The Phenomenological Research on Experiencing the Stillpoint in Sandplay therapy*

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<Abstract>

This study is a qualitative study of how the stillpoint might be experienced in sandplay therapy. we selected Van Manen's categories for phenomenological questions and reflections: lived space, lived time, lived relations, and lived body. We added an additional categories because of their importance in psychotherapy: lived emotions. We understood the lived body was 1) stillness, 2) Tears filling the clients' eyes; Lived time was 1) Intersection of the past, the present, and the future, 2) Kairos time; Lived space was 1) Temenos within the temenos, 2) Space of the beginning; Lived relations were 1) Worldly relations, in terms of symbolic experiences, 2) Recognition of a different aspect of self in the inner world, 3) Spiritual relations; lived emotions were 1) Catharsis, 2) Divinity. In addition, We understood the essential meaning of the stillpoint was flow and Transcendence.

Keywords : still point, sandplay therapy, analytic psychology, phenomenology

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I. Introduction

The theme of the 23rd International Society for Sandplay Therapy (ISST) Congress held in 2015 in Ottawa, Canada was "Finding the Stillpoint... at the Crossroads." Upon hearing the theme, we became concerned about making preparations for the Congress (Participants are normally provided with the theme a year ahead of the Congress.). The concept of the stillpoint rarely comes up in sandplay therapy and thus we were unfamiliar with it. A year later at the Congress, we could see that Dr. Brenda Weinberg, who opened the first plenary session, had shared our concerns. In her introductory paragraph, Dr. Weinberg wanted to discuss what the stillpoint is, because she realized that sandplay therapists and students do not often meet the phrase "the stillpoint" explicitly in the sandplay literature, aside from those in the list of references provided by ISST committee. Her presentation seemed to console us as well as our year-long difficult journey in search of the stillpoint in sandplay therapy. Dr. Weinberg (2015) further went on to say that the stillpoint was clearly mentioned in page 250 of Mary Jane Markell's book *Sand, Water, Silence - The Embodiment of Spirit* where she mentions the word "mystic center" together with a sandpicture forming the shape of a mandala. Having done a meticulous study on literature and sandplay therapy in relation to the stillpoint, Markell's wordings resonated deep with us. As she said, the stillpoint indeed can be referred to as the "mystic center."

Experiencing the stillpoint, or the mystic center as described by Markell, while engaging in sandplay therapy at times offers clients an opportunity to contact the energy of whole psyche. The experience normally requires the development of clients' consciousness, and even the death of the old conscious, the emergence of a new conscious, and the relationship with the Self. While experiencing the stillpoint, clients may, through careful observations or even unconsciously, sense bodily movements and energy changes. They may come to perceive invisible orders and patterns found in the dynamics of ordinary life surrounding the stillpoint.

While looking through various literature we found that the word stillpoint first made its appearance in a poem by T.S. Eliot. The stillpoint in the poem is described as follows:

*At the still point of the turning world.
Neither flesh nor fleshless..
And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered..
Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.*

Here the stillpoint is an agent for immobility, a point where the past and future unite as well as a point of becoming conscious, existing outside of time. Becoming conscious represents breaking away from the chains of the present, past and future, and achieving a strong and enhances consciousness where one becomes united with a god conscious of eternity (Yu, 2002).

Stillpoint continuously emerged in the works of Eliot thereafter. While it is difficult to formulate a clear definition of the stillpoint, works of Eliot suggest that the stillpoint can be divided largely into two concepts: "centricity" and "integrity." The latter is the integration of all concepts opposite to the concept of centricity. Expressions in Eliot's poems that suggest the qualities of centricity include "axle-tree," "reality," "love," "intense moment," "God," "the point of intersection of the timeless," and "sudden illumination." Expressions that suggest the qualities of integrity are "neither flesh nor fleshless," "limitation between un-being and being," "the stillness the dancing," "the way up is the way down," and "the way forward is the way back." The stillpoint is not fixed on one or the other; the two concepts of the stillpoint coexist in the works of Eliot. He sometimes used the concept of centricity and at other times the concept of integrity. While many scholars have arguments of their own with regard to the stillpoint, they all share the concept of centricity and the union of the opposites. The stillpoint is the power to reconcile and resolve different or conflicting concepts, a spiritual center, and encompasses the concept of a certain absolute (Cornwell, 1962).

Eliot pursued a certain "framework" that may contain the absolute perfection itself together with its processes and ideas. That framework was the stillpoint. He discovered the possibility for everything to become merged and interpreted within this framework. To Eliot, the stillpoint can accommodate all concepts referring to perfection; it is a framework that is

capable of resolving all different concepts and placing all on the same horizon for interpretation (Kim, 2004). Eliot was of the view that what appeared to be opposites have the same central point in which order and harmony are achieved, and described that central point as the stillpoint (Yu, 2002).

An association can be made between the stillpoint and the transcendental function of symbols in sandplay therapy. In sandplay therapy, opposite qualities forming order and harmony toward the central archetype of the Self and eventually achieving union is referred to as the transcendental function. Center and union, the two major qualities of the transcendental function, is in consonance with the two major qualities of the stillpoint, centricity and integrity.

Jung (1950) asserted that the stillpoint is the Self, an ultimate state of the transcendental function. His assertion is in sync with the views of Eliot and Cornwell on the stillpoint. Jung explained that the individuation process is achieving self-realization. His process of self-realization is similar to the process of reaching the state of unity toward the perfection of the stillpoint.

With that said, this study's definition of the stillpoint encompasses the transcendental function of symbols and Jung's self-realization process in which the Self becomes individualized. Jung noted that self-realization is achieved through three stages: awareness of the shadow, awareness of the animus/anima and awareness of the Self. Therefore the definition of the stillpoint in this study naturally includes all of these three stages.

Building on the abovementioned definition, this study sought to find the stillpoint in sandplay therapy. In other words, this study sought for the answers to the following questions: How is the stillpoint manifested in sandplay therapy? How is the stillpoint experienced in sandplay therapy? What is the meaning of stillpoint experiences?

The objective of this study was to understand stillpoint as it is by giving vivid accounts of the stillpoint experience in sandplay therapy, and to find the essential meaning of the stillpoint experience. To this end, we first conducted a literature review to see how the stillpoint was applied and used in sandplay therapy and analytical psychology, from which we formulated the definition of the stillpoint. Second, building on that definition we selected sandpictures of different cases in which the stillpoint seemed to have taken place. Taking into

account clients' verbal expressions and therapists' impressions and observations, we attempted to interpret the selected pictures in accordance with the theories and techniques of a sandplay therapy as envisioned by Dora Kalff, which rests on Carl Jung's analytical psychology. Third, we conducted in-depth interviews with clients to hear the accounts of their experiences. Fourth, while trying to avoid being guided by the theories and techniques of Kalfian sandplay therapy, we simultaneously made the effort to take a phenomenological approach, which illuminates the specific by reflectively looking at a phenomenon in a new light.

