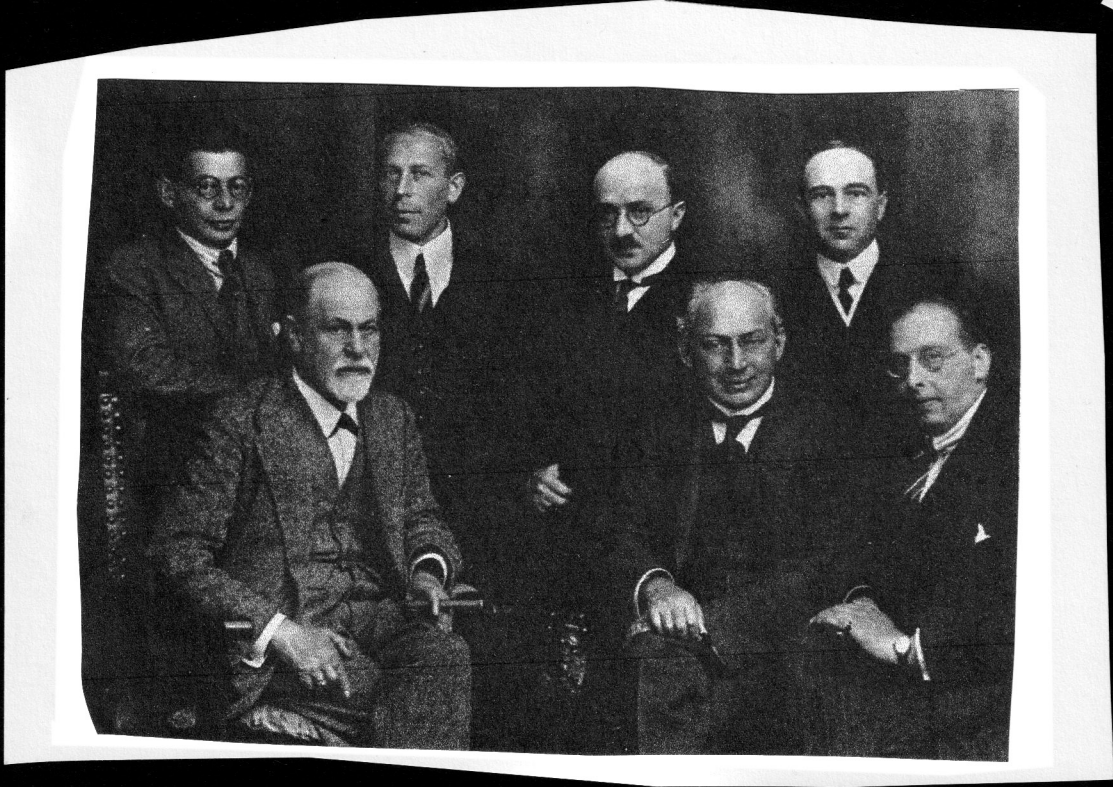


PLAY

Play has been at the heart of psychotherapy since the very beginning

FREE ASSOCIATION



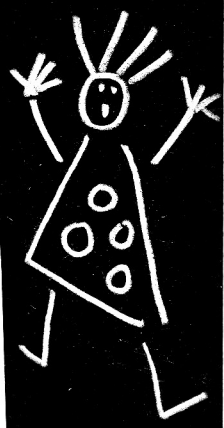
Some Playful men



Melanie Klein worked with both children and adults.

Melanie Klein

One of her most important practical contributions was the discovery that the play of children could be 'interpreted' in the same way that dreams and free association could be in adults. It provides access to the unconscious: as we know, the exploration of the unconscious is the main task of psycho-analytic procedure.



Play for child is 'a means of expressing what the adult expresses predominantly by words. [It] corresponds to a fundamental principle of psychoanalysis - free association'.

Klein provided children with a room in which they could freely express themselves: small wooden toys, paper, scissors, water, pencils. She allowed the children free rein to play, to build, to draw, to destroy.

Toys are used to represent the self & others. A seven year old girl uses toys to represent herself and her friend, and the sexual content of their play, which she has not verbalised. Peter expresses his destructive desires on to his toy 'brother', reassuring MK that he would never treat his *real* brother in that way.

