

Exploring the application of dialectical logic and imagery experience of Chinese traditional culture in the process of localising sandplay practice

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Abstract: *Using the idea of dialectical logic of Chinese traditional culture to explore the whole process of localized practice of sandplay technology, we start from three dimensions, namely, the setting of the sandplay room, the establishment and development of the consultation relationship, and the production and interpretation of the work, and argue that the dialectical logic of Chinese traditional culture in the process of localized practice of sandplay technology can better explore the inner world of the visitor in terms of imagery experience, and then guide The aim is to "please oneself and help others to help themselves".*

Keywords: *sandplay; imagery experience; traditional culture; localisation*

Sandplay is a Western psychotherapeutic technique based on the basic theory of Jungian analytical psychology and the philosophical ideas of traditional Chinese culture, and its playfulness has been widely welcomed by counselling clients, especially child visitors, and is increasingly used by counsellors in localised therapy. The author conducts a series of research and discussion on the relationship between traditional dialectical logic and imaginative experience in sandplay therapy techniques [1].

1. The concept of sand tray game and the introduction of imagery experience

As a simple and effective method of psychological counselling and therapy, sandplay therapy (abbreviated as sandplay, also translated as box court therapy) is widely used around the world, and most of the studies at home and abroad have been conducted on clinical adult or child patients and the general population, including basic studies on its use as a projective psychological assessment tool and process studies to explore its inner working mechanism. Research into the imaginative healing experience of sandplay has demonstrated that the intrinsic structure of the therapeutic mechanism of sandplay is highly consistent with the principles of Jungian analytical psychology of positive imagery. However, in current research, the emphasis on the playful and interpretive nature of sandplay is more often confined to the pursuit of immediate effects, while the philosophical underpinnings and inner mechanisms of action of sandplay techniques have been less explored [2]. Dora Kalf, the creator of the sand tray game, once pointed out that the counsellor must first know a great deal about symbols, but that the understanding of symbolic imagery in the sand tray should adhere to the principle of 'delayed interpretation', that is to say, the counsellor should observe and record the process and then immediately apply the relevant knowledge and experience to interpret the imagery. This is very arbitrary. The psychotherapeutic function of sandplay is not always dependent on interpretation; often the meaning of the imagery represented by the sand tool cannot be fully explained by the therapist rationally, but it can be experienced and fully understood by the mind. This is because sandplay tends to be a 'non-verbal' therapy, meaning that the counsellor does not rely almost exclusively on verbal suggestions, explanations or guidance, as is traditionally the case, but rather uses non-verbal, experiential techniques to work on an unconscious level [3]. Therefore, sandplay is more suitable for visitors with verbal difficulties and those who have experienced trauma during the pre-verbal period.

The dialectical logic advocated by traditional Chinese culture emphasises the holistic concept as one of the basic theoretical features of Chinese traditional culture, which includes the holistic view of the human body itself and the holistic view of the human being and the external environment. For the individual itself, an individual is a whole in itself. The five organs, blood, fluids, muscles and bones of

this individual can be seen as a small but interconnected, influential, constrained and acting whole, yet at the same time there is a distinction between the physiological whole and the pathological whole [4]. Traditional cultural interpretations of the relationship between human beings and the outside world tend to regard the individual and the external environment, and even the universe, as a whole. In other words, the human being and the natural environment on which he or she lives can be seen as a whole, with the individual being inextricably linked to the individual and even to other species of life [5]. The concept of wholeness advocated by traditional Chinese culture can be summed up in eight words: "Big but no outside, small but no inside". The holistic concept advocated by the dialectical logic of the theoretical system of traditional Chinese culture is reflected in the setting up of the sandplay room, the establishment and development of the consultation relationship, and the production and interpretation of the work, and is present throughout the process of the sandplay.

2. The main aspects and theoretical foundations of traditional dialectical logic in the sand tray game

2.1. The manifestation of traditional dialectical logic in the setting of the sand tray game therapy room

In the process of sandplay therapy, there is a whole between the visitor, the therapist and the therapy room. The sand frame and sand tools correspond to all things in nature, and the sand box and sand can be understood as a projection of the natural and social environment that the visitor is exposed to [6]. The visitor in front of the sandbox can fully express his or her thoughts, consciousness and experiences through the projection of the sandbox work. The traditional Chinese concept of the unity of nature and man emphasises that man and the natural environment are a unified whole, and that the sunlight, water and air in nature are the conditions for man's survival, while changes in the natural environment can directly or indirectly affect man's survival. This is what is meant by the saying "Heaven and earth are dense, and all things are mellow". Therefore, individuals should follow the changing laws of the natural environment, "nourish Yang in spring and summer, and Yin in autumn and winter", so as to live in harmony with the natural environment and achieve physical and mental health.

