

AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION OF USING SANDTRAY IN COUPLES THERAPY

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Abstract

Sandtray therapy is a form of expressive therapy that allows a person to construct their own microcosm using miniature toys and sand. The scene created acts as a reflection of the person's own life and allows them the opportunity to resolve conflicts, remove obstacles, and gain acceptance of self. This non-verbal method of therapy is often used with children, but can be applied to adults, teens, couples, families, and groups as well. Couples may find the sandtray a good way to let out feelings, share inner thoughts and fears, and work through conflict. When couples enter therapy together, it is often precisely because they are having difficulty communicating with one another. They may have feelings that they feel are not appropriate to share with their partner, or they may feel like they don't have the support from their partner to be safe when expressing their feelings. Primarily, sandtray therapy aids in communication. Because communication is a cornerstone of relationships, any therapy that can help people understand each other more clearly is beneficial to couples and other family relationships. This paper shares qualitative results from an exploratory investigation of the use of sandtray as an intervention within regular couples talk-therapy, and the experiences of three couples participating in the intervention. How sandtray was utilized within sessions is discussed as well as qualitative feedback from couples participating in the therapy over a 3-month period. Further research opportunities using sandtray with couples are also identified.

Keywords: *Sandtray, couples, relationships, communication, expressive therapy.*

COVID-19 IMPACT ON MEANINGFULNESS OF LIFE, QUALITY OF LIFE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMMUNITY

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Abstract

The pandemic period of covid-19 has been a time marked by serious declines in quality of life, affecting pervasively not only physical health but also psychological well-being. The purpose of the study was to examine the state and interrelations of the three following variables – quality of life, meaningfulness of life and the psychologically-based physical immunity. It was hypothesized that all three variables will be positively interrelated and that quality of life will fulfill a focal role in this triad of variables. The sample included 230 individuals who responded to an unanimously administered which included the following three questionnaires (all with confirmed satisfactory reliability and validity): the multidimensional quality of life inventory, the meaning-based meaningfulness of life questionnaire, and the cognitive orientation of health questionnaire. The result showed that all three variables were intercorrelated positively. The highest correlations were obtained for quality of life and meaningfulness of life. The cognitive orientation of health appears to be affected more directly by quality of life, and by meaningfulness of life more indirectly through the relation of the latter with quality of life. The impact of covid-19 on the findings was relatively limited. A major conclusion is that the basic structure of the three variables was maintained preserving their supportive role in the psychological system.

Keywords: *Covid-19, meaningfulness of life, quality of life, cognitive orientation of health, emotion.*
