Applications of Adlerian Play Therapy Across the Lifespan
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I. Interventions for Building the Relationship

II. Exploring the Client’s
   A. Family atmosphere and family constellation
   B. Functioning at life tasks (friendship, work/school, love/family, self, and spirituality/existential) and determining a “firing order” for working with the client
   C. Crucial Cs (courage, connect, capable, count) recognizing which constitute a strength for the client & which Crucial Cs need boosting
   D. Exploring personality priorities and discovering areas in which the client is struggling with his/her personality priorities
   E. Investigating goals of the client’s misbehavior in specific situations
   F. Assets

III. Helping the Client Gain Insight Into His/her Lifestyle

IV. Reorientation and Reeducation With Play Therapy Interventions Designed to

   A. Foster the client’s positive expression of his or her personality priorities.
   B. Foster the client’s Crucial Cs, with an emphasis on the ones that need boosting.
   C. Help shift goals of misbehavior to more positive ones.
   D. Enhance the client’s functioning at the life tasks that need enhancing.
Integrated Adlerian Play Therapy Life Style
Conceptualization/Treatment Plan

Family Constellation/Psychological Birth Order Position and how the child's perception of this has affected his/her life style:

Self-defeating rules and/or discouraging perceptions/conclusions that need tweaking; soup that needs spitting & strategies that can be used:

Family Atmosphere (including parent(s)' life styles and parenting styles) and how the child's perception of this has affected his/her life style:

Family dynamics that need adjusting/strategies for helping family members adjust them:

Functioning at Life Tasks: (can use scaling to indicate how well client is functioning at each life task)

School--

Friendship--

Love/Family--

Self--

Spirituality/existential--
Functioning at life tasks that needs readjusting/balancing and strategies:

Goal(s) of Misbehavior—manifested in what behavior/how parents deal with problems:

Assessment of Crucial Cs: (can use scaling to indicate functioning)
Connect--

Capable--

Count--

Courage--

Personality Priorities (of child and of parents--how do they interact with one another?):

Cs/Goals of Misbehavior/Personality Priorities that need readjusting & strategies:

Assets:

Assets you want to encourage and strategies:
Early recollections (themes) and what they tell you about the child’s life style:

**Life Style Convictions:** (* those that are mistaken beliefs/faulty convictions)*  
I am/I must be...

Others are/others must be....

The world is/life is ...

Based on these convictions/perceptions/beliefs/feelings, my behavior must be...

**Private Logic** (how did the client get from convictions to behavior?):

Mistaken beliefs (about self/others/the world/life) need readjusting & strategies:

**Self-defeating/useless behavior** you want to change: (put an * by those needed immediately that you want to prioritize) and strategies for helping the child change them

**Skills** the child needs to learn and strategies for teaching them:

Prioritized goals for the child:

Progress measured by:
Creative Characters

Creative Characters is a metaphor/storytelling technique devised by Robert Brooks that uses several different characters to co-tell a story with the child. In my experience in play therapy, this technique works best with older children (7-10 years old). I frequently record (either audio or video) the presentation of the story so that the child can watch it later--either in session or at home. Here is my adaptation of the technique:

1. Describe the setting, the characters, and the beginning of the story.
   
   A. The setting can be either real or imaginary, but should have some elements that relate to the child’s life. The more detailed description of the setting and the beginning of the story, the better chance that most children will get into the story.

   B. In casting the story, include a character who represents (a) the child, (b) the counselor or another wise person with whom the child can consult about problem situations, (c) the difficult situation or an antagonist in the child’s life, (d) at least one ally for the character who represents the child, and (e) a reporter who asks the other characters for information, reactions, feelings, attitudes, plans, and so forth at various intervals throughout the story. To represent each of these characters (in play therapy at least), pick a puppet, doll, stuffed animal, or some other toy. As part of the description of the character, include details from the physical appearance of the representative toy.

   C. Explain that each of the characters can talk and that the child will tell part of the story and the counselor will tell part of the story, taking turns. The counselor and the child can either rotate who speaks for which character or rotate having one person be responsible for speaking for all the characters in the story.

   D. Describe the beginning of the story with some kind of dilemma facing the character representing the child. The dilemma may resemble the child’s presenting problem or some other challenge facing the child. Be sure to make the connection relatively subtle and oblique--not emphasizing the parallels to the child’s life.

2. Begin telling the story. The counselor may speak for all the characters at the beginning or the story or may assign certain characters to the child. However, it works best to initially have the counselor speak for the reporter and the wise consultant, as the child may not understand how to speak for either of these characters.

3. The reporter interviews the other characters to find out how they are feeling and what they are thinking as the action of the story progresses. The wise consultant provides advice, different perspectives, and information to the other characters as the story progresses.

4. Eventually, the child may also want to take over speaking for either the reporter or the wise consultant as well.

5. The end of the story should resemble the end of a therapeutic metaphor--with some socially appropriate resolution of the dilemma or challenge facing the protagonist and a celebration of the lessons learned along the way or the skills demonstrated by the protagonist and his or her allies.


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Art Techniques

Draw Me A Story (or Create a Sand Tray....)
Ask the child to draw a picture/create a tray that they can tell you a story about.

Questions About the Picture
1. What happened?
2. What happened next? (until the end of the story)
3. Who was there?
4. When did it happen? (time of year, time of week, time of day)
5. What’s this? (using index finger to point to various details of the picture)
   - What happened with this?
6. Who is this? (using index finger to point to various people in the picture if they
   were not identified by questions 3) What did they do?

Questions About Feelings (At any point, you can ask
the child to “show me the ....(feeling) by encouraging
him/her to draw a picture)
1. How did you feel when it happened?
2. How do you feel now about what happened?
   - What scared you the most then?
3. What scares you now?
4. What was the worst part then?
5. What is the worst part now?
6. What hurt you the most then?
7. What is the worst part now?
8. What hurt you the most now?
9. When you first learned (heard) about it, where did you feel the hurt most in your
   body?
10. Do you still hurt there sometimes?
11. When do you have the feelings mostly?
12. When did the hurt start? Who/what caused it?
13. If you could name the hurt, who would you name it?
14. How big was the hurt? How big is it now?
15. What is the color of the hurt? Texture? Smell? Taste? Sound/noise?
16. If the hurt could talk, what would it say?
17. Does anyone else know about the hurt? Who? What do they know about it? What don’t they know about it? What do you wish they knew about it?
18. What triggers the hurt now? (e.g., smells, sounds, times, tastes) Is there anyone with you when it hurts now?
19. Does the hurt ever go away? When does it go away? What makes it go away?
20. What would you want to do with the hurt?
21. What would you want to do to the person/thing who caused the hurt?
22. What is your biggest worry? How big is it?
23. What could help you feel safe?

Questions About The Worst Part

1. What was the worst part?
2. What was the worst part of the worst part?
3. What does the worst part look like?
4. What makes the worst part worse than the other parts?
5. How often do you think about the worst part?
6. Where do you feel the worst part in your body?
7. What comes to mind when you think about the worst part?
8. What’s the worst part now?
9. If you could give the worst part a name, what name would you give it?
10. How did the worst part change you?
11. Does the worst part ever change? How?
12. What has the worst part taught you?

Adapted from Steele, W. (2002). Children of trauma I and II. A presentation sponsored by the National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children, Detroit, MI.
Give client(s) a selection of photographs gathered from magazines, depicting animals. (Be sure to include a selection of different "types" of animals--wild, domestic, aggressive, "sweet," etc.)

1. Have the client(s) choose an animal.
2. Give the following directions/ask the following questions:
   a. Describe this animal.
   b. What drew you to pick this animal?
   c. What positive qualities do you share with this animal?
      d. What positive qualities does this animal have that you wish you shared, but don't?
   e. How would your life be different if you did have those positive qualities?
   f. What keeps you from having those positive qualities?
   g. What changes are you willing to make in your life to acquire those positive qualities?

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Family atmosphere version--Give client(s) a selection of photographs gathered from magazines depicting animal families and/or groups of animals.

1. Have the client(s) choose a family.
2. Give the following directions / ask the following questions:
   a. Describe this family.
   b. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this family?
   c. What does this family do well? What does this family do poorly?
      d. What would the members of the this family like to change about the family?
   e. What is the main difficulty encountering this family?
   f. How would the lives of the family members be different if this difficulty was eliminated?
   g. How do you think the family could go about eliminating this difficulty?
3. Can also ask the following (less metaphorical) questions:
   a. How does this family resemble your own family?
   b. What strengths does your family share with this family?
   c. What weaknesses does your family share with this family?
   d. What would you like to change about your family?
   e. What is the main difficulty in your family? How does it resemble the difficulty of the family in the picture?
   f. How would the lives of the members of your family be different if this difficulty was eliminated?
   g. How would the lives of the members of your family be the same if this difficulty was eliminated?

Family constellation/atmosphere version--Give client(s) a selection of photographs gathered from magazines depicting animals.

1. Have client(s) choose an animal.

2. Give the following directions / ask the following questions:
   a. What drew you to this photograph?
   b. Describe this animal.
   c. How do you resemble this animal?
   d. What positive qualities do you share with this animal?
   e. What positive qualities does this animal have that you wish you shared, but don't?
   f. How would your life be different if you shared those qualities?
   g. What keeps you from having those positive qualities?
   h. What changes are you willing to make in your life to acquire those positive qualities?

3. Have the client(s) choose an animal to represent each of the members of his or her family of origin.

4. Give the following directions / ask the following questions:
   a. Describe each animal, including assets and liabilities.
   b. Describe how the family member resembles the animal--stressing assets and liabilities.
c. Describe how each of these animals relates to the animal that represents you.

d. Which of the children in this family of animals is the mother's favorite?

e. Which of the children in this family of animals is the father's favorite?

f. Which of the children in this family of animals is most like the mother animal?

g. Which of the children in this family of animals is most like the father animal?

h. Which of these animals is most like you/your animal? How?

i. Which of these animals is most different than you/your animal? How?

j. Which of these animals fought? What did they fight about?

k. Which of these animals played together? What kinds of things did they play?

l. What was the relationship of the parents with each other?

m. What was the relationship of the parents with the children?

4. Ask any other questions that seem to give a picture of how the client(s) sees relationships in the family and/or himself, others, and the world.

The Rosebush

This technique was originated by Dr. Violet Oaklander

I would like you to close your eyes. Just be aware of your body. Forget about what's been going on around you...just think about what's going on inside of you. Think about your breathing...feel the air move in through your nose and mouth, down into your chest--imagine that your breathing is like gentle waves lapping on the shore...As each wave rolls in, the more relaxed you feel.

Think about your right arm. Feel it getting heavier and heavier...Feel the heaviness go all the way down the arm, down to your fingertips...Think about your left arm...Feel it getting heavier and heavier...Feel the heaviness go down, down, into your fingertips...Think about your left leg...Feel it getting heavier and heavier...Feel the heaviness go down, down, into your foot...Think about your right leg...Feel it getting heavier and heavier...Feel the heaviness go down, down, into your foot...Feel your body relaxing and feeling heavy...

Be aware of your thoughts and images in your mind...look at them [pause]...now put them into a glass jar and watch them...[pause]...examine them...As more thoughts and images come into your mind, put them into your jar too...Find out what you can learn about them...Now take the jar and pour out the thoughts and images; watch as they spill out and disappear [pause] the jar is empty...

Now I'd like you to imagine that you are a rosebush. Become a rosebush and find out what it's like to be a rosebush...What kind of rosebush are you?...Are you very small?...Are you large?...Are you wide?...Are you tall?...Do you have flowers?...If so, what kind?...They can be any kind you want...Do you have leaves?...What kind?...What are your stems and branches like?...Do you have any thorns?...What are your roots like? [pause]...or maybe you don't have any...If you do, are they long and straight?...Are they twisted?...Are they deep?...Look around you [pause]...Are you in a yard?...In a park?...In the desert?...In the city?...In the country?...In the middle of the ocean?...On a cliff?...Are you in a pot or growing in the ground?...Or through cement?...Or even inside somewhere?...Look around you (pause)...What do you see?...Other flowers?...Are you alone?...Are there any other roses?...Animals?...People?...
Birds? . . . Do you look like a rosebush or something else? . . . Is there anything around you like a fence? . . . Does someone take care of you? . . . What’s the weather like for you right now?

What is your life like? . . . How do you feel? . . . What do you experience and what happens to you as the seasons change? . . . Be aware of yourself as a rosebush . . . look carefully. Find out how you feel about your life and what happens to you.

In a few minutes, I’ll ask you to open your eyes and I want you to draw a picture of yourself as a rosebush. Then, later I’ll ask you a few questions, and I will want you to talk about the picture as though you are the rosebush [longer pause]. . . When you are ready, open your eyes and draw the rosebush.

Post-Drawing Inquiry for the Rosebush

1. What kind of rosebush are you, and what do you look like?
2. Tell me about your flowers.
3. Tell me about your leaves.
4. Tell me about your stems and branches.
5. Do you have thorns: If so, tell me about them. If not, tell me how you protect yourself. Are you a mean or friendly rosebush?
6. Tell me about your roots.
7. Tell me about where you live. What kind of things do you see around you? How do you like living where you are?
8. Do you think that you look like a rosebush, or do you think that you look like something else? If so, what?
9. Who takes care of you? How do you feel about that? How do they look after you?
10. What’s the weather like for you right now? What happens to you as the seasons change?
11. How does it feel to be a rosebush? What is your life like as a rosebush?
Fostering Courage

Play Therapy Skills & Techniques

♦ Return responsibility to the client
♦ Encourage, emphasizing effort, progress, & assets
♦ Invite the client to play simple games (stacking blocks; rolling the ball back and forth)
♦ Play with shaving cream, finger paint, Ooblick
♦ Rake sand together
♦ Bibliotherapy including You’ve Got Dragons, Wemberly Worrried, Chester, Courage
♦ Toning—matching tone
♦ Toning symphony
Use a trophy as a symbol of small successes in courage

Art Techniques

♦ Draw a dragon and a way to deal with it/how to go around it
♦ Popsicle sticks with writing listing strategies for being courageous—what could you say to yourself that would help you be more courageous?

Sand Tray Techniques

* Do sand tray for the client about a character who is afraid to do something but does it anyway
* Client does tray on what he/she is afraid of or things that worry him/her
* Client does tray on what happens when he/she is afraid or worried
* Client does tray on how she/he deals with being afraid or worried

Metaphor/Storytelling Techniques

Tell Button Stories
Do puppet shows for the child about a character who is afraid to do something but does it anyway

Movement/Adventure Technique

Fake Tai Chi and shifting to other movements
Fostering Connect

Play Skills & Techniques

- Play Mirrors or Shadows
- Play Safety Cars
- Play hide-and-seek
- Draw energy drawings
- Create Circles of Intimacy
- Play mirrors or shadows
- Play Safety Cars
- Play hide-and-seek
- Draw energy drawings
- Create Circles of Intimacy
- Paint one another’s faces

Use role-play and didactic teaching to teach social skills, with an emphasis on making and keeping friends, paying attention to nonverbal social skills, taking responsibility for the impact of your behavior.