2.2. The embodiment of traditional dialectical logic in the establishment and development of the client-client relationship

The relationship between the therapist and the visitor in the sand tray game has been described in academic circles as follows: the 'mother and child' relationship (the therapist provides a safe, protected and free space for the visitor); the role of the Zen master (accompaniment is the main focus, with guidance at key points) [7]. This shows that the ideal therapist and the visitor form a close bond, and that the performance of the therapist in particular has a great impact on the visitor. This is because the therapist can only provide a free and protected space in which the client can better express himself or herself. Regardless of the status of the client, the lack of security is common to all of them and they tend to hide their innermost thoughts intentionally or unintentionally. The therapist provides a protected space for the visitor to express himself or herself freely and focus on the creation of the sand tray.

2.3. The application of traditional dialectical logic in the production and interpretation of the work

In the ancient Chinese Classic of Classics, it is said that "form is the body of God, and God is the use of form; without God, form cannot live; without form, God has no master", which clarifies the so-called "God" and "form" The dialectical logic of interdependence and action and reaction. The overall layout of the sandplay room, the selection and placement of sand tools are all external projections of the therapist's "God". Therefore, "God" can be seen as a bridge between the visitor and the sand tray work through the projection of communication, and the sand tray work is the external projection of the visitor's "God". The sand tray work is the external projection and expression of the visitor's "God" [8]. The inner activity of the visitor during the sandplay (i.e. 'God', either consciously or subconsciously) corresponds to the act of placing the sand set in a certain position and the external expression of emotions (i.e. 'form').

3. The application of imagery-based experiential techniques in sandplay analysis

Imagery is used in sandplay therapy through the triad of imagery, sensation and meaning, where the visitor spontaneously expresses his or her true inner mental world in the safe and protected space of the sandplay as imagery [9].

3.1. The use of perceptual association techniques

After the visitor has completed the sand tray, the counsellor should spend a few minutes with the visitor observing and feeling the sand tray together, and then ask the visitor to describe his or her sand tray. For example, guide the visitor to think, feel and describe who the person is, where he is, what he is saying, what he is thinking, what time of day is in the sandbox scene, the season of the story, and the weather at the time [10]. Shin Ho-young stresses that contextuality is very important and that the counsellor guides the visitor to describe in detail the scenes and situations made up by the imagery in the sand tray, so that when the situation is vivid and alive, it is easier for the person to feel "in the moment" and the emotions and associations become richer. However, the four conditions for the realisation of affective associations are: contextuality, concentration, spontaneity and autonomy. It is only when the visitor devotes a high concentration of attention and emotion to the situation in the sandbox and focuses on the imagery itself that the imagery can be activated and a 'dialogue' with the imagery can take place.

3.2. The use of active imagery techniques

Positive imagery techniques can be very useful in the psychoanalysis of imagery in the sand tray game. After the visitor has set up the sand tray, the counsellor asks the visitor to describe the scene in the sand tray and his or her feelings, and then uses one of the images or pictures as a starting point for active imagination. The counsellor asks the visitor to close his or her eyes, show the image clearly in his or her mind, and keep his or her attention on it. Gradually, a series of associations occur naturally in the visitor's mind, and the positive imagery begins. Ultimately, the visitor ends the process of active imagination with a sense of relief and thus acquires the meaning given to him by the overall imagery of the sandbox [11].

3.3. Practice of the embodied imagery technique

The Embodied Imagery Technique is the process of using the body as a medium to unite mind and body in the positive imagery technique. During the sandplay, the counsellor guides the visitor and the process to a certain extent, so that the visitor pays more attention to the imagery that has appeared in his dreams and to the feelings that he has felt in his body during the analysis steps, and when he has had concrete feelings in his body, he deliberately stays in those feelings for a while: what they contain and what they are expressing, and then tries to remember them as much as possible, and then does the same with the other imagery. Do the same with other imagery. Finally, the process of experiencing the positive and negative feelings of each imagery in the body in turn and alternately, and finally achieving an integrated feeling, is a systematic and integrated process of working with the three dimensions of imagery, feeling and meaning.

By concentrating on the imagery in the analysis process, the degree of feeling and the depth of understanding of unconscious symbolism is increased, the unconscious mind is connected to the conscious mind, and psychic energy flows and integrates freely for the purpose of healing[12]. Through the deeper experience of the 'image' and 'feeling' of imagery, the 'meaning' part can be accessed more easily. Freud's technique of free association, Jung's technique of active imagination in analytical psychology and the technique of embodiment of imagery all focus on working with symbolic imagery.

Play is a natural part of human nature. It can be argued that a restoration of nature takes place in sandplay and also contains the conditions and possibilities for treatment and healing. Winnicott believes that the premise of allowing a patient to heal is: "Just teach him to play." If a person loses interest in play, then the opportunity for healing is also lost.

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