Or toys may have symbolic meanings

PLAY + CHILDREN

"By approaching the play of the child in a way similar to Freud's interpretation of dreams... I found I could get access to the child's unconscious"

Or MK and the child play games in which roles are allotted

- Mother - Baby
- Doctor - Patient
- Mummy - Daddy



"The variety of emotional situations which can be expressed by play activities is unlimited: for instance, feelings of frustration and of being rejected; jealousy of both father and mother, or of brothers and sisters; aggressiveness accompanying such jealousy; pleasure..."

Trude . . . came to me for a single session when she was three years and nine months old, and then had to have her treatment postponed owing to external circumstances. This child was very neurotic and unusually strongly fixated on her mother. She came into my room unwillingly and full of anxiety, and I was obliged to analyse her in a low voice with the door open. But soon she had given me an idea of the nature of her complexes. She insisted upon the flowers in a vase being removed; she threw a little toy man out of a cart into which she had previously put him and heaped abuse on him; she wanted a certain man with a high hat that figured in a picture-book she had brought with her to be taken out of it; and she declared that the cushions in the room had been thrown into disorder by a dog. My immediate interpretation of these utterances in the sense that she desired to do away with her father's penis because it was playing havoc with her mother (as represented by the vase, the cart, the picture-book and the cushion) at once diminished her anxiety and she left me in a much more trustful mood than she had come, and said at home that she would like to come to me again. When, six months later, I was able to resume this little girl's analysis again, it appeared that she had remembered details of her single hour of analysis and that my interpretations had effected a certain amount of positive transference, or rather, some lessening of the negative transference in her. (Klein, 1975, II: 21-2)

* INTERPRETATION . . . *



D.W.
WINNICOTT
(1896 - 1971)



3

PLAYING

A theoretical statement

my meaning in this communication.

The essential feature of my communication is this, that playing is an experience, always a creative experience, and it is an experience in the space-time continuum, a basic form of living.

playing.

It is good to remember always that playing is itself a therapy. To arrange for children to be able to play is itself a psychotherapy that has immediate and universal application, and it includes the establishment of a positive social attitude towards playing. This attitude must include recognition that playing is always liable to become frightening. Games and their organization must be looked at as part of an attempt to forestall the frightening aspect of playing.

PLAY IS
CREATIVE
&
UNIVERSAL

it is play that is the universal, and that belongs to health: playing facilitates growth and therefore health; playing leads into group relationships; playing can be a form of communication in psychotherapy; and, lastly, psychoanalysis has been developed as a highly specialized form of playing in the service of communication with oneself and others.

GROWN UPS
PLAY
TOO!!

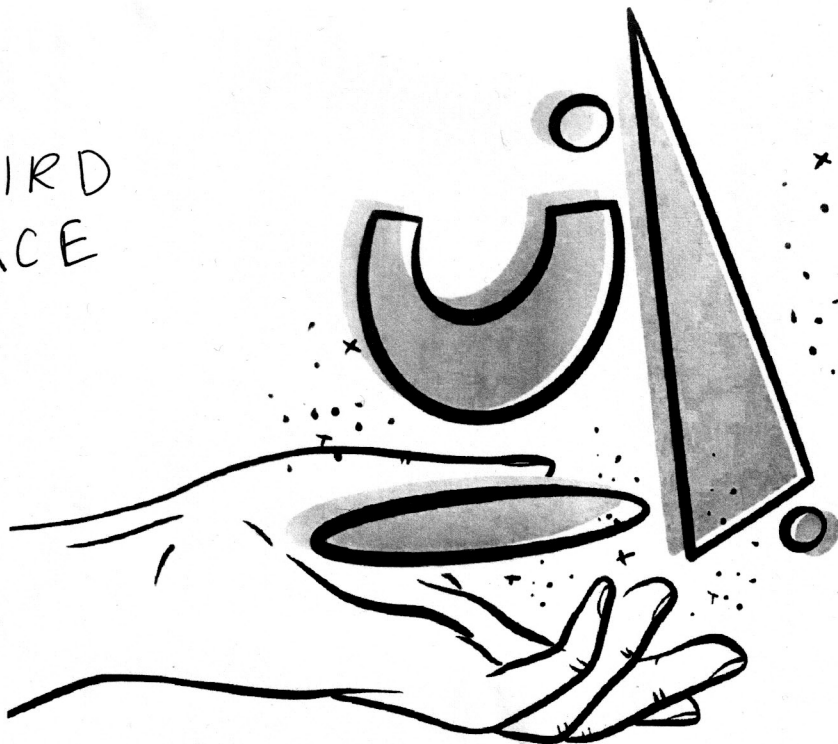
Whatever I say about children playing really applies to adults as well, only the matter is more difficult to describe when the patient's material appears mainly in terms of verbal communication. I suggest that we must expect to find playing just as evident in the analyses of adults as it is in the case of our work with children. It manifests itself, for instance, in the choice of words, in the inflections of the voice, and indeed in the sense of humour.