To reiterate what is stated above, on one hand we tried to understand clients' world in the sandtray strictly from the viewpoint of Kalfian sandplay therapy, which is based in Jungian analytical psychology. Sandplay therapy, a technique conceived by Dora Kalff and inspired by the analytical psychology of Carl Jung, is a nonverbal therapy method that facilitates the innate healing ability of the psyche (Lee, 2010). Theories of Jungian analytical psychology and theories and techniques of Kalfian sandplay therapy themselves are sandplay therapy. Therefore, sandplay itself needs to be first explored in order to look into the phenomenal qualities of the stillpoint and to find its essential meanings.

On the other hand, we abandoned interpretations based on the theories and techniques of a Kalfian sandplay therapy. It is because a phenomenological approach is independent from objective tools and instead bases itself on the concrete, vivid reality and the experience of the agent to apprehend the meaning of human experiences and phenomena.

We anticipated that our attempt would make a small contribution to understanding the mystic experience in sandplay therapy.

The following are the key questions of this study:

First, how is the stillpoint manifested in sandplay therapy, and how do clients and therapists experience the stillpoint? How can this phenomenon be interpreted from the viewpoint of analytical psychology?

Second, what is the meaning of the stillpoint experience in sandplay therapy?

Third, what are the essential meanings of this phenomenon?

II. Methods and Procedures

1. Participants

Participants of this study were four clients who received sandplay therapy: Jina, Jane, Kim, and Kang. Their basic information is outlined in Table 1. Other information including chief complaints, family background and history are contained in the section of case discussion.

Table 1. Participants of the study

Name	Sex	Age	Marital Status
Jina	Female	42	Married
Jane	Female	36	Married
Kim	Female	58	Married
Kang	Female	46	Married

2. Method

First, this study conducted a literature review to examine how the expression of the stillpoint came about as well as how the stillpoint is applied and used in sandplay therapy and analytical psychology.

Once the review had been completed, this study selected, for a period of a month from October to November of 2014, sandpictures of sessions considered as the stillpoint experience from four sandplay therapy cases. After selecting a total of five sandpictures-one to two sandpictures from each client-we looked closely into clients' verbal expressions as well as therapists' impressions and observations, and also made interpretations of the pictures from the viewpoint of Jungian analytical psychology.

Then we had in-depth interviews with the clients for a month in December 2014. The interview was held once a week for a total of three per client, each lasting 1-2 hours. Clients were asked to describe what they had experienced during the selected sandpicture session, focusing specifically on the feelings and emotions they had experienced. What was

found in each interview allowed the next interview to proceed at a deeper level. When we felt the need to further confirm certain parts while writing down and analyzing the interview contents, we had additional face-to-face meetings with the clients to make sure that the data collected was as accurate and detailed as possible. Data collection, analysis and writing were all done in a cyclic, spiral process.

Through these measures we sought to see the stillpoint experienced by clients as it is, and to discover the essential meaning of that experience. But in order to do so, a certain “framework” was necessary because the stillpoint, being an abstract concept, has qualities that cannot be identified in a visible manner. We agreed that Van Manen’s (1994) four lifeworld existentials, productive categories for the process of phenomenological questioning and reflecting, would be an appropriate analytic framework for this study. In other words, lived space, lived time, lived relation and lived body were selected as the framework for analysis. Here we added the category of “lived emotion,” because we believed that emotion is the most important element of psychotherapy.

To test the validity of this study, first our interpretations of the data were confirmed by the clients. Second, we as colleagues and co-researchers of this study shared our views as often as possible. Lastly, the pictures were examined by two sandplay therapists/supervisors at the Korea Society of Sandplay Therapy. The overall structure of the study process is outlined in Picture 1:

Picture 1. Structure of the study process

3. Data Collection and Interpretation

Related data was collected in the period of around 12 months, from August 2014 to August 2015. Data collection involved the method of an in-depth interview: three in-depth interviews were conducted for each client.

Collected data was analyzed and interpreted according to techniques of suspension of judgment and phenomenological reduction as well as eidetic intuition. More specifically, the methods of suspension of judgment and phenomenological reduction were used to collect vivid raw data unaffected by prejudice and judgment. And the method of eidetic intuition was employed in analyzing the data to discover the essence of the stillpoint experience. By doing so we attempted to explore not only the realistic structure-existing within the real, everyday life-but also the essential structure of the clients' stillpoint experience.

We also categorized the data based on space, body, time and relationship, which is accepted among phenomenologists as a guide to study the life world reflectively (Seo, 2006), and at the same time attempted phenomenological writing. In addition, together with themes found by the aforementioned categorization effort, we tried to find themes that are consistent in the five axes of Van Manen's time, space, body, relationship together with emotions so as to understand the realistic and essential structures of clients' stillpoint experiences.

III. Stillpoint in Sandplay Therapy

1. Jane's Case

Figure 1 was created by Jane, a 36-year-old female client. When Jane was young her parents had earned their living by making cabinets inlaid with mother-of-pearl. At a young age, Jane was sexually harassed by one of her parents' male coworkers. When she was a first grader at an elementary school, a storm hit and flooded not only her house but also the entire village. She remembered being frozen in horror, waiting for someone to come and rescue her. Her father's frequent drinking generated a deep conflict between her parents, and thus Jane

grew up in a rather chaotic environment. She worked hard to become a professional photographer despite her parents' opposition, but marriage and child-rearing compelled her to pursue her dream no more. Jane as a mother was usually generous, warm, energetic, sensitive, and loving. But when her children made mistakes or behaved inappropriately that would result in negative feedback from others, she was unable to control her temper. She became violent-swear, shouting, and throwing whatever was in her hands-like a ferocious storm. After the storm swept over, a severe headache and indigestion would overwhelm her that she could only lie down in bed, unable to move an inch.

Figure 1. Jane's sandpicture

The following is Jane's description of her creation:

"The turtles are here for a ritual; they are the manager of this place. Today is the day of a massive ritual that is held once a year. (Pointing to the red turtle) Wearing special clothes, [the turtles] are praying for the storm not to come. This is a very sacred place inside an underwater palace in the depth of the sea."

Jane's story reminded us of what Dora Kalff said about a transpersonal moment that encompasses archetypal events or the great sacredness (Weinrib, 1983). Awe, sacredness, fear and other energies of unknown were strongly felt from Jane as she stared at her sandpicture. It seemed that Jane had gone down deep and was inside the sacred primal world, the realm of the collective unconscious. A strong, sacred light as well as darkness emanated from her and

her sandpicture.

We can see the four turtles moving toward the center of the sandtray. Turtles often appear in creation myths of various cultures as a symbol of a new beginning.

A huge star, a symbol of wholeness, created a shadow in the center that looked like a butterfly or a high altar. Jane was fond of the star figure and used it in many of her sandpictures. The star symbolizes the potential for the development of a new conscious. A five-pointed star represents number five. With regard to number 5, Theodor (2005/2008) said that just as the opposites (lovers) attract each other or unify qualities, as alchemists wrote, the number 5 has a unique erotic (sexual) character. It is also related to Aphrodite, the goddess of love. Therefore, the number 5 suggests the need for relationship, its possibility, and actual achievement in real life. We felt that the use of the star in this tray suggested that the stars in her deep dark psyche were shining brightly.

Nearby the star coral, the tree of the sea or the tree of life in the unconscious. Jane said that while ordinary people may consider the coral beautiful, it looks scary to the sinners, and that it does in fact scare them. Her remarks seemed to represent her attitude toward life.

Nearby was a conch shell. For thousands of years men have altered the conch shell to serve as a trumpet (Jackson, 1917). The lips vibrate as the breath blows through the conch to create a deep sound that can project over long distances. The ancient Greek god of the sea, Triton, son of Poseidon and Amphitritem is always depicted holding a conch trumpet that he blows to create waves or calm storms (Steinhardt, 2000/2010). It looked as if the client wished to settle the storms that may come at any time, just as the ancient Greek gods did.

The abalone has been used in sandplay as a container of pure spirit, or as a fertile womb filled with objects related to birth and transformation (Steinhardt, 2010). Jane carefully filled the inside the abalone shell with water. Water symbolizes purification, cleansing filth and making it anew. The energy of purification seemed to flow inside the client.

For a while Jane sat with her eyes closed and back straight, taking a deep breath. No sound could be heard in the therapy room, except the ticking sound from the wall clock. Jane commented that the sound of the clock ticking reminded her of the sound of amoktak (wooden percussion instrument used for chanting by Buddhist clergy), which made her feel at

ease. She and the therapist felt simultaneously the transformation of physical sound into sacred energy. Together with Jane, the therapist, too, could feel something sacred flowing inside her body, mind, psyche and soul.

Jane was normally outgoing, active and talkative, with a loud voice and exaggerated gestures. She often cried while talking. Unlike in her other sessions, she created this sandpicture in a quiet and calm manner and stared at it in silence for quite a long time. The therapist became very quiet as well as well. Jane experienced the stillpoint in this session, which she described as follows:

"It looks interesting... I can feel safety and tranquility, also peace, sacredness, astonishment and stillness. I feel as if I am inside a place of great depth."

Creation of this sacred and creative sandpicture granted Jane with a stillpoint experience. Although Jane's outer reality did not change much afterwards, the way she coped with her external situations underwent significant changes. For instance, during the entire two-week period between this session and the next one, Jane and her children had to stay home as kindergartens and schools were closed due to the spread of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) virus. But Jane found that she was able to maintain a state of peace and calm during those two weeks. When came to her next session, Jane reported that she had time to think about many things while staying at home, and came to the realization that she had never done anything with genuine passion in her life. Although her dream was to become a professional photographer, she had never exerted herself to actually become one. Jane declared that she would start carrying her camera with her at all times to take pictures and hold an exhibition at least once a year. Just being able to talk about her dreams made her feel better and more energetic.

2. Jina's Case

Figures 2 and 3 were created by a 42-year-old woman named Jina. Jina had suffered many big, unexpected troubles in her life. She had a high degree of depression and anxiety, and reacted sensitively to mildly stressful situations. She was also under a lot of stress from

Figure 2. Jina's sandpicture (Session 11)

child rearing; her two children were also receiving psychotherapy at the time.

Jina described her sandpicture as follows:

"This is a scene of a raining country garden, or a scene after the rain. The place is tediously quiet, and yet amid the silence there is serenity and tranquility. I used to visit my grandma's house in the countryside when I was young. I had so much fun and many special experiences there."

The therapist felt grace and composure from Jina, her creation and her story. Around the edges of the tray were a stone bowl, three ceramic vases, four earthenware pots, a stone mortar and an iron pot. These objects have one thing in common: they all are containers. Jung (1977) said that containers represent the ability to maintain composure.

The therapist also felt a strong inner energy from Jina's voice. Her eyes were shining brightly, and her voice, although calm, emanated strength. Looking at the child figure who was wearing a winnowing basket over his head, Jina shared her childhood story:

"This child reminds me of the time when I wet my bed during my first year in elementary school. Afraid of being scolded, I lied to my mom that my younger brother had done it. Since I was young, I have often found myself needing to go to the bathroom frequently. At night, I would be nervous that something might happen so I always clutched the blanket tightly while going to sleep."

Traditionally in Korea if children wet the bed, they would be forced to visit their neighbors, while wearing a winnowing basket on their head, to ask for salt. The salt children earned from the neighbors has both traditional and symbolical meanings as Koreans believed that the salt defeats bad spirits and also replenishes the sodium lost through urine. While experiencing a withdrawal of affection or being an object of ridicule among their family and neighbor, children may feel inner frustration and conflict and thereby gain an opportunity to correct their ill behaviors and attempt to step into the world of independence, away from the parents. We can hypothesize that this is the kind of energy Jina came across in this session.

Looking at the lotus placed directly in front of her, Jina expressed her satisfaction over the figure:

"It's beautiful. The lotus grows being surrounded by mud and muck. It's amazing how such a beautiful flower can bloom in dirty water. I wish to become like the lotus. It is not only beautiful to the eyes, but also has the ability to purify something dirty. The lotus is invaluable in every way; that is the kind of person I want to be."

While listening, the therapist was convinced that Jina was already living a life like the lotus. Jina continued on to talk about a Korean folktale "Shimchung," which is a story about a girl who sold herself for 300 sacks of rice in order to give sight to her blind father Shim. Jina expressed her anger over Shim's incompetency in the story, adding that her father and Shim are alike.

In this session Jina talked about her past, present and future. The memories of her grandmother's house, the life she had lived to date, how others perceive her in outer reality (a perfectionist, cold-hearted, angry, scary-looking, as well as her nagging that makes others uncomfortable, etc.), and the kind of person she wishes to become in the future (living a life like a lotus, living a genuine life, becoming a warm and humorous person, etc.). We felt that the sandpicture was filled with the energy of transformation, and that Jina was communicating with her deep inner realm through the sandpicture representing her past, present and future.

A week later, Jina created the following sandpicture:

Figure 3-a. Jina's sandpicture (Session 12)

Figure 3-b. Jina's sandpicture (Session 12)

The sandpicture was filled with lights having the quality of strength, sacredness and transcendence.

"It seems that the mermaid is watching over everything. Apparently, she is telling me that something important and valuable is coming through the light, something that allows me to look at myself in a very careful, quiet and entirely new fashion. This [scene] looks like a masquerade or the beach. There is a feeling of something mystical, extraordinary and sacred. It looks like a ritual. It's a ritual that counters unseen evil and protects the country as well as love, a ritual that goes back to the past and sees the present and the future."

Jina placed a star at the center and eight crystal candle holders around it, forming the shape of a mandala. Then, as if holding a solemn ritual, she lit each candle one by one. Watching this activity gave the therapist a sacred, austere and solemn feeling.

Other figures Jina used were three silver masks, a crystal shoe, a glass pyramid, crystal shells containing a jewel and a small glass marble.

"The masks are so beautiful, mysterious, and powerful. On one hand, I want to hide them. But I think the masks want me to say something."

With that said, Jina cried for a long time and talked about what she had to suffer in life, the pains that she did not share even with the therapist up until then.

Among the figures used, the ones that strongly affected Jina's emotions were the silver masks. Silver has long been associated with self-reflection and the moon, and consequently also Narcissus as well as lunacy (http://www.impossiblemachine.com/alchemy_silver.html). To go over the masks one by one, it appeared that the one in front of the pyramid represented her father's brutality and rage. He had a borderline intellectual disability, was involved in a major traffic accident, and experienced mobility difficulty due to a serious burn on his leg. He usually spent time at home drinking and abusing the client verbally and physically. The one next to the glass shoe could represent her mother's psychological illness, and the one in the center area possibly represented the client in between her mother and father. From a young age, Jina grew up watching her father beheading pigs in their front yard, and her mother removing the innards from their bodies. At the age of 7, Jina had to follow her mother around to sell pig intestines at the market. She admitted that back then the first thing that she did when waking in the morning was to worry about having to sell the day's worth of intestines. Having to take part in the family business deprived Jina of the time to study for school at a young age.

Underachievement in school; maladjustment to school life; sexual harassment from her father and siblings; serious car accidents experienced by her father, uncle, husband and herself while going to the hospital to get a checkup during pregnancy; death of a close neighbor from a car accident; her mother's stay at a mental asylum; harsh treatments from her in-laws; and

her sick son-all of these contributed to Jina's anxiety and fear. Jina dreaded becoming mad like her parents and thus suffered from extreme anxiety.

The divine light of the eight candles and the starlight reminded us of the Noble Eightfold Path (Picture 2) in Buddhism. The Noble Eightfold Path consists of eight moral and sacred practices that and guide followers of Buddhism to a path to becoming noble.

Picture 2. Representation of the Noble Eight-fold Path in Buddhism

The first practice is "Right View," which represents having a right or true set of values when viewing oneself and the world. We can connect this to Jina's beginning to see and understand the outer world as it is. The second practice is "Right Thought," or seeing the reality as it is and having a rational way of thinking. We can assume Jina's reflection of the agony and distress her parents had experienced at her age, and her realization of their feeling frustrated and scared. The third practice is "Right Speech," ensuring that you speak the truth instead of speaking in vain. We may be able to allude to assume Jina's speaking gently and kindly to her children rather than nagging them. The fourth is "Right Conduct." We can assume Jina's beginning to behave well and attentively. The fifth practice is "Right Livelihood," which may be related to Jina's thinking about how she can become a good and responsible member of this society. The sixth practice is "Right Effort." This can be connected to Jina's comment that she wants to live a life like a lotus, filled with sincerity and vitality. The

seventh practice is "Right Mindfulness," in which one discards greed and becomes conscious of what he or she is doing. This is related to Jina's trying to love herself, recognize who she is as a person, and become mindful of her behaviors. The eighth practice is "Right Concentration," developing concentration and thereby becoming enlightened. Jina has already earned this capacity through her sandplay process, especially from this session.

We noticed the foregrounding of a "cross" in Jina's sandpicture (noting one axis from the 12 o'clock position to the 6 o'clock position, running through the star, and the other axis from the 9 o'clock position to the 3 o'clock position, also running through the star). Weinrib (1983/1995) wrote, "At a certain stage in the sandplay process the appearance of a cross in the sandpicture of these patients-some Christian, some not-indicates that they are experiencing the psychological equivalent of crucifixion. By crucifixion I mean psychological suspension between irreconcilable drives and values, resulting in prolonged emotional anguish, which can end in profound change..."

Jina commented that she was stuck where two roads-a new road of change and the old road on which she had walked before-intersect and needed make a decision between the two. It appeared that she not only was looking at the life she had lived-often horrible and terrifying, as if crucified-but also gained access to energy of forgiveness, reconciliation and love. Describing many of the difficulties her parents had to go through in their 40s, Jina explained that having her 40s she could finally understand and forgive her parents, and resonate with the fear they must have felt at her age. Jina first reconciled with herself, forgave her parents, and reconciled with them. There is a great difference between reconciliation and forgiveness. Stevens (2004) defined reconciliation as recovering a broken relationship and finding a solution to live together amid existing differences.

The cross in Jina's sandpicture has a strongly concentrated center. The large star at the center represents the constellation of the Self. The therapist felt that her ego has been nurtured by that Self energy and been reconstructed in relation to the Self. She seemed to have been able to withstand a very long-lasting tension and anxiety and accepted her shadow. The process of reaching reconciliation requires a change in one's identity. Accepting others not any longer as antagonists but as parents, who are only human and thus not perfect, is only

possible when one willingly changes oneself and accepts them in a way different from that of the past. So reconciliation possible only when the inner transformations of "forgiveness and repentance," "understanding the need for a reconciliation," and "breaking away from the past" take place (Kim, 2015).

When Jina came to therapy a week later, she looked far more relaxed. While there were no changes in her external world, there were a lot of changes in her attitude, the way she perceived her outer reality. Jina explained that she had spent her time tidying up her clothes and house, from which she had felt that her mind was tidied as well. During that one week period her son suffered from enteritis and so she had to visit the doctor. Unfortunately, the doctor who normally sees her son was not available for personal reasons. But unlike her previous self, Jina dealt with the stressful situation in a reasonable manner. In addition, Jina reported that her need to use the toilet had decreased. Jina had had the habit of using the toilet on a frequent basis. Although her home and the therapy room were only 15 minutes away, she always had to go to the bathroom before leaving home, soon after arriving at the therapy room, and right after a therapy session. But when this session was over, Jina did not go the bathroom and did not feel the need to until she arrived home. It was a first for her. We felt that these behavioral changes indicated Jina's practicing the Noble Eightfold Path in her life.

3. Kang's Case

Figure 4 is the sandpicture of a woman in her 40s named Kang. Kang had two mothers. When Kang's biological father and mother were unable to have a baby for quite some time after their marriage, the paternal grandparents forced the father to sleep with another woman. Kang's second mother became pregnant, and soon after Kang's biological mother became pregnant as well. Kang's biological mother had six children in total, Kang being the youngest. The second mother had four children. The father faithfully played his role as the head of two households. But Kang and her biological siblings were hurt by the fact that their father had two wives; it instilled a sense of inferiority in them. The father was a leadership figure in the area where Kang had grown up; he was a highly respected man. He

always taught his children not to waste life but to live a life of value. He was a man who practiced what he preached. Whereas Kang's siblings did not dare speak what was on their mind to their father, Kang had the courage to communicate her opinions to him in a logical fashion. Such personality of Kang led to great and small conflicts between the two, but among all his children the father cherished and trusted Kang the most. For years the father had struggled against cancer. Even while struggling against the disease, he would worry about not being able to walk Kang down the aisle during her wedding. Kang hurriedly set her wedding date for her father. The father's condition became so serious that he could not get up from bed even until the day before the wedding. His family, friends and even the doctor tried to talk him out of walking Kang down the aisle, saying that even attendance at the ceremony may not be an option. But on the very day of the wedding the father displayed a superhuman power to get up from bed and proudly walked Kang down the aisle. He passed away several weeks later.

Figure 4. Kang's sandpicture

The following is Kang's description of her sandpicture:

"The butterfly is my eternal mentor and the fruit of my love. It is my father who died 20 years ago. I miss him so much that it pains me to the marrow whenever I think of him. One day... a butterfly flew into the room where my father had often stayed. I intuitively felt it was "Father." Thereafter sights of butterflies reminded me of my father, which made me happy. I feel that emotion in secrecy, fearing that others may come to know of it. I placed the butterfly

symbolizing my father so that it would connect it to me forever. The house at the center is the house where I live... The turtle represents my faith, which I don't want anyone to know. It connects me to the butterfly and gives me strength. The strength sent by my father! I placed the turtle facing my father. [The turtle] for me is a much appreciated medium that delivers to me the strength of my father when I need it. I think I had a strong faith toward [the turtle] at the bottom of my heart..."

Silently and endlessly, tears rolled down from Kang's eyes as she gazed at her sandpicture. Eventually, she wept out loud.

"These tears are a mixture of my longing and love for my father, my coming to understand his having two wives, and my forgiveness."

Kang reported that she had felt her long resentment toward her father, which stemmed from his having two wives, transforming into understanding and forgiveness as she created the picture. Thinking about how the family situation must have distressed her father made her heart ache. She regretted not being good to him when he was alive. Kang claimed that she was determined to live a life of value, reaching out to those in need and contributing to society just as her father had done. Tears symbolize purification, healing and guidance towards individuation (Sung, 2015). The therapist felt that the energies of purification, healing and individuation were flowing inside Kang. Seeing Kang melting into tears reminded us that the process of transformation is profound and characterized by chaos, and is related to a sudden reorganization of the personal ego as well as the conscious recognition of who one is (Turner, 2005/2009).

Such transformation leads our ego to reach or even to surpass its limit. It takes us to the other side of the familiar reality, enabling our conscious to be more open to the Self. Taking part in this transcendental function brings irrevocable changes in our conscious, about who and what we are. This is the kind of change Kang underwent.

"I have begun to naturally accept everything-creating this sandpicture and talking about it-as if this is the life I foresaw."

Her story is in sync with the dramatic destruction of the limits of individual's perception, expansion of the awareness on what is possible and impossible, and the conformation of all with the central archetype of the Self (Turner, 2005/2009). Such form of sandplay therapy process clearly takes place when clients go down to the unconscious. Descending to the unconscious can occur at a time when clients intermittently rise back to the level of conscious in which they feel comfortable. The decent is characterized by profound darkness and powerful energy when the struggle between the polarities of a symbol reaches its peak at the opposing forces. In this process a unusual state of the ego is consciously observed. Together with the paralysis and the eventual death of the ego, a new product, which becomes well known by the archetype that directly describes the problem, becomes more attuned with the conscious Self (Turner, 2005). Kang was invested with such vitality.

"As I created the sandpicture, the strength to live surged incessantly from the bottom of my heart."

Kang's experience tells us that the unconscious contents and the conscious must become integrated in order for the transcendental function to develop. Kang achieved union between the two through the turtle, which mediates between the butterfly (the unconscious) and the house (the conscious). She was able to achieve centricity of the Self and at the same time expand her consciousness.

The butterfly generally symbolizes freedom, transformation, the wheel of life or resurrection (Kim, 2010). In this sandpicture the butterfly symbolized perpetuity, spirituality and the love of god; the house symbolized transience, materiality and the love of mankind; and the turtle symbolized harmony and union between the two.

Through self-realization of the unconscious Kang achieved individuation and experienced the centricity and integrity of the stillpoint. Kang said that during therapy, she had forgotten the flow of time and where she was, even the fact that the therapist was sitting in front of her. She had felt that she was alone in a space entirely of her own.

We witnessed that through the stillpoint, "the point of intersection of the timeless with time," Kang was able to combine transience and perpetuity, materiality and spirituality,

and the love of mankind and the love of god, thereby attaining in a world in which there is union with god. We also confirmed the existence of both centricity and integrity, two characteristics evident in the stillpoint experience and, as Jung (1950) said, that the stillpoint is the Self, the ultimate state of the transcendental function.

4. Kim's Case

Figure 5 was created by Kim, a woman in her mid-50s. Kim had three siblings: an older brother, an older sister, and a younger brother. Kim's father passed away when she was seven. Prior to her father's death, Kim's family was the most affluent in the neighborhood. Her family was always the first or the only one to have the latest home appliances; in fact, no one in the neighborhood had a television except for Kim. So all neighbors would always gather at her home. The house was crowded and full of something to eat all the time. Kim's father was the leader of the neighborhood and received much respect and trust from the people. Kim was always proud of her father. But after his death, the family fortune went downhill to the point that the mother was forced to go out and work to barely make ends meet. Kim's older sister was only interested in grooming herself, so Kim had to play the role of the mother and do all the household chores. She had to become strong for her family. Even her mother, who was born to wealth and never had to get her hands dirty, went out and face

Figure 5. Kim's sandpicture

hardships in the outer world for her children. Kim also had to make many sacrifices for her family, but she always made the effort to not lose her dream. Kim managed to graduate from a two-year college without receiving help from anyone, after which she transferred to a four-year university and received a bachelor's degree. When she reached her 40s, she earned a master's degree.

Kim described her sandpicture as follows:

"The marrying couple atop the mountain is praying for the strength to defeat the devil (the two-headed dinosaur) so that they can go to the world (the place where a group of golden dolphins are) behind the devil. At first I was scared of the devil...but now I am not afraid of it. I somehow feel a sense of intimacy with the devil. The marrying man and woman represent that life and death are not separate or that men and women are one. The man could be me, and the woman could be my husband. The couple also represents a combination of all things that are visible and invisible. In the old castle, an old lady and a young girl are living together. The old lady is comfortable and relaxed, and the girl is having fun. Somehow I think this old lady is like the Virgin Mary. Or my paternal grandmother. My paternal grandmother was very fond of me. She did whatever she could for me whenever I visited her. She gave unconditional love to not just me but to all her other grandsons and granddaughters."

The two-headed dinosaur in front of the bride and the groom seemed to symbolize Kim's shadow that has aggressive and destructive qualities. Calling this dinosaur a devil, Kim said, "At first I was scared of the devil...but now I am not afraid of it. I somehow feel a sense of intimacy with the devil." We made an association with the story of Moses and Al-Khidr in the Quran, which talks about the experience of encountering one's shadow.

When we think about the symbolic meanings of the marrying couple (symbol of the union of the opposites and reconciliation of the polarities), the group of white elephants (symbol of strength, loyalty, patience, wisdom, happy marriage and sacredness), and the unicorn (symbol of union and purification), we can conclude that the positive aspects of her animus (although the animus may have negative aspects, just as the unicorn horn can purify poisoned water, Kim's positive feminine qualities will be able to purify the negative qualities of her animus) will grant Kim with positive and creative energies, which will allow her to become

connected to her Self.

The old lady and the young girl living in an old castle could be the personifications of the client. The old lady listens to Kim when she is weary and helps her rest. The young girl instills curiosity and vitality in Kim's stagnant life at present. That a woman's Self is personified by female figures (Jung et al., 1964) and that the personification may be older or younger than we actually are reminded us that the Self is always with us in our entire lifetime and that it transcends the flow of life as recognized by us consciously, i.e., the Self transcends the way we experience time (Jung et al., 1964). Kim said that even after the termination of her therapy, she visits the old castle to see the old lady and the girl whenever she feels worn out. Just imagining asking the question, "I'm dead tired. How am I supposed to live in life?" to the old lady and having a fun time with the girl gave Kim comfort and strength. Kim's symbolic experience was possible because the Self in its entirety is not included in the experiences of the conscious time, and exists anywhere at any time (Jung et al., 1964).

Kim, while creating her sandpicture, became aware of her shadows, integrated her animus, gained access to her Self and experienced the potentials of self-realization and individuation. And in this process she experienced the stillpoint. She described that experience as follows:

"I was excited to be able to express what was on my mind; I felt delighted. My hands felt happy; it felt as if they were dancing. I felt something strange and odd during the creation. Taking out what was inside of me-the emotions that I had suppressed-made me feel a feeling of love. It's not a physical love. I felt something sweet, like you would feel when eating a candy. I think my body exists in the past, present and future simultaneously. The pains of the past has permeated the roots of my stagnant life at present, making the roots stronger. I think the present, death, heaven and hope all coexist. My body sometimes walks on a mountain, and sometimes is at the old castle where the old lady lives. At times I ask her, 'I'm dead tired. How am I supposed to live in life?' Looking at the sandtray and feeling what I feel alone makes me relaxed and comforted. I felt a greater energy while creating my sandpicture. I had images of gods, like the Virgin Mary, and I felt something sacred."

We made an association that through the stillpoint, "the point of intersection of the timeless with time" that symbolizes eternal present in Eliot's "Four Quartet," Kim was able to

combine transience and perpetuity, materiality and spirituality, and the love of mankind and the love of god, thereby attaining in a world in which there is union with god.

It appeared that Kim had felt her Self energy rising from deep within while creating her sandpicture. Her story let us know that during the stillpoint experience, Kim was able to unify her past, present and future; exist simultaneously in different locations within her inner world (at the top and the bottom of the mountain); engage in a symbolic conversation with the figures; recognize and integrate her shadows, animus and the Self; and finally reach individuation and self-realization. From these discoveries we again confirmed the two major characteristics of the stillpoint mentioned in the introductory paragraph: centrality and integrality. Kim's emotions, bodily movements, changes in the energy, access to the energy of the whole psyche, expansion of the conscious and the rebirth of a new conscious-all of these were confirmed as qualities of the stillpoint.

IV. What are the Characteristics of a Stillpoint?

What are the characteristics of the stillpoint experienced by clients in sandplay therapy? As the stillpoint is an abstract concept that cannot be identified the eyes, we needed a certain "framework" to explain the stillpoint and its unique characteristics. We felt that Van Manen's (1994) four lifeworld existentials, productive categories for the process of phenomenological questioning and reflecting, was a suitable framework that would assist out understanding the stillpoint experienced by sandplay therapy clients. To these four lifeworld existentials-lived space, lived time, lived relation and lived body-we introduced also the category of "lived emotion" as we believed that emotions are the most important element of psychotherapy.

1. Lived Body

1) Stillness

Jane sat in an upright position with her eyes closed, taking deep breaths, for a long time. Kim, also for a good while, gazed at her sandpicture in silence with a look of rapture.

When experiencing the stillpoint, the clients seemed to freeze and stare at a single spot, or speak slowly or nothing at all.

2) Tears

Jina said that the eyes of the silver masks seemed to urge her to say something and that she could not control her tears; she continued to cry while speaking. And as she talked about how her husband had waited for two whole years to marry her, she felt her heart becoming heavy and cried out loud for a long time. As for Kang, tears first rolled down her eyes quietly but endlessly as she stared at her sandpicture. Eventually those tears became a loud, heavy sob.

Clients appeared to shed tears when experiencing the stillpoint. Tears purify emotions and allows healing energy to flow.

3) Spiritual relationship: Unity with god

In Kang's case, the butterfly has the meaning of perpetuity, spirituality and the love of god. The house represents the meaning of transience, materiality and the love of mankind. The turtle combines these two. It seemed that Kang's symbolic experience was connected to a spiritual and godly being. Then there is Kim comment, "Somehow I think this old lady is like the Virgin Mary."

These anecdotes suggest that one experiences being united with a spiritual being during the stillpoint.

2. Lived Time

1) Intersecting the past, present and future

Jina commented that her picture looked like “a ritual that counters unseen evil and protects the country and love, a ritual that goes back to the past and sees the present and the future.” She also shared her memories of grandmother’s house, the life she had lived to date, how others perceive her in outer reality and the kind of person she wishes to become in the future. As for Kim, she said, “I think my body exists in the past, present and future simultaneously. The pains of the past has permeated the roots of the present stagnant life, making the roots stronger. And I think the present, death, heaven and hope all coexist.”

These stories hinted us that while experiencing the stillpoint clients are able to feel their past, present and future unite and intersect. At that moment clients are no longer caught inside time but instead feel the timeless cosmos.

2) Kairos time

“While creating the sandpicture,” Kang said, “the strength to live surged incessantly from the bottom of my heart.” Kim’s narrative was that she “felt a greater energy while creating the sandpicture.”

When stillpoint is experienced, one obtains the strength to live and strongly feels the meaning of existence. This reminded us of the Kairos time. The Kairos time is the time of moment: a moment of a specific event, a moment of feeling an emotion, a meaningful moment of joy of salvation, and so on. Conversely, the Chronos time or the time of reality flows linearly.

3. Lived Space

1) Temenos within the temenos

Sitting inside the therapy room which was silent but for the sound of the ticking clock, Jane said, “The ticking of the clock sounds like a wooden fish, and I feel more comfortable by it.” Jina’s narrative of her sandpicture was as follows: “It is quiet. Looking at

the candlelight relaxes my body and mind... It feels safe, quiet, and peaceful."

We can infer from these statements that when a client experiences the stillpoint, the sandplay therapy room where the sandtray, figures and the therapist exist together with the client becomes a temenos that contains the client.

Kang made the following comment: "I forgot where I was... Even the fact that the therapist was sitting in front of me. I felt that I was alone in a space purely of my own." Kim testified, "Just looking at the sandtray alone makes me feel relaxed and comforted."