- Friendship want ads
- Scribble wars
- Toning—matching
- I could tell you about…

Collection of popsicle sticks—initially looking at them, they all look alike, but as you look at them a bit longer/deeper, it emerges that they are really not all alike.

Art Techniques

- Make Pocket Pals
- Draw energy drawings
- Create Circles of Intimacy
- Scribble drawing—string of connection

Sand Tray Techniques

1. Client does tray on his/her friends
2. Client does tray on how to make (and/or keep) friends
3. Client does tray on what he/she looks for in a friend
4. Client does tray on what kind of a friend he/she is

Metaphor/Storytelling Techniques

- Create shared stories
- Use Creative Characters as a storytelling device
- Fantasy creature conversations

Movement/Adventure Techniques

- Different Button, Different Mood, Different Movement
Fostering Capable

Play Skills & Techniques

Play games like UNO, Connect 4, Jenga, Don’t Spill the Beans, Don’t Break the Ice

Play school with the child being the teacher

Make potions

Ask the client to teach you something and/or mentor someone younger

Weave 6 popsicle sticks together to make “exploding” sculpture

Use a trophy as a symbol of small successes in capable

Art Techniques

Draw Super Hero drawings

Do body outline drawings, focusing on assets

Make and destroy Gremlin puppets

Paper bag trash eaters

Scribble drawing—if you don’t like it, you get to make a change

Popsicle sticks in a cup with flowers—write a list of things you are good at as a reminder

Sand Tray Techniques

Client does tray on things he/she is good at or is proud of

Client does tray on things he/she likes doing

1Client does tray on something(s) his friends would nominate him/her for an award for

Movement/Adventure Techniques

Different Button, Different Mood, Different Movement

Fake Olympic events
Fostering Count

Play Skills & Techniques

Set client up with someone to mentor

Collaborate on projects, like writing a book or magnetic poetry

Ask family to give child responsibilities and acknowledge his/her contributions

Ask client to teach you something or help you

Art Techniques

Make Fairy Godparents/Guardian Angels

Make Cheerleader puppets

Helping hand

Popsicle sticks with things the parent/spouse/other family members appreciates about them/contributions they make to the family (could do this for themselves)

Sand Tray Techniques

Client does tray on what he/she contributes to home/school/work (is helpful?)

Client does tray on how he/she makes an impact at home/school/work

Client does tray on how others (friends/co-workers/parents/teacher/therapist) see him/her

Movement/Adventure Techniques

Walk like an Egyptian

Mirrors/Shadows

I Can Do This....

Stretching Story
Interventions to Foster Positive Expression of a Comfort Personality Priority

**Play Skills & Techniques**

If you are doing something directive, keep it very simple and easy to complete
Design active interventions for success
Play games that do not require skill for success
Encourage with an emphasis on effort rather than finished product
Encourage focusing on assets
Metacommunicate about desire to avoid stress and pressure
Reframe “under-achieving” as comfort
Teach self-soothing techniques

**Sand Tray Techniques**

1. Client does a tray on things that stress him or her out
2. Client does a tray on how he/she feels when things are stressful
3. Client does a tray on situations in which he/she feels uncomfortable
4. Client does a tray on how he/she handles stressful or uncomfortable situations

**Movement/Adventure Technique**

Fake Tai Chi and shifting to other movements
Fake Olympic events
Slow Motion Race

Interventions to Foster Positive Expression of a Pleasing Personality Priority

**Play Skills & Techniques**

Always return responsibility to the child
Encourage focusing on abilities other than pleasing
Use whisper technique to empower the child
Metacommunicate about pleasing patterns
Role play boundary-setting (saying no, etc.)
Teach & practice coping strategies for dealing with rejection/anger from others
Stay/go away

Art Techniques
Popsicle sticks with writing reminding the client it's okay to be yourself/to grow into being yourself

Sand Tray Techniques
1. Client does a tray about how it feels to be rejected
2. Client does a tray about a situation in which he/she was rejected
3. Client does a tray about anger—others getting angry or he/she getting angry
4. Client does a tray on the ways that he/she tries to avoid being rejected
5. Client does a tray on how he/she takes care of the needs of others
6. Client does a tray on how he/she takes care of his/her own needs

Metaphor/Storytelling Techniques
Design therapeutic metaphors to suggest that a character can say no and still be liked

Movement/Adventure Technique
Safety cars

Interventions to Foster Positive Expression of a Control Personality Priority

Play Skills & Techniques
Give client limited choices
Develop interventions designed to foster sharing power
Make up games for cleaning up the play room together
Play with “loosening” materials like finger paints, shaving cream, sand, etc.