The natural thing is playing, and the highly sophisticated twentieth-century phenomenon is psychoanalysis. It must be of value to the analyst to be constantly reminded not only of what is owed to Freud but also of what we owe to the natural and universal thing called playing.

PSYCHOTHERAPY IS PLAY

When I come to state my thesis I find, as so often, that it is very simple, and that not many words are needed to cover the subject. Psychotherapy takes place in the overlap of two areas of playing, that of the patient and that of the therapist. Psychotherapy has to do with two people playing together. The corollary of this is that where playing is not possible then the work done by the therapist is directed towards bringing the patient from a state of not being able to play into a state of being able to play.

THIRD
SPACE

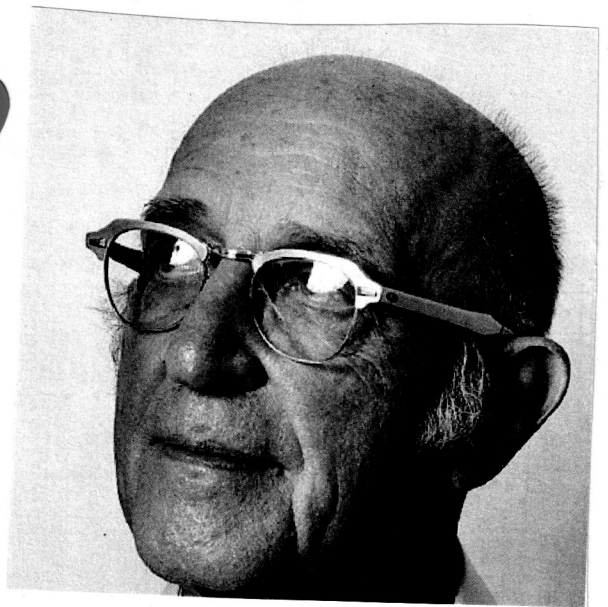


CAITLIN METZ

HELLO

my name is

CARL
ROGERS



Carl Rogers: part of a movement away from interpretation

on the basis of the psychoanalytic tradition.

(1902 -
1987)



ACCEPTANCE

Here the emphasis is on creating a warm and accepting space for the child. The child can play (or choose not to play). The therapist accepts the child exactly as he is: "The child's opportunities for responsible self-direction are maximised". *Note the confidence that a person has a natural innate tendency towards healing and growth: this is fundamental to the humanistic tradition.*

The Rogerian therapist does not 'interpret'. She accepts symbols at face value. A sausage is a sausage, until the child says it is not.

A SAUSAGE IS A SAUSAGE IS A SAUSAGE IS A SAUSAGE IS A SAUSAGE IS A SAUSAGE IS A SAUSAGE IS
A ROSE

☆
+
UNCONDITIONAL +
+ POSITIVE ☆
REGARD °
° +

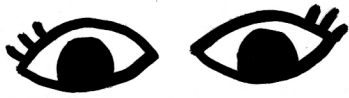
Acceptance of your own
feelings as therapist:

Thus the relationship which I have found helpful is characterized by a sort of transparency on my part, in which my real feelings are evident; by an acceptance of this other person as a separate person with value in his own right; and by a deep empathic understanding which enables me to see his private world through his eyes. When these conditions are achieved, I become a companion to my client, accompanying him in the frightening search for himself, which he now feels free to undertake.

Being genuine

TRUTH

FREEDOM



INTERNAL
LOWS OF
EVALUATION

Freedom from external evaluation:

This freedom is an important condition of the relationship. There is implied here a freedom to explore oneself at both conscious and unconscious levels, as rapidly as one can dare to embark on this dangerous quest. There is also a complete freedom from any type of moral or diagnostic evaluation, since all such evaluations are, I believe, always threatening.

Note that it is complete freedom of *symbolic* expression which is described. To express in behavior all feelings, impulses, and formings may not in all instances be freeing. Behavior may in some instances be limited by society, and this is as it should be. But symbolic expression need not be limited. Thus to destroy a hated object (whether one's mother or a rococo building) by destroying a symbol of it, is freeing. To attack it in reality may create guilt and narrow the psychological freedom which is experienced.

