



# Sandplay Therapists of Hawai'i

Newsletter - February 2026

## President's message

Happy New year, Gung Hee Fat Choy! 2026 is off to a good start for STH. We intend to gallop into this year with joy and excitement over our planned workshops and symbol study. Please read through this newsletter to get the information about our upcoming spring workshop that will be fabulous with our international presenter. As you will also see our national STA and our international ISST also have some wonderful learning and connecting opportunities for our Hawaii sandplay therapists and students. Really consider taking advantage of expanding your sandplay horizons. It is super special to meet sandplay therapists and students from across the US and around the world. Talk about making new friends and keeping the old. I love to combine my conferences with some travel, I feel like I'm getting 2 for one!!

Hats off to our STH board for all their hard work all year to continue creating valuable workshops and fun pau hana symbol studies. Thank you to each board member for continuing to serve for another year. Lorraine Freedle, our vice president; Kerri Kahapea, our past president, John Mascaro, our treasurer, Donna Charron, our secretary; Alissa Schneider Berg, our webmaster and member outreach; and Ala Kahalekai, our program chair. We have a super-duper working team that makes sure you have interesting presenters and topics for our workshops each year.

If you would like to be more involved in STH, we welcome you! We always need someone to write a summary following each workshop and symbol study for our next newsletter and welcome members to join us for presenting symbol studies. If you have a symbol you would like to know/learn about, please let us know and join us in some mini research on the symbol then take part in presenting a portion during one of our pau hana study presentations or let us know about a symbol you are researching and would like to present on your own.

We are looking forward to seeing each of you on April 4th for our spring workshop.

Happy 2026, hoping your year has had a great beginning and will continue to be marvelous.

Sue Bergman : )

~Sandplay Therapists of Hawai'i (STH) presents~

# “The Little Prince” and the Divine Child Archetype in Sandplay Therapy

Presented by, Nil Akat, MA

Sponsored by Lorraine R. Freedle, PhD, CST-T (STA/ISST) and the Sandplay Therapists of Hawai'i



From: Saint-Exupéry (1946) The Little Prince. Editions Gallimard. Used with permission.

Live, interactive webinar

Saturday, April 4, 2026

9:00 am to 11:00 am  
(Hawai'i Time)  
12:00 pm to 2:00 pm  
(Pacific Time)

**Location:** Virtual event, Zoom link will be provided closer to training date

**Cost:** \$50 professionals, \$40 - STH members, \$35 - students with ID

**2 CEs:** pending through NASW-HI (Social Workers, Counselors and MFT's)

**Register online:** <https://sandplaytherapistsofhawaii.org/>

Saint-Exupéry's "The Little Prince" is a story that has captured the world for decades. The main figure is known to be associated with the magical, innocent and divine qualities of the Child. For Jung, the appearance of the Divine Child in therapy announces a new potential for the development of the personality.

Inspired by the contributions of Dr. Don Kalsched (clinical psychologist, Jungian analyst), Roberto Lima Netto (writer) and Olivier Larrègle (philosopher), the presentation will explore many symbols that appear in the story (snake, fox, rose, the destructive baobabs) into a cohesive interpretation that is applied to a case study of a 56-year-old woman with complex trauma who sought therapy for problematic relationship patterns. The Little Prince symbol, which appeared during the completion part of her Sandplay process was found to play a significant role in her journey towards healing and growth. It allowed a centering movement to take place in her psyche and helped the client find resolution of an inner split from her traumatic experiences.



## Audience

This STA/ISST Certified Training® is ideal for students, social workers, mental health counselors and play or sandplay therapists who would like to...

- Deepen their connection to the story of The Little Prince
- Explore sandplay therapy in the treatment of trauma
- Experience how symbols and archetypes promote psychological healing and well-being in sandplay therapy

## Learning objectives

1. Assess the dynamic symbolism that appears in The Little Prince through the lens of three different authors.
2. Apply to a case study in Sandplay Therapy—tending to the co-transference relationship and implications for trauma treatment.

## Reference

Jung & Kerenyi (2001) *Introduction to a Science of Mythology. The Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis*. Routledge



### About the trainer

Nil Akat is a clinical psychologist (MA), founder of the Turkish Sandplay Developing Group. With 15 years of experience, she uses trauma-informed approaches, including EMDR, Clinical Heart-Centered Hypnotherapy, and Sandplay Therapy. Nil Akat started her sandplay training through the Swiss Society in 2015. She has published articles on sandplay in Turkey and Russia, and has presented her work on sandplay in national and international conferences. Involved in the preparation and editing of the Turkish translation of Dora Kalf's book, she is currently working at her own private practice in Istanbul, with adolescents and adults. Her passion for Sandplay Therapy is driven by her belief that sandplay should expand and be known on a wider range due to its powerful therapeutic and transformative effects.

\*For cancellations within 1 week of the program, a \$25 cancellation fee will be applied.

\*In the event this workshop must be canceled due to a natural disaster or other unforeseeable event, STH's expenditures will be deducted from the collected registration fees and the remainder will be refunded to registrants.

## The Year of the Fire Horse

Once every 60 years, the fire horse is created by pairing the horse with the fire element. The Chinese zodiac sign emphasizes intensity, with a reputation for energy and independence. A fire horse year is often described as being fast-moving and high-energy. Some say that the fire horse year can bring extreme success but can also be an extremely challenging period. A fire horse year is often described as being fast-moving and high-energy. The last fire horse was in 1966, when China's Cultural Revolution began, a time of political and social upheaval. Experts say the fire horse year is widely expected to bring intense, fast-paced change on a personal and global level.



Xiaohuan Zhao, a professