

Figure 4. Summer tree

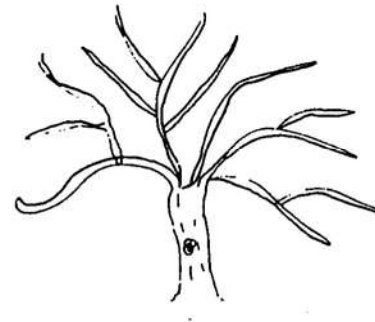


Figure 5. Winter tree

c) Fantasy tree

The loose, disconnected branches with downward hands (See figure 6) can also indicate depression and self-disintegration.

d) Drawing of a house

In figure 7, a house was drawn with a closed door and no windows. This can reflect the isolation and private nature of her family life, and possibly also the loneliness of her grandmother since the death of her grandfather.

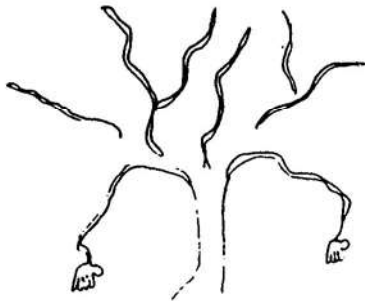


Figure 6. Fantasy tree.

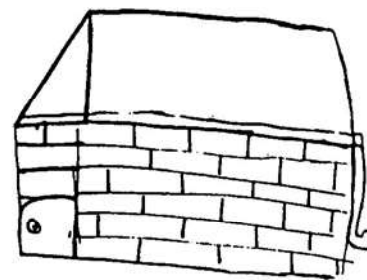


Figure 7. House drawing

Even though she is twelve-years-old, the investigation took place in the playroom, and began with play as the method of investigation. This is because she acts toward everyone with suspicion, and she must become distanced from her mother through play.

Thus, the first aim is to create a situation in which she feels secure and in which the pedotherapist is not experienced as a threat. She cannot do without the security of being

together, and this can only be accomplished by a pedotherapist who co-experiences empathetically, and who assists in the meaningful actualization of the pedagogical essences without imposing him/herself on the child.

The pedotherapist participates in her world and helps her come to a reconciliation with it and its real essentials. Then, a therapeutic relationship arises in which symmorphosis becomes possible. Symmorphosis means that, through play and with the example of the therapist, she learns to manage what is strange and what causes alarm. When she cannot find someone who can help her by means of symmorphosis, her anxiety continues, and the actualization of the pedagogical essences are distorted.

As a therapeutic method, play therapy is not essentially different from symmorphosis in daily life. There are optimal possibilities to create symmorphosis through play. Then, anxiety appears in projected concretizations. Projection means that, in play, her problem is attributed to another through characteristics, affects, behaviors, attitudes, and relations, e.g., with the figurines used in the Von Staabs⁽⁷⁾ play medium. This means that, by projection, she defends herself against a confrontation with her avoided self, as this appears in the other (e.g., in the figurines). Thus, projection is a defense. When projection doesn't occur, neither does concretization. Concretization occurs in times of anxiety and insecurity, and the feelings of threat are concretized. This is still unpleasant and stressful but, at least, it is no longer vague and incomprehensible. Further, with the help of the pedotherapist, measures are taken against it, because there is something tangible to face. During play, projected concretizations arise, and therapy begins when she ascribes anxiety to another, and she can explore it in the safe presence of the pedotherapist, as co-actualizer of the pedagogical essentials.

The child knows that she will not be exposed by the pedotherapist because protective anonymity is preserved during play therapy. Through play, she becomes accessible to and approachable for the pedotherapist. The first and foremost pedagogic task is to ensure her feeling of security when she engages in **illusive play**, as a form of the actualization of pedagogical essences (educating), and she is not confronted with the problematic reality. Then, she can relate to what was being avoided while she is in the presence of the pedotherapist, and can be guided to projective concretizations, and eventually to full projection, and finally to deprojection.

She is lonely and desires the pedotherapist's participation. She became a participant in the avoided world, and the essences of educating were discernible in that she engaged in projections and did not feel threatened by them. The aim was then to playfully create an image of a secure world; to a degree, she had to retreat from her participation in the environment. She was still involved with the world, but more from a distance because the world temporarily receded behind the play.

In educating, or corrective educating (pedotherapy) through **play**, there is a methodical attempt to help the child, via symmorphosis, but in an incidental and indirect way. Symmorphosis during play generally rests on security which is given as a possibility in the relationship with the pedotherapist. Because of deficiencies in her being educated,

thus, through inadequately actualizing the pedagogical essences, as well as her traumatic experiences, striving for security was a motive for illusive play. The task of the pedotherapist, then, was to see that the level of play was elevated by removing all hampering influences. The therapist also must be attentive to make sure that the child is not over-taxed during each visit, because this leads to a decrease in the level of play.

Play usually takes its course in a sphere of intimacy and trust, which invites participation. To understand the girl in her play, observation is a meaningful procedure, but it is not enough. The pedotherapist also must participate in and link up with the world the child has playfully designed. The pedotherapist assists her in developing her play because obstructions arise which can only be overcome with the help of the pedotherapist. Obstructions arose in the content, as well as in the way she played. Not only what she played, but also how she played manifested problems which required encouragement and assistance.

To explain play therapy to her and the investigation preceding it, an attempt was made to describe the event of play to her. In her case, the choice of play therapy was because all other forms of therapy had not been successful. Also, she is so closed, and turned into herself that she must be helped by the pedotherapist to participate in play. [However, the pedotherapist is so caught up in the richness of the encounter, and so much occurs that it is difficult to express in words the share or role of the pedotherapist].

B. Pedotherapeutic visits

First visit

This twelve-year-old had to be brought to the playroom by her parents. She cried without restraint and clung to her mother while she pleaded not to go back to school. The parents took turns staying with her so that a conversation could be conducted alone with each of them. Eventually, she agreed to sit with the pedotherapist in the playroom without her parents, provided they wait for her near the door. Although the car keys were in her hand, her mother's handbag on her lap, and tears flowed, there still was a little hope that she would proceed to play. The play medium of Gerhild von Staabs, which consists of building blocks, farm animals, wild animals, trees, human figures, and household items, in due course, directed a strong appeal to her. The pedotherapist tried to actualize the essentials of play with and for her. She built a large farmhouse and barnyard. (See figures 8 & 9).

First, she placed grandpa and grandma in one room, and then, in another room papa, mama, and a daughter. They are all sitting and are supported by their hands; not one of them is involved in anything. Outside in the barnyard are different farm animals, and a boy and girl sit with a little pail under a cow.

In these first play activities, she participated in actualizing the essentials of play, and she entered communication with the pedotherapist by using play to conduct a dialogue (Compare the essentials of play-as-dialoguing, play-as-knowing, play-as-designing).

From this first visit, it is evident that she cannot accept that her grandfather is dead and, thus, he lives among them in the world she designs in play. A second deduction is that she cannot accept and carry the responsibility and obligations which the school demands, so she withdraws to the safe, private family circle where she interacts with her parents, and where all three of them are passive. This can point to the problematic school situation which they no longer can solve alone.



FIG. 8.

Plaashuis en werf. Oupa en Ouma in een vertrek. Pappa en Mamma met 'n dogtertjie voor hulle.
Buite op die werf twee kinders by 'n koei.

Figure 8. Farmhouse & yard. Grandma & Grandpa in one room. Papa & Mama with daughter in front of them.

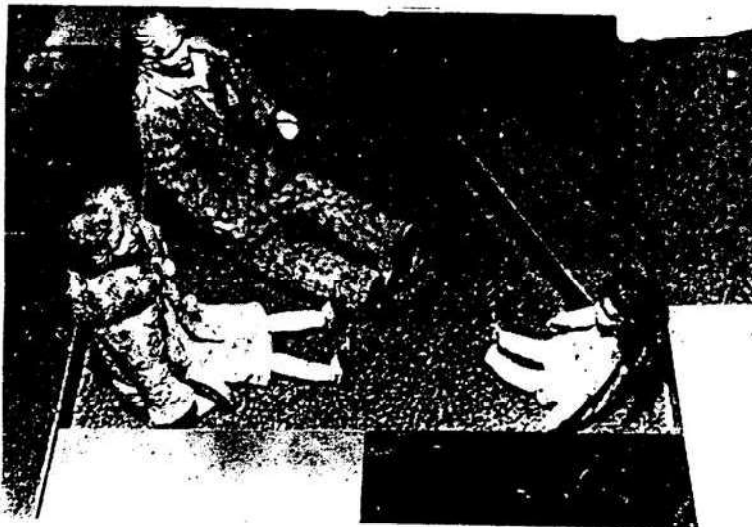


FIG. 9.

Om die posisie van die dogtertjie by haar ouers te bepaal.

Figure 9. The position of the daughter with her parents.