Freedom
in/of
'symbolic
expression'

CREATIVITY

Y. *Psychological freedom*. When a teacher, parent, therapist, or other facilitating person permits the individual a complete freedom of symbolic expression, creativity is fostered. This permissiveness gives the individual complete freedom to think, to feel, to be, whatever is most inward within himself. It fosters the openness, and the playful and spontaneous juggling of percepts, concepts, and meanings, which is a part of creativity.

“

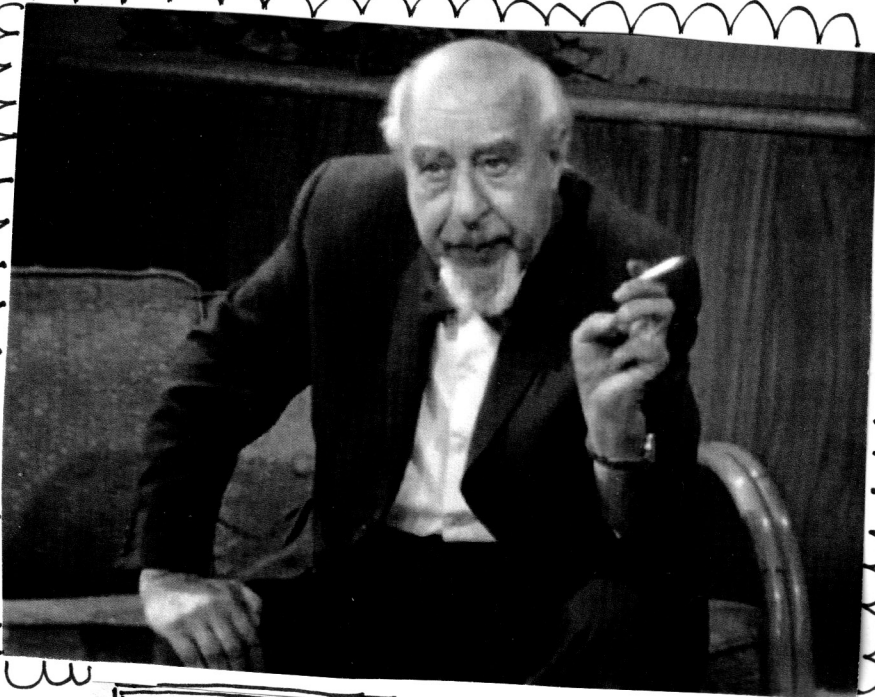
PLAY

”

is a word Rogers only really uses when talking about children.

GESTALT

Gestalt drags play kicking and screaming into the therapy room. Fritz Perls was a charismatic and theatrical character, influenced by the psycho-dramatist Jacob Moreno.



EXPERIMENTATION is one of the cornerstones of gestalt therapy. It is used by gestalt therapists to heighten the client's awareness (the primary goal of gestalt therapy), and potentially to suggest alternatives (what could be...)

The therapist may ask the client to

- EXAGGERATE (vocally or physically)
- TAKE ON CHARACTERISTICS OF DREAM SYMBOLS OR PARTS OF THE BODY
- ROLE PLAY

An example of 'play' being used in gestalt therapy is the Empty Chair or Two Chair work

Anything may be placed in the Empty Chair:

- A significant other person
- A part or quality that the client disowns
- A 'split' within the client
- A dilemma

YOU ARE MY MOTHER
YOU ARE MY SELFISHNESS
TOP DOG / UNDERDOG

The aim is to seek to achieve greater integration, and (potentially) appreciation of the viewpoint of the 'other' (the rejected person or part).

Gestalt therapy also follows Freud in being interested in **dreaming**. Perls describes dreams as 'the royal road to integration'. However, he has a particular approach to dreamwork. For Perls, *everything contained in the dream is a representation of an aspect of the dreamer*. The client is asked to talk in the first person from the point of view of different aspects of the dream. So, if you dream that you enter an old, rickety house with rickety stairs, and through the window you see a frozen pond, you may be invited to play the house, the stairs, and the ice. Each is conceived of as an element of the dreamer.

"A client dreams he is leaving a therapy session and goes for a walk in the park. He goes across the bridge path, into the park. So I ask him "Now play the bridge path". He answered indignantly "What? And let everybody shit and crap on me?" You see, he really got the identification".





SHORT dramatic "BANG-BANG" therapies

ESALEN ENCOUNTER

are we having FUN yet?



HUMOUR
Teasing
Mimicry...

