

Research on scribbling and its different stages



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Scribbling is a process that involves writing or drawing hurriedly without heed to style or legibility. It can also be said to be part of natural human behavior that involves playing, processing and manipulating. It usually comes naturally as a child explore and discover many new things in his or her surroundings. Children begin to scribble roughly at the age of 2 years and continue until they are 4 years old. Scribbling has got various phases and each of these phases reflects a child development.

The first phase of scribbling is known as random scribbles. This phase is characterized by a child making haphazard marking on walls, papers or any other surface. The random scribbles form the basis of writing and drawing. During this time a child make accidental and tentative lines with varying length, size, shape, and direction. Random scribbles are done using whole arm movement with a crayon or any other tool that can be used for drawing since the child has not yet developed fine muscle control. At this phase the child making scribbles is not fully aware that the marks that are being made on the surface are coming from him and that is why he may not look at the surface as he scribbles. As the child's brain develops, he begins figuring out that the marks being made are coming from him and thus he starts to scribble more enthusiastically.

The second phase is the controlled scribbles. These are scribbles made by a child who is already aware that the marks made on a paper are coming from him. At this level the child recognizes that he can control the marks since his brain is more developed. At this stage the child has developed enough muscle control. He will try to make different kinds of squiggles and marks using repeated motions. The child also has better motor and visual control

over his scribbles and with time he become more elaborate and spends much of her time scribbling.

The third phase is known as the named scribbles and it is at this stage that a child begins labeling the scribbles. His mind has developed well enough for him to realize that the shapes he has made resemble real objects in the world. The drawing at this level may not be very different with those in level two but the child mind has certainly grown making him to have a purpose in mind as he draws. For example a child may have an intention of drawing a person but on hearing someone else mention something else he changes his mind and draws whatever is mentioned instead e. g. an orange and try to name it.

Adults too scribble when they are bored or as a form of abstract art. This may be utilized by a therapist as a form of art therapy because it is inexpensive, easy to implement, effective and also enjoyable. In order to understand how scribbling in adults can be used as a form of art therapy it is important that we understand what an art therapy is. It is a form of interpersonal process where a trained therapist apply the curative power of art systematically to help an individual resolve the psychological difficulties they may be undergoing through as well as preventing future ones.

Scribbling in adults can be used as a tool to help them get away from conscious drawing and hence be able to tap into their imaginations or unconscious feeling. In this case the therapist will be concerned with helping the client to consciously or unconsciously express their inner self in form of art. Before the therapist can use scribbling as a form of art therapy on a patient it is important for him to find out what exactly the client is going

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through. With this in mind he she will be able to know the correct path to use. Research has found out that most people scribble their worries especially when they are undergoing through a very difficult psychological crisis. The best way to help a client to do this is ensuring that you as a therapist provide a very conducive environment where a client can truly focus on his or her inner self. With focus the client can be able to learn how to listen himself in an empowered way which enable him to have an access to the inner wisdom. This method has been found to be very effective to people who are depressed for a variety of reasons and it is for a therapist to guide them on how to be able to express their feeling through scribbled drawings.

An art-based therapeutic intervention is a form of therapy that is expressed through the use of art materials such as markers, paints, and chalk. It is the duty of an art therapist to determine the materials and interventions that are appropriate based on his or her client's need. On deciding the materials and the intervention to use an art therapist then design different sessions which will help him to achieve therapeutic goals and objectives he wanted. For example, when using an art based therapeutic intervention on a clients who may have been sexually abused when they were young, the art therapist will have to use very creative processes to help this clients to increase judgment and insight so as to be able to cope well with the stress. During this time an art therapist uses drawings and paintings to discuss and interpret with the person who is traumatized the meaning a particular painting or drawing has to him or her and how this may relate to the psychological problems they are experiencing. During this time the clients are able to communicate their

psychological emotions, conflicts and issues they are facing. The clients are able to express their unspoken concerns about the problem they are facing.