The experience of the stillpoint enables the sandplay world to become an inner temenos, a free and protected space. In a sense, the temenos of the sandtray exists inside the temenos of the sandplay therapy room.

2) The primal space

Looking at her sandpicture Jane commented, "I feel like being in a very deep place. This is a very sacred place inside an underwater palace in the depth of the sea." Jina's sandpicture was full of powerful, divine and transcendent light. The sandpicture conveyed the message that something important and valuable is coming through the light, something that allows the client to look at herself in a careful, quiet and entirely new fashion.

It seemed that clients descend to a deeper world and stay in a sacred primal realm during their experience of the stillpoint. We made an association with Jung's idea of the realm of the collective unconscious.

4. Lived Relations

1) Worldly relationships: Symbolic experiences

Jina said, "The red turtle is my mother, and the blue turtle is my father." Kang said, "The woman riding a horse is me. The woman wearing a mask is my mother. She is watching over me in silence, without showing herself." Kang also added, "The butterfly is my eternal mentor, the fruit of my love, and my father who died 20 years ago. Thinking about him pains me to the marrow because I miss him so much." Kim said, "This old lady may be my paternal grandmother. She cherished me much. She did anything for me whenever I visited

her. She displayed unconditional love for me and her other grandchildren.”

When experiencing the stillpoint, one symbolically comes in touch with important relationships in the external world, such as those with his or her mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, and children. This leads to one to encounter another me within his or her inner world, which is elaborated below.

2) Another me within the inner world

Kim created a mountain in the rear center of the tray and placed a butterfly on top of it. Creating a mountain in sandplay therapy often represents a movement toward more things in relationship with the center as well as the psyche's intentional excavation work for the purpose of establishing something new (Turner, 2005).

It can be assumed that Kang established the Self at the center of her tray. As if the Self was formed by the influence of the father's experience of wholeness, Kang's symbol of Self is the butterfly, a personification of her father.

If the unicorn symbolizes Kim's feminine qualities then we can assume that the elephant symbolizes her masculine qualities, or her animus. The process of her feminine and masculine qualities integrating and achieving perfection and wholeness was personified through the marriage of the groom and bride atop a mountain. Meanwhile, the old lady and the girl dwelling in an old castle could be personifications of the client herself. The old lady listens to Kim when she is tired and weary and helps her rest. Meanwhile, the girl has the ability to instill curiosity and vitality into Kim's stagnant life at present. The two-headed dinosaur seemingly symbolizes Kim's aggressive and destructive shadows. She called the dinosaur a devil and although she was initially frightened by it, she later became scared no longer and instead felt a sense of intimacy with it. Her testimony suggested that she was integrating her shadows.

Given the above, we concluded that when experiencing the stillpoint, clients are invested with the ability to face their inner qualities—the shadows, the animus or the anima, the Self, etc.-as well as integrate in part their shadows, integrate and/or differentiate the anima or the animus, and become aware of in part their Self.

3) Spiritual relationships: Unity with god

In Kang's case, the butterfly is everlasting, spiritual, and has the meaning of god's love. The house is something transient and worldly, like human love. The turtle reconciles with and combines these two. Kang's experience in the present is connected to a spiritual and godly existence. Kim said, "Somehow, this grandmother is like the Virgin Mary..."

Such stories show that when one experiences the stillpoint, one experiences unity with a spiritual existence.

5. Lived Emotions

1) Catharsis

Jina said, "Before sandplay therapy, I had much anger and contempt toward my father. But I think those [emotions] are at ease just a bit now. He must have been very scared when he had that serious car accident in his 40s... He must have toiled and gone through so much pain when his leg was burned by hot oil while working at a restaurant... Both my mother and my father did not graduate from elementary school so they cannot even do basic calculation well. It must not have been easy for them to nurture us under such conditions... Now that I've reached the age of 40, married with a child, I'm beginning to develop a feeling of understanding rather than anger. Things must have been just so difficult for my mother; she lost her mind and was hospitalized in a mental institution for more than a year." The therapist also felt that Jina, while enduring the prolonged tensions and anxiety, was able to accept her shadows and meet a positive animus, thereby beginning to forgive and reconcile, through love, with those who hurt her, just like Jesus Christ crucified on a cross.

Looking at her sandtray, Kang first quietly but endlessly shed tears and later cried out loud with grief. She explained that the tears are a mixture of her longing and love for her father, her coming to understand and forgive him for having two wives.

When experiencing the stillpoint, anger toward others often leads to forgiveness and even reconciliation. The process of reconciliation requires transformation of one's identity. Accepting adversaries no longer as adversaries but as parents requires transformation of oneself, being able to accept others in a way different from the past. Reconciliation is possible only

through inner transformations: forgiveness and repentance, a sense of calling for reconciliation, breaking away from the past, and so on. (Kim, 2015).

2) Sacredness

Jane's sandpicture appeared to be powerful, divine, and full of transcendental light.

Jina remarked that her sandpicture looked like a masquerade or the beach, and that she felt astonishment, awe and sacredness. Jina placed a star at the center and put eight crystal candle holders around it, forming the shape of a mandala. Then, as if holding a solemn ritual, she lit each candle one by one. Watching this activity gave the therapist a sacred, austere and solemn feeling.

Kim said, "I felt a greater energy while creating my sandpicture. I had images of gods, like the Virgin Mary, and I felt something sacred."

Jane said, "This is where they perform ancestral rites and pray, inside the underwater palace. It's a very deep and sacred place." The concept of numinosity-regarding which Dora Kalff mentioned "archetypal incident" or "'superindividual moment' with 'great divinity'" -came to mind in relation to Jane's sandpicture making process (Weinrib, 1983). The therapist, too also felt a sense of awe, sacredness, fear as well as something powerful that could not be expressed verbally.

It seems that when clients experience the stillpoint not only the clients but also the therapists feel a sense of sacredness.

V. What is the Essential Meaning of Stillpoint Experience in Sandplay Therapy?

We concluded that what passes through lived body, time, space, relations and emotions-the characteristics of the stillpoint examined thus far-were "flow" and "transcendence."

1. Flow

When experiencing the stillpoint in sandplay therapy, the first phenomenon that runs across lived body, time, space, relations and emotions is flow. Kang said, "I had forgotten the flow of time, where I was... Even the fact that the therapist was sitting in front of me." Kim commented, "I was entirely absorbed [in sandplay] and excited and delighted to be able to express what was on my mind. My hands felt happy; it felt as if they were dancing." Jane explained, "[The sandpicture] looks interesting... I feel safety, tranquility, peace, sacredness, astonishment and stillness."

When experiencing the stillpoint, clients were entirely engrossed in their sandplay process to the point that they would forget about the flow of time and the existence of the therapist. They became immersed in excitement, pleasure and delight. In other words, the stillpoint seemed to be a moment of flow.