Metacommunicate about feeling the need for control
Metacommunicate about the effects of trying to control others
Teach the client about the “Reset Button”

Art Techniques
Responsibility pie

Sand Tray Techniques
1. Client does a tray on how he/she feels when things don’t go the way they are “supposed” to go
Client does a tray about how he/she feels about making mistakes
Client does a tray about the methods he/she uses to avoid feeling out of control
Client does a tray about things that might be embarrassing to him/her
Client does a tray about what it means to feel “out of control”
Client does a tray about what it means to be embarrassed or humiliated

Metaphor/Storytelling Techniques
Design therapeutic metaphors to suggest that a character cannot be in control but still feel safe

Interventions to Foster Positive Expression of a Superiority Personality Priority

Play Skills & Techniques
Play games where there is no winner
Encourage cooperation, not competition
Play with “loosening” materials such as finger paints, shaving cream, sand, etc.
Work on being “good enough”
Metacommunicate about feelings of inferiority
Teach ways to recognize feelings of inferiority and healthy strategies for dealing with these feelings
Give the client a trophy with “4th place” and discuss what it is like to not be perfect.

Art Techniques
Foot in the mouth faces
Pocket pals with a friend who will like you no matter what

Sand Tray Techniques
Client does a tray about feeling like he/she is not good enough
Client does a tray on what he/she does to prove that he/she is good enough
Client does a tray about situations in which he/she compares himself/herself to others
Client does a tray about a time when he/she feels inferior to others
Client does a tray about a time when he/she acted like he/she was superior to others
Client does a tray about bragging or putting others down/getting put down by others

Metaphor/Storytelling Techniques
Design therapeutic metaphors to suggest that a character can achieve without outdoing
Adlerian Play Therapy Interventions for Shifting Goals of Misbehavior

Play Skills & Techniques

Metacommunicate about the goals of misbehavior
Spit in the client’s soup
Emphasize more positive goals like Crucial Cs

Sand Tray Techniques

1. Client does tray on what kinds of things get him/her into trouble
2. Client does tray on what happens when he/she gets in trouble (consequences of his/her misbehavior)
3. Client does a tray about how adults react when he/she misbehaves

Metaphor/Storytelling Techniques

Use metaphoric interventions, like therapeutic metaphors, mutual storytelling, shared stories
Do role playing games

Shifting the Goal of Attention

Play Skills & Techniques

Ignore child when he/she is using misbehavior to get attention
Pay attention to child when he/she is not “asking” for attention
Use encouragement, not praise
Return responsibility to the child
Encourage internal locus of evaluation
Play games where the child has to evaluate his/her own success/progress

Art Techniques

Mouth puppet making conversation
Name design
Name monster

Sand Tray Techniques

1. Client does tray on ways he/she gets attention (positive/negative)
2. Client does a tray on how negative attention feels
Client does a tray on how positive attention feels

**Metaphor/Storytelling Techniques**

Tell stories about a character who demand attention and it backfires
Read bibliotherapy stories about characters who demand attention

**Shifting the Goal of Power**

**Play Skills & Techniques**

Establish power sharing in the relationship and play games that require sharing power
Give limited choices (avoid power struggles)
Play games requiring rule-governed behavior (like pitch & catch; Mother May I?) & games that have an element of chance to outcome (like Uno Attack)
When a client ““changes the rules,”“ you get an equal number of rule-changes you can do
Use the Whisper Technique (with clients with too little power and clients from chaotic families)
Return responsibility to the client
Weave 6 popsicle sticks together to make “exploding” sculpture
Give a client a trophy to reinforce being a good sport

**Art Techniques**

Do drawing conversations and scribble wars

**Sand Tray Techniques**

1Client does tray on how he/she gets what he/she wants
Client does tray contrasting situations when he/she is in control and he/she is out of control
Client does tray on how it feels to be in control/out of control

**Movement/Adventure Techniques**

Safety cars
Walk, stop, run
Hand dance

**Shifting the Goal of Revenge**

**Play Skills & Techniques**

Don’t take anything personally
Explore abuse issues
Be scrupulously fair
Reflect feelings, reflect feelings, reflect feelings
Make a list of positives about the child to reground yourself in caring about the child
Offer chances to help others
Involve child in problem-solving
Never retaliate or escalate

**Sand Tray Techniques**

1. Client does a tray on how he/she reacts when he/she feels picked on

Client does a tray about what he/she does to get “back at” people who are bothersome

**Shifting the Goal of Proving Inadequacy**

**Play Skills & Techniques**

Encourage, encourage, encourage
Look for small increments of improvement or effort
Create play situations in which play is likely
Be willing to play by yourself
Model the courage to be imperfect
Teach positive self-talk
Emphasize more positive goals like Crucial Cs

**Sand Tray Techniques**

1. Client does tray about all the stuff he/she can’t do/does badly/wishes to do better

**Metaphor/Storytelling Techniques**

Use metaphoric interventions, like therapeutic metaphors, mutual storytelling, shared stories
Do role playing games
The Crucial Cs for Parents

To be well-balanced and happy in their role, parents must master each of the Crucial Cs:

**COURAGE**--Parents need courage--the willingness to face daily challenges and a job without a job description or training program. Parents who have mastered the Crucial C of courage feel hopeful, and they believe that they can make a difference in their children's lives. They are willing to take risks and believe they can handle challenging situations. Parents with courage know that they are effective even if their children are not perfect--they do not give up when family life doesn't turn out as they had hoped.

