnie Badenoch and Theresa Kestly Present Brain-Wise Therapy Conference at Daytona Beach and Laguna Beach



*Daytona Beach Resort and Conference Center*



*Daytona Beach*

The Brain-Wise Therapy Conference with Bonnie Badenoch, Ph.D. and Theresa Kestly, Ph.D. will take place at the Daytona Beach Resort and Conference Center on May 6-7, 2010 and then again at the Aliso Creek Inn in Laguna Beach on November 18-19, 2010. At both hotels, we have reserved a block of rooms with special conference rates if reserved 30 days in advance. Call 505-898-1177, or log on to our website, [www.sandtraytraining.com](http://www.sandtraytraining.com), and then click on either the Daytona Beach page or the Laguna Beach page for details, including conference location, fee, and room rates. The conference begins at 9:00 a.m. each day and finishes at 5:00 p.m. allowing plenty of time for walking on the beach and playing in the sand.



*Aliso Beach, Near the Aliso Creek Inn in South Laguna*



*Aliso Creek Inn Conference Center*