



Theraplay

*Helping Parents and Children Build Better Relationships
Through Attachment-Based Play*

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Disclosure Information

I have no financial relationships to disclose



Learning Objectives

Learning Objective #1: Describe the basic assumptions of Theraplay

Learning Objective #2: Understand the Marshak Interaction Method assessment tool

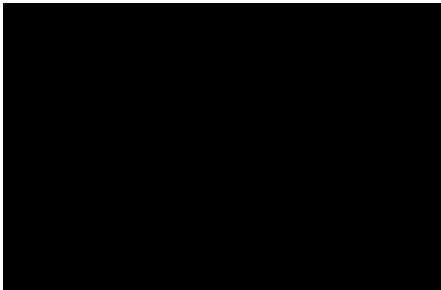
Learning Objective #3: Name the four dimensions of Theraplay: structure, engagement, nurture, challenge



A Theraplay Experience



Video Example



A Theraplay Interaction

- What do you notice about the treatment—how does it differ from other forms of child therapy?
- What are the child and parent experiencing?
- What do you notice about the practitioner?



What is Theraplay?

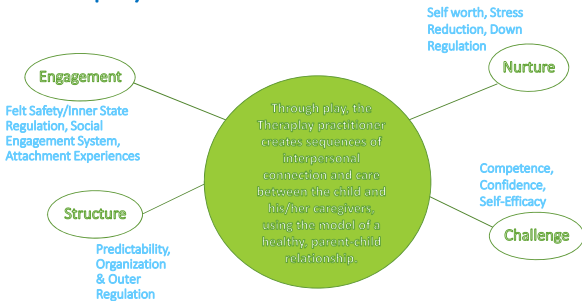
- Proactive, intensive, relationship focused parent-child treatment model
- Modeled on the natural patterns of healthy interaction between parents and child
- Parents are actively involved in the treatment
- The practitioner and parents work together to engage the child
- Treatment involves respectful, emotionally attuned, interactive, physical play
- Principles are based on attachment theory, intersubjectivity, brain research and play



The Four Dimensions of Theraplay



Theraplay Dimensions



Characteristics of Structure in the Infant- Parent Relationship

- Adult helps baby become physically regulated
- Focus on the body
- Play activities have a sequence and rhythm
- Basic safety, caregiving and play routines set up predictable sequences of organized interaction

Structure in Theraplay – Role of Practitioner

- Adult is responsible leader
- Adult assures child of order
- Create a positive experience for the parent/child
- Create environmental regulation
- Establish relational regulation
- Teaches each child to be in control of self
- Addresses inner and outer disorder



Forms the basis for predictability, safety and co-regulated interaction



Structure in Treatment

Structured activities benefit:

CHILDREN:

- Overactive
- Undirected
- Overstimulated
- Want to be in control

CAREGIVERS:

- Poorly regulated/disorganized
- Have difficulty setting limits/Lack confidence
- Rely on verbal/cognitive structuring
- Over/under stimulating

Structure Video #2



Structure Activities

- Stack of Hands
- Trace Hands



Characteristics of Engagement in the Infant-Parent Relationship

- Adult is attuned to the baby's state
- Adult is responsive to the infant to help baby regulate/integrate physical and emotional states
- Caregiver is focused on baby in an exclusive way to provide soothing and delightful interactions

Engagement in Theraplay –Role of Practitioner

- Uses own Social Engagement System (SES) to engage the parent’s and child’s SES.
- Focuses on the child intense/personal
- Uses the child’s verbal and physical cues to maintain engagement
- Promote a calm physiological state (neuroception of safety)
- Engage the parent/child in attachment enhancing experiences: attunement, synchrony, repair of mis-attunements, co-regulation, moments of meeting



Child feels safe, is enticed and drawn out



Engagement in Treatment

Engagement Activities Benefit:

CHILDREN:

- Withdrawn
- Avoidant
- Rigid

CAREGIVERS:

- Disengaged
- Preoccupied/inattentive,
- Out of synch with the child
- Verbal/cognitive engagement only
- Who do not enjoy the child