Parents who struggle with courage feel inferior to others and inadequate. They do not take risks and tend to give up without trying. They frequently avoid life's challenges and situations that might be stressful or difficult. They are reluctant to think about new ideas related to parenting and family life, and they may avoid learning about new parenting strategies. If things do not go well in the family, they tend blame others for difficulties and try to avoid taking responsibility for their part in the situation. When things get rough, they may shut down, resort to passive aggressive behavior, target one or more family members as “the problem.

**CONNECT**--Parents need to connect with others--children, their partners, other parents, friends. Parents who have mastered the Crucial C of connect feel secure in their ability to build relationships and confident about the stability and strength of their relationships. Relationships are a priority, and they believe that interacting positively with others will enhance their ability to parent. They are cooperative with others, using their relationship skills to make a contribution to their family and the community. Parents who are strong in the Crucial C of connect usually have confidence that they belong and seldom act out of social insecurity. If they do not have this confidence, they work very hard to find ways of belonging in their relationships.

Parents who have not mastered the Crucial C of connect struggle with the whole idea of relationships being essential to family life. Relationships are an extremely low priority for them, resulting in minimal social support. These parents may also lack the skills necessary to connect with others. They may seek attention (usually in negative, self-destructive ways) in order to feel that they have a place in the family or isolate themselves from family members.

**CAPABLE**--Parents need to feel that they are competent and capable in their role as parents. Parents who have mastered the Crucial C of capable have a sense of competence, self-control, and self-discipline. They are confident of their ability to parent and believe they make a positive contribution to their children's lives. These parents also have confidence in their ability to maintain a positive atmosphere in the family and inspire cooperative interaction among family members. They
are self-reliant and assume responsibility for themselves and for their own behavior. They believe they can do whatever they set their minds to doing and are willing to try new parenting strategies and apply new ideas in their families. When these ideas do not work out the way they expected, they do not doubt their abilities. Instead, they analyze what went wrong and try again a different way or reevaluate the applicability to their particular situation.

Parents who struggle with the Crucial C of capable frequently feel inadequate in their roles as parents and in their interactions with children, their partners, extended family members, school personnel, and other people. As a result of feeling inadequate, they may try to control others or let others know that they cannot be controlled. They frequently become dependent on others or seek to overpower others. When things do not go well for the family, these parents frequently to doubt their skills, seeking reassurance or a solution from others. The families of parents who struggle with capable are often chaotic, as they have difficulty managing discipline.

COUNT--Parents need to feel that they are significant--that they count. Parents who have mastered the Crucial C of count believe that they make a difference in the lives of their children and partners and that they make a positive contribution to their families. They feel valuable and valued by other family members and their friends. They consider themselves powerful agents of change--for their children, for their extended families, for their communities. Their children feel valued and valuable.

Parents who struggle with the Crucial C of count feel insignificant. If things do not go well in the family, they automatically believe that this is due to someone else in the family (usually their children) not valuing what they have to contribute. This belief is painful to them, and they may react to their feelings of hurt by trying devalue others. Some of these parents give up trying to be a valuable member of their families, withdrawing from family interactions. Others express their discouragement by trying to intimidate others or by acting superior as a compensatory behavior. Others may try to force their children and partners to confirm that they are valuable by asking constantly for reassurance about their value.

The Crucial Cs for Teachers

To be professionally successful and happy, teachers must master each of the Crucial Cs:

**COURAGE**—Teachers need courage—the willingness to face tough clients, irrate parents, unreasonable & demanding administrators, new curricula, difficult classroom dynamics, and poor pay even when they do not know if they can succeed. Teachers who have mastered the Crucial C of courage feel hopeful, and they believe that they can make a difference in their students' lives. They are willing to take risks and believe they can handle challenging situations. Teachers with courage know that they are effective even if every child does not master the class content—they do not get completely discouraged and become burnt out husks or give up and quit the teaching profession when their students do not progress as they had hoped. They are resilient.

Teachers who struggle with courage feel inferior to others and inadequate. They do not take risks and tend to give up without trying. They frequently avoid classroom challenges or children who might be “difficult.” They are reluctant to think about new ideas related to teaching and children, and they may avoid learning about new teaching strategies. If things do not go well in the classroom, they tend to blame others for difficulties and try to avoid taking responsibility for their part in the situation. When things get rough, they may shut down, resort to passive aggressive behavior, target one or more students as “the problem, try to get the student ejected from the classroom or the school, etc. Their classrooms are usually rather minimalist, with limited stimuli.

**CONNECT**—Teachers need to connect with others—children, parents, administrators, support staff, other teachers. Teachers who have mastered the Crucial C of connect feel secure in their ability to build relationships and confident about the stability and strength of their relationships. Relationships are a priority, and they believe that interacting positively with others will enhance the learning in their classrooms. They are cooperative with others, using their relationship skills to make a contribution to the school and the community. Teachers who are strong in the Crucial C of connect usually have confidence that they belong and seldom act out of social insecurity. If they do not have this confidence, they work very hard to find ways of belonging in their relationships.