PLAYING
DEVIL'S
ADVOCATE

CHALLENGE
& AGGRESSION
By gently teasing
& challenging, the
therapist calls
forth C's ability
to assert themselves,
defend themselves
& demonstrate a
sense of their
own self worth

Dependent on
personal charisma
of the therapist

"proceed with a
twinkle in the
eye & affection
in the heart"

Frank Farrelly

"You are
worthless;
your superiors
are better
than you;
your lover
hates you;
you have
achieved
nothing"

"You are a phony!"
"You are
playing the
little girl"

"O you
butter
me
up
right
at it"

"The patient, it might
be said, suffers from
gravity. To him, life is
a burden, his
personality a riddle.
Without irreverence,
he & the therapist
stay mired in
earnestness..."

(Provocative
Therapy)

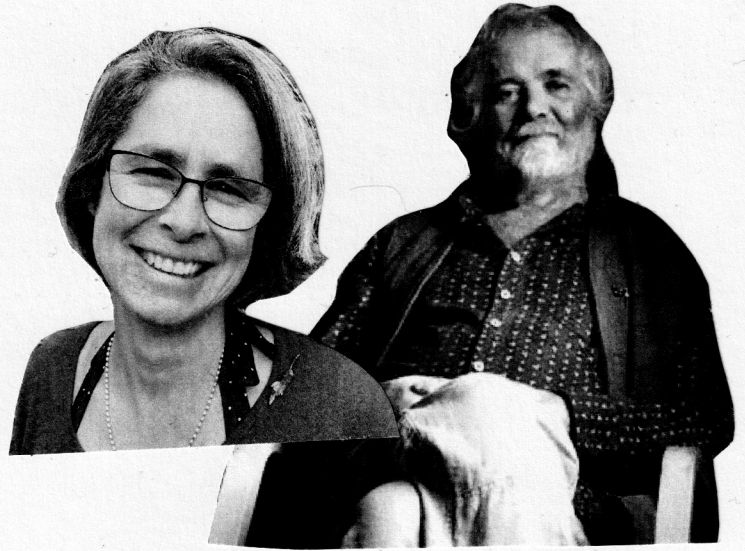


provocative
Therapy

UNBOUNDARIED
EXPLOITATIVE



ALLISON PRIESTMAN & NICK TOTTON



What are Totton and Priestman talking about when they talk about play?

"If you think as therapy as play, how does that change your work?"

It creates a relaxation, a lightness, a softening

It frees us up from an over-reliance on the intellectual, on the analytical. We can follow our bodies. We can be spontaneous. We can follow the thread of our curiosity.

Play as activating the space between us (I-Thou)

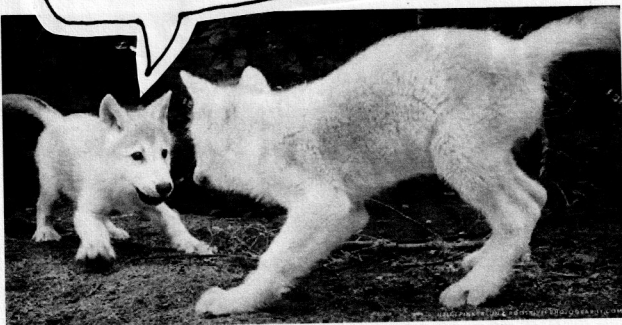
The liminal space / in which our attention is 'wild' – not over-focussed, spreading lightly over both of us and all that is around

PLAY IS WILD

... we don't know
what is going to
happen next...!

"Step into unknown & follow the threads..."

PLAY WITH ME!



PLAY is
inherently
democratic:

neither of us know where it is going /

neither of us can be either right or wrong

/ and we are both responsible for keeping the balloon in the air



THERAPIST'S USE OF SELF

Val Wosket: don't do
this until you're
experienced!!

PLAY allows the clients patterns
and internal states to become
things to EXPLORE, rather than
PROBLEMS TO SOLVE

How might we use play in the therapy room?

- To unburden ourselves as the therapist, to create a sense of lightness and ease, to shift our awareness away from the intellectual.
- Role play: 'You be mummy, I'll be daddy'.
- Empty Chairs: "Fayaz is on the chair. What would you like to say to him? What does he say back?"
- Here is a bowl of stones and small objects. Choose stones or objects to show me your friendship group.
- Vesuvius: Pretend to be a volcano! Stand up! EXPLODE! Tell me everything that you are angry about for 2 minutes. ROAR!
- ANGER BATTING
- Teasing... ooh...

Relax: Nothing is under control!