Satir in the Sand Tray

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Virginia Satir on Metaphors

"The metaphor is the real change intervention. It forces people to look at their beliefs, to see them from another perspective, a different picture. Change follows."

Satir et al. (1991)

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Virginia Satir on Metaphors

"What I am most interested in is beyond the logical, to engage the intuitive, to bring out the pictures, to bring out the seeing which goes beyond the seen and possibly allows for deeper change."

Satir et al. (1991)
Virginia Satir on Metaphors

"Using metaphors in the therapeutic process is a powerful way to engage the right hemisphere, which brings about deep levels of change and transformation."

Satir et al. (1991)

The way we keep safe becomes the problem

"The symptom is the subconscious solution to the problem, even if it creates dysfunctional patterns. It is the result of the person’s attempt to survive the pain of their problem."

(p.2 Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy (in brief))
### The Continuum of Safety

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### Attachment

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### Self-Regulation

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Its all about an internal sense of Safety

Ultimately, Neuroscience and Satir in the Sand Tray (NSST) is about creating an internal sense of safety for the client to regain a sense of Self. The therapy begins in the sand tray where the client experiences and recognizes the special gifts of their default behaviours and, subsequently, can transform the no-longer-useful defence and coping states and sense their authentic Self.

Six ways clients may start a session to transform the defences.

1) Show the problem/experience (fear, trauma, show how you feel about this problem (usually fear, and) show how you kept safe from this (defence). Show how this has helped you (special gifts).
2) Show how you would feel if you didn’t feel this way (yearning). Show what is getting in the way of you feeling this way (defence).
3) Showing the defence that has become the problem (e.g., depression). Show what it is that you are hiding from. Show the special gifts of the defence/hiding.
4) Show me all your parts (resources) (I think there is more to you than the problem).
5) When very stuck, I am going to ‘lend’ you some light.
6) Life Energy

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<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Para-Sympathetic Nervous System</th>
<th>Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS)</th>
<th>Social Engagement System (Hypothalamic/Pituitary/Adrenal Axis)</th>
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<td>2: Fear</td>
<td>+ “I am”</td>
<td>3: Self</td>
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<td>+ Wholeness</td>
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<td>Whole</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
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<td>Tingles</td>
<td>There is arousal to something greater through the sensing system</td>
<td>With Disappearance and probably Bandstand there is scientific spiritual experience.</td>
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1) Showing the Original Problem or Experience

Show me what you want to work on. What happens in your body when you see this picture?
• Show me what the feeling about this experience looks like. (rabbit)
• What would it look like if you didn’t feel this way? (trees etc.)
• Show me what is getting in the way. (rocks)
• Did you know that the rocks have been trying to help you?
• I am going to lend some light.

Can you let the rabbit see over the other side? What can he see? (moves candle to help see).

What is it like for the rabbit to be able to see the trees, the flowers and the butterflies?
How is that for the rabbit to be on the other side with the light, the trees, the flowers?

As you see this picture now, what has happened to your body? Show me.

2. Show how it would look like if you didn’t feel this way
Show me how you would like to be different.
What are you experiencing in your body right now when you see this picture?

Show me what is getting in the way? (Defences)
Show me how this has helped. (Special Gifts)
Integration
• Coming together of sequestered disorganized, dissociated parts
• Now you have integrated the how you want to be with the way you have kept safe.
• As you see this picture now what is changing in your body as you look at this?

3. Showing the defence first
• Can you show what it is that you are hiding from.
• Can you show how this (defence) has helped you? (special gifts of the defence/hiding)
• Client often starts with the defences as that has become the problem.

• I will tell you what I see....
• Show me how this has helped you (special gifts).
So wonder woman is your intuitive part. It seems that she has helped you be a good counsellor.

The unicorn is helping to lift up the cage?
You have added an eagle.  
Tell me about the eagle (wisdom, protection).

Now the incredible hulk is helping to slowly lift off the barrier.  
“That’s as far as he can go.” So that’s it for today. Yes?  
There is nothing more we can do?

“No I want to, but I can’t’
Who else here can help?

How is that for you now that Gumby has joined in to help?
How is that for you now that the first layer has come off?

What does Wonder Woman see in there?

“A little child wanting to come out”
Where in your body are you experiencing this picture of the child being in the light?
4. Show me all your parts (resources) (I think there is more to you than the problem).

5) I'm going to lend you some light
Beginning to experience connection; Hetty may feel estranged, with longing for connection.

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Keeping the sense of disgust away.

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Disgust has become smaller.

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6) Life Energy

6) Life Energy and Survival and growth
What are you nervous/excited about?

Show me what you want to work on.
You have put in a snake by the little girl. Tell me about the snake...

The fairy seems as if it is your life energy, keeping the little girl alive.
How is the little girl feeling now that she knows the fairy has kept her alive?

"The flowers are my appreciation for the fairy keeping me alive."
"She is not so afraid. She can appreciate herself for keeping safe."
Integration is beginning as she brings together the little girl and the fairy.

How is it for the little girl now that she is alongside the fairy and all the flowers?
You have added flowers candles-tell me what is happening for you right now. What is shifting in your body?
My Book

Hard copy: $35 plus postage ($50 Canadian)
email me: mdelitle@gmail.com

Or eBook version: $20 Barnes and Noble.