Flow refers to the state in which the conscious is filled with relevant experiences, where what one feels, desires, and thinks become one. During flow one feels the moment of life being heightened, behaviors occur naturally like the flowing water, distractions ceasing to exist, a sense of his or her identity almost disappearing, and the level of concentration reaching its peak. One feels a sense of achievement and happiness beyond words for his or her accomplishments. Those who experience the state of flow form a stronger ego full of pride, as they mostly use their psychological energy for the successful performance of their creative goal (Csikszentmihalyi, 1986).

The flow clients experienced during stillpoint showed two major characteristics: "complete absorption" and "excitement, pleasure and delight." These suggest that clients engaged in a "genuine play" with the sandtray and figures-the latter of which symbolize diverse aspects of life-in a free and protected space. It reminded us that sandplay therapy is a "play" before a "therapy." A genuine play makes players become completely engrossed and feel excitement, pleasure and delight, unaware of the flow of time.

2. Transcendence

The second phenomenon which penetrates across lived body, time, space, relations and emotions during stillpoint is transcendence.

Kang said, "I have begun to naturally accept everything-creating this sandpicture and talking about it-as if this is the life I foresaw... While creating the sandpicture, the strength to live surged incessantly from the bottom of my heart." Kim said, "I felt a greater energy while creating my sandpicture."

These accounts suggest that clients took part in a transcendental experience. In other words, they experienced a change in their conscious about who and what they are, a trait of the transcendental function as mentioned by Turner (2005), and their ego recovered vitality, and became expanded and more attuned with the Self. To sum up, the stillpoint is a moment of transcendental experience.

A transcendental experience, which encompasses acceptance, attunement and vitality, facilitates "attunement with the Self." The cross that appeared at the center area of Jina's sandpicture had a highly powerful, concentrated center. The large star at the center represented the constellation of the Self. Meanwhile, Kang talked about the Self she genuinely wanted: "I want live a life of value, reaching out to those in need and contributing to society, just as my father had done." Jina's statement hinted us that she was able to attune herself to Self: "The lotus is beautiful. It grows being surrounded by mud and muck. It's amazing how such a beautiful flower can bloom in dirty water. I wish to be a person like the lotus. It is not only beautiful to the eyes, but also has the ability to purify something dirty. The lotus is invaluable in every way; that is the kind of person I want to be."

Ultimately, transcendence leads to changes or transformations in life. Jane said, "I have lived thus far without any dream and goal. I have never been crazy about something. I'm going to take the camera lying around my house and start taking pictures again. I want to have an exhibition with my pictures once a year." Jina talked about her cleaning her closet and house, and explained that discarding things she no longer needed had given her the feeling that her mind was tidied up as well. And strangely, as Jina put it, she did not feel the urge to use the toilet as often as she did before. She always had to use the bathroom at home

before coming to therapy, upon her arrival at the therapy room, and right after therapy. But she reported after a sandplay session that she did not have to use the toilet.

We observed that transcendence experienced by clients during the stillpoint has three characteristics: "acceptance, attunement and vitality," "attunement with the Self" and "transformation." These characteristics represent the "therapy" aspect in sandplay therapy. While flow reminded us of the "play" aspect, transcendence reminded us of the "therapy" aspect in sandplay therapy. Clients engage in real play while creating a world in their sandtray, and therapists melt their alchemical psyche. In that process clients' psychological wounds are healed.

The essential meanings of the stillpoint, or flow and transcendence, tell us why sandplay therapy is sandplay plus therapy. A range of experiences encountered during sandplay therapy, one of which is the stillpoint, overlap with the lived body, time, space, and relationship examined earlier. However, the moments of flow and transcendence are unique experiences of the stillpoint in sandplay therapy. At certain moments in sandplay therapy-moments when our body becomes still; tears fill the eyes; the past, present and future intersect thereby permitting Kairos time to flow; temenos exists within temenos; worldly relationships are symbolically experienced in the primal space; another me in my inner world is encountered; spiritual relationships in which we united with god is experienced; catharsis and sacredness is felt; and flow and transcendence integrate-do we finally discover the stillpoint.

Picture 2. Structure of the stillpoint experience

(Picture source: <http://travelfacebook.tistory.com/2013>)

VI. Conclusion

We live in two different worlds: the outer world and the inner world. The two worlds are connected by multiple paths. Some paths become deserted, no longer allowing travel; some disappear without a trace. Nevertheless the two worlds are aware of each other's existence through these paths.

In sandplay therapy the sandtray becomes that path, and our hands connect that path to the two worlds. At a certain point in sandplay therapy, the past, present, future, the primal time before the past, and the distant future beyond the future all intersect and combine to allow Kairos time to flow. It is at this point we come in touch with our worldly relationships (with both the living and the dead), another me in the inner world (persona, shadow, anima or animus, the Self, etc.), and spiritual relationships (godly beings). During this process, clients experience sacredness, tranquility, serenity, rapture and so on. Through these emotions clients and therapists resonate with each other, and the therapists, too, experience being filled with sacred feelings.

These experiences thaw frozen emotions like hatred, resentment, anger and sadness and facilitates the flow of forgiveness, reconciliation and love. Melted emotions find their healthy outlet through the tears of clients, turning into healing energies. In addition to this, we must embark on a process to restore the disappeared paths. This transition requires us to become brave, brave enough to confront our shadows, explore our anima or animus, and once again find the Self. It is then when our inner and outer worlds can be reconnected, which supports the restoration of the transcendental function. Once this process is complete clients' lives are never the same. There exists a hope for transformation. This is the stillpoint clients experience.

While conducting this study, we came to identify factors that make sandplay therapy an inevitably excellent psychotherapy technique. The first factor is that sandplay therapy deals with things, in a visible fashion, of not only the past, present and future but also the timeless. The second factor is that sandplay therapy makes it possible to visually embody both the outer and inner worlds as well as the spaceless. The third factor is that sandplay therapy promotes symbolical connections with not only worldly relationships and internal qualities (persona,

shadow, anima or animus and the Self) but also spiritual beings. A combination of these factors leads to the stillpoint as well as individuation.

In addition, the study allowed us to dare speak about how we should live life. The study enlightened us that despite how busy we are in outer life, we should take time to attend to our inner garden and take at least a short walk around it; that we should not only look straight ahead but also be able to live together with the past, present and future; that we ought to observe how worldly relationships had influenced us and the meaning they hold; and that if we were hurt by those relationships we should be able to forgive and reconcile in a sincere manner. By living such a life we may be able to not only experience flow and transcendence in our everyday reality and at the same time achieve self-realization and individuation. Practicing what was said above in our life may be a small but powerful method to prevent various problems facing mankind: environmental pollution and natural disasters that follow, diseases without known cause, war, and so on.

Stillpoint experience is not sandplay-exclusive. We experience the stillpoint at various places and moments in our daily lives: in the twilight, at the sea dancing to the moonlight, in the beautiful nature, while being with someone else, when a certain music plays, inside a certain scene in a movie or a certain phrase of a book, etc. What is important is that we should have the courage not to avoid but to face it straight on. We should be able to accept it, feel it to its full extent, and sometimes genuinely forgive and reconcile with it. It is about loving life.

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