Teachers who have not mastered the Crucial C of connect struggle with the whole idea of relationships being essential to the flow of learning in a school. They tend to be very impersonal, focusing on the content of their courses, rather than on the process of learning. Relationships are an extremely low priority for them. These teachers may also lack the skills necessary to connect with others. They may seek attention (usually in negative, self-destructive ways) in order to feel that they have a place in a group or the family or isolate themselves from the rest of the staff. The classrooms of teachers who struggle with connect are not warm and friendly places in which the learning involves interaction with others.
**CAPABLE**—Teachers need to feel that they are competent and professionally capable. Teachers who have mastered the Crucial C of capable have a sense of competence, self-control, and self-discipline. They are confident of their ability to teach and believe that they can optimize the learning of their students. These teachers also have confidence in their ability to maintain an atmosphere of positive discipline and cooperative interaction in their classrooms. They are self-reliant and assume responsibility for themselves and for their own behavior. They believe they can do whatever they set their minds to doing and are willing to try new teaching strategies and apply new ideas in their classrooms. When these ideas do not work out the way they expected, they do not doubt their abilities. Instead, they analyze what went wrong and try again a different way or reevaluate the applicability to their particular situation. The classrooms of these teachers run very smoothly. Some are very calm, structured, and orderly, and others are lively, loud, and interactive—but no matter what, they work. Children are happy and excited about learning as these teachers competently and confidently apply their skills.

Teachers who struggle with the Crucial C of capable frequently feel inadequate in their classrooms and in their interactions with children, parents, and other staff. As a result of feeling inadequate, they may try to control others or let others know that they cannot be controlled. They frequently become dependent on others or seek to overpower others. When things do not go well in the classroom, these teachers frequently doubt their skills, seeking reassurance or a solution from others. The classrooms of teachers who struggle with capable are usually chaotic, as they have difficulty maintaining classroom discipline. Students may not progress as they should because these teachers are constantly undermining their own ability to teach by doubting themselves.

**COUNT**—Teachers need to feel that they are significant—that they count. Teachers who have mastered the Crucial C of count believe that they make a difference in the lives of children and parents and that they make a positive contribution to the school. They feel valuable and valued by students, parents, administrators, and other staff. They consider themselves powerful agents of change—for children, for schools, for society. Their classrooms are dynamic places in which they work to enhance the learning of their students. Their students feel valued and valuable—that their teacher is glad to have them as a student.

Teachers who struggle with the Crucial C of count feel insignificant. If things do not go well in the classroom, they automatically believe that this is due to the child (or the parent or the principal) not valuing what they have to contribute. This belief is painful to them, and they may react to their feelings of hurt by trying devalue others. Some of these teachers give up trying to be a valuable member of the staff and simply collect their pay checks. Others express their discouragement by trying to intimidate others or by acting superior as a compensatory behavior. The classrooms of these teachers are very discouraged/discouraging places, where no one feels valued or supported.

Adlerian Play Therapy Session Summary

Date/Session # __________/_______  Child/Age__________________________________________________________

Counselor________________________________ Diagnosis__________________________________________

Underlying purpose of presenting problem:__________________________________________________________

Specific interventions used (circle): tracking, restating content, reflecting feelings, returning responsibility, asking questions, limiting, metacommunicating, metaphors/storytelling, bibliotherapy, spitting in soup, role-playing, art activity(__________________________), sand tray, didactic teaching, modeling, practicing new skills, _____________________________________________________________________

I.  SUBJECTIVE (Feelings Expressed)  (Underline all that apply and indicate predominant feeling(s) by circling them):

HAPPY: relieved, satisfied, pleased, delighted, excited, surprised, silly

CONFIDENT: proud, strong, powerful, determined, free

SAD: disappointed, hopeless, pessimistic, discouraged, lonely

HESITANT: timid, confused, nervous, embarrassed, ashamed

ANGRY: impatient, annoyed, frustrated, mad, mean, jealous, enraged

CURIOUS: interested, focused, intense

AFRAID: vulnerable, helpless, distrustful, anxious, fearful, scared, terrified

FLAT: restricted, contained, ambiguous

II.  OBJECTIVE

A.  Toys/Play Behavior (put CH if child initiated; put TH if therapist initiated)

_______sandbox/water/sink

_______puppets/theater

_______kitchen/cooking/food

_______easel/paint/chalkboard/white board

_______bop bag/bean bag

_______dress up/jewelry/hats/masks/wand

_______crafts/clay/markers/paint/scissors/glue

_______sheets/blankets/fabric

_______doll house/doll family/bottle/pacifier/baby

_______cash register/money/telephone/camera

_______musical instruments

_______medical kit/bandages

_______games/bowling/balls/ring toss

_______construction toys (tinker toys, Leggos, blocks)

_______vehicles/planes/boats

_______animals (domestic, zoo, alligator, snake, dino)

_______soldiers/ weapons/handcuffs

_______sandtray/miniatures

B.  Significant verbalizations:

C.  Set Limit(s) on:

D.  Returned responsibility to child when:
E. Worked to help child gain insight/shift or adjust/move toward more constructive application of:
Functioning at life tasks (school, friendship, family, self, spiritual):
Interpretation of family constellation/family atmosphere:
Personality priorities:
Crucial Cs:
Goals of misbehavior:
“Owning” assets:
Mistaken beliefs:
Self-defeating behaviors:
Private logic:

III. ASSESSMENT A. Dynamics of the Session (circle the number on any scale that applies to child's behavior in session):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low activity level</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</th>
<th>High activity level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low social interest</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>High social interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low degree of self-regulation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>High degree of self-regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low level of intensity</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>High level of intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little therapist inclusion</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Much therapist inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destructive play</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Constructive play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaotic/disorganized</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Orderly/organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Peaceful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too tight</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Too loose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immature/hyper-mature</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Age appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scattered, impulsive, hyper</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Focused, purposeful, calm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Play Themes (underline all that apply, describe play behaviors that fit into theme; circle predominate theme):

EXPLORATORY: RELATIONSHIP:
POWER/CONTROL: FEELINGS OF INADEQUACY/HELPLESSNESS:
AGGRESSION/REVENGE: SAFETY/SECURITY/TRUST:
MASTERY: NURTURING:
DEATH/LOSS/GRIEF: TRAUMA:
REGRESSION: SEXUALIZED:
OTHER:

Plans/Recommendations (including consultation with parents/teachers):

-28-
Activating the Parasympathetic Nervous System

1. Relaxation—relax your tongue, eyes, and jaw muscles; feel tension draining from your body and going into the earth; run warm water over your hands; scan body for tense places and relax them
2. Diaphragm breathing
3. Progressive relaxation
4. Big exhalation
5. Touching the lips
6. Mindfulness of your body
7. Imagery—imagine a safe place, imagine yourself as being able to calm yourself down, imagine yourself as a super hero, imagine your fairy godmother/father or guardian angel coming to help you, etc.
8. Balance your heartbeat (a) breath so that exhalation and inhalation are the same duration, (b) imagine you are breathing in and out through your heart area, (c) think about a pleasant warm emotion, moving through your heart as part of your breath.
9. Focused breathing—inhale, pause, exhale, pause, changes noted
10. Horse lips [relaxes the brain stem]
11. Talking funny (press the tip of your tongue against your lower teeth, relax your tongue, try to talk) [relaxes tongue, pumps and relaxes brain, causing flow of cerebrospinal fluid, which helps you feel more relaxed]
12. Tongue stretch (stick out your tongue, with clean fingers pull on it gently) [relaxes the root of tongue and relaxes brain stem]
13. Yawning on purpose [helps you “come down out of your head,” increases production of serotonin, balances flow of cerebrospinal fluid]
14. Jiggling (shaking medicine) [supports the rhythms of pulsation, which supports life, liveliness, and well-being; loosens us up when we feel stiff or rigid]
15. Humming (lying down; pay attention to the vibrations moving throughout your body) [awakens the body; massages muscle, fluids, nerves, organs, etc.]
16. Finding Refuge—sanctuaries and/or refueling stations

“I take refuge in.................”
“I find refuge in.................”
“I am one with.................”
“...................... flows through me.”


Questions You Could Ask about Music

1. What do you like/dislike about this song/music? What do you like/dislike about this type of music? What do you like/dislike about this musical group/singer?
2. What makes this song/music special to you?
3. What was going on when you first heard this song/music?
4. What does this song/music remind you of?
5. What does this song/music tell (us) about what is important to you?
6. What is the impact this song/music has on you and/or your life?
7. What is going on with you when you listen to this song/music?
8. Describe what you are thinking as you listen to this song/music. [What is going on in your head as you listen to this song/music?]
9. Show me how you feel when you listen to this song/music.
10. What feelings does this song/music evoke in you? (How do you feel as you hear it? How do you feeling after you listen to it? How do you feel as you think about it later?)
11. What can we tell about you if we know you like/dislike this song/music? [What does this music/song tell (us) about you?]
12. What does this song/music tell (us) about your life in general? What does this song/music tell (us) about specific situations in your life?
13. What does this song/music tell (us) about your relationships? Friendships?
14. What does this song/music tell (us) about a particular relationship in your life?
15. What does this song/music tell (us) about issues in your life?
16. What does this song/music tell (us) about how you solve problems?
17. How do you move to this song/music?
18. What do you want to do when you listen to this music? What do you want to do after you listen to this music?
19. When do you want to listen to this song/music?
20. Are you more attracted to the lyrics or music?
21. Do you sing to it or just listen?
22. What's the difference between singing or not?
23. How does the singer influence your enjoyment or dislike of the song/music?
24. How would you feel if there was a different version?
25. Does the song remind you of regrets or other paths you could have taken?
Balance Wheel

Adapted from a balance wheel in the class manual for students in co-active coaching classes taught by The Coaches Training Institute—www.thecoaches.com
This is Your Life...

Romantic Relationships  School/Homework
Relationships with Siblings  Friends
Spirituality/Faith  Job/Earning Money
Physical Appearance  Chores
Relationship with Dad  Extra-curricular Activities
Relationship with Mom  Fun and Recreation
Balance Wheel

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