During an art therapy session the client facing this kind of problems may be encouraged to create image of the person who was abusing them sexually when they were young. This way, they can express feelings about the bitterness harbored in their hearts, which may be hard to talk about or may be unconscious. The therapist concerned has to be very attentive and focused so as to recognize any finer detail that may be expressed either through metaphors or nonverbal symbols. As the intervention proceeds the client is able to discover the major underlying feelings and thoughts that are being communicated to them through artwork. The major emphasis in this form of therapy is the inner feelings and imaginations of the clients. Some of the therapeutic effects of art therapy are reduction of anxiety levels & improving recovery times. This is easily achievable through art therapy because a client is able to express his or her inner feelings better hence removing all the bitterness in his or her heart which enable them to face the problem they are facing more positively. This form of treatment is can be used to people with chronic illnesses like cancer, sexually abused adolescents, people with eating disorders.

Sandplay/ sandtray involve a process in which a client is given a chance to express his feelings by means of figures and a sand arrangement in an area bounded by a sand box. This setup is aimed to correspond to the inner state of the client. During sandplay the clients are provided with small figures which they are supposed to give a formal realization to their internal feelings. These figures should represent as complete as possible animate

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and inanimate beings we encounter in the inner imaginative world as well as in the external world e. g. men, women, trees, stones, soldiers, houses, plants, vehicles, e. t. c. Sandplay can be employed on a variety of patients, for example it can be used on a client suffering from psychotic disorder. During the sandplay the relativising encounter of the client's ego with other forces is brought out. A lot of emphasis is put on the totality of the client's body and spirit. Individuals with psychotic disorder normally feel unworthy and therefore the meaning of life is lost. This is normally attributed to the loss of connection between the feelings and the body due to the negative aspect of the spirit. This lack of connection is characterized by contempt for feeling making an individual to be unsure of his or her feeling. Through sandplay this connection can be brought back hence making the client to have a meaning of life once again.

Sandplay is beneficial for these kinds of population because it provide a means through which healing, self-discovery and integration can be achieved. Through sandplay these individuals who cannot be able to articulate their experiences and feelings can find a channel to do so. Also the use of sand provides a good, non threatening approach to the client's inner world, and a safe space to explore life situations and feelings that may be overwhelming. It provide a very powerful approach to trauma counseling thus providing a pathway to access and express internal experiences For this reason, sandtray can be fit in a variety of other orientations like the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). CBT is a method that is used to help a client become fully aware of the factors which are causing psychological distress, and what are the behaviors which are reinforcing it so as to be able

to correct them. Since it is not possible to correct every distortion that a client may be facing, cognitive behavioral therapy helps in dealing with just those factors which may be the root cause of the problem. This means that sandtray can be fit in this form of therapy so as to be able to unearth the inner fears that a client may be facing. This is possible because it creates a protected environment which is essential for a client to fully open up his or her inner self. This process can help one objective of CBT which is helping a client to acquire coping strategies and improved skills of awareness which in turn help them to manage their own future without the help of a therapist.

In order for sandtray to fit into this orientation (CBT) a few modifications need to be done. In this case the modification will be done on the approach that CBT uses in order to achieve the intended objective. Some of the approaches that CBT uses include,; rational emotive behavior therapy, cognitive therapy and multimodal therapy. However, the therapeutic technique that each approach uses varies from one problem to another. This means that the modification to be done will be dependent on therapeutic technique to be used. For example, if a client has a strong fear of walking under trees due to the impression that a squirrel will jump onto his or her head, CBT will use a therapeutic techniques that will prevent a client from acquiring this false information that contradicts hi thoughts. Sandtray on the other hand will assist the client in overcoming this problem by employing a natural developmental medium play. Since this medium does not require artistic skills or verbal dialogue, most of the clients feel comfortable when given a chance to play in sand without anyone judging them. This is very important for therapist because with time they are able to access safely the

inner emotions of the clients and thus help them overcome the anxiety they may be facing.

The process of integrating sandtray in cognitive behavioral therapy may however face some challenges. One major challenge that this process face is that most client at fast are not comfortable using sandtray in therapy because they fear that they will be asked to play in sand which is childish to them. To overcome this challenge it is important to educate the client what sandtray is and show him or her that it is a very powerful technique that will help them be fully in control of their healing process.