Engagement Video #2



Engagement Activities

- Patty Cake
- Make a 4 Part Handshake



Characteristics of Nurture in the Infant-Parent Relationship

- Adult selects activities that are soothing, quieting, reassuring
- Makes the world feel safe, predictable, warm, secure
- Child develops the expectation “people will take care of me” and “good things happen to me”

Nurture in Theraplay – Role of Practitioner

- Sets up several gentle, caring, soothing activities (feeding child)
- Meets the child’s unfulfilled younger needs
- Looks for opportunities to express appreciation/concern
- Looks for opportunities to care for child/parent



Builds the inner working model of the child as valued and loveable.
Down regulates hyper aroused children & reduces stress



Nurture in Treatment

Nurture Activities benefit:

CHILDREN:

- Overactive
- Aggressive
- Pseudo-mature

CAREGIVERS:

- Dismissive
- Harsh
- Punitive
- Difficulty with touch/displaying affection

Nurture Video #1



Nurture Activities

- Warm hands
- Draw an imaginary drawing on back of hand



Challenge in the Infant-Parent Relationship

- Adult selects activities to help the child extend him/herself, yet appropriate to the child’s developmental level
- Allows child to master tension-arousing experiences (extend finger to grab, Peek-a-Boo, Soooo Big)

Challenge in Theraplay – Role of Practitioner

- Support the child’s growth within the zone of proximal development
- Select and guide parent/child in activities that require a partnership/collaboration
- Encourage the child to take mild age appropriate risk.



The intention is that by completing these challenge activities, the child feels more competent/confident.
Self-efficacy develops.



Challenge in Tx - Benefits

CHILDREN:

- Withdrawn
- Timid
- Rigid

PARENTS:

- Have inappropriate developmental expectations
- Competitive

Challenge Video #2



Challenge Activities

- 3 Rounds of Thumb Wrestling
- Feather Pass



Importance of Play



Joy changes the brain in positive ways and counter-acts negative emotions

J. Panksepp, researcher on genetics of play



Play In Theraplay – Role of Practitioner

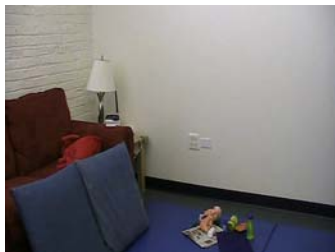
- Leads a series of simple face to face play activities
- Recruits the parent's and child's PLAY energies
- The activities are frequently up-regulating but can be brought down in arousal as necessary.



Creates moments of joyful interaction, pleasure, success and cooperation.



Parent Demo Session



Theraplay & Trauma



Behavioral Effects of Complex Trauma

- Lack of joy, humor
- Lack of reciprocal enjoyment
- Lack of eye contact
- Lack of selective attachment; indiscriminately charming
- Lack of empathy
- Lack of guilt and remorse
- Lack of appropriate communication
- Lack of inner-state language
- Lack of cause/effect thinking
- Lack of awareness of bodily functions
- Lack of appropriate physical boundaries
- Lack of a continuous sense of self



Core Elements of Experience for Healing Trauma

- Relational (safe)
- Relevant (developmentally matched)
- Repetitive (patterned)
- Rewarding (pleasurable)
- Rhythmic (resonant with neural patterns)
- Respectful (take the child, family and cultural values into account)



Why Theraplay with Children Impacted by Trauma?

- Focuses on building the attachment relationship
 - Helps children deal with trauma
 - Trauma can disrupt the attachment relationship
- Helps the child feel safe and calm
- Helps the child learn to relax and have fun



Theraplay Training and Certification

- **Join** the Theraplay Association
- **Register** for a Training
- **Become** a Certified Theraplay Therapist
- **Participate** in Peer Supervision
- **Observe** Supervision Online
- **Contact** Gloria Cockerill, Training Director @ Gloria@Theraplay.com
- **Visit** our website for future training dates and more info @ www.Theraplay.org



Upcoming Theraplay Trainings

Upcoming Level 1 Trainings in US:	TBD
2017 Group Theraplay Trainings in US:	TBD
2017 What is Theraplay Training in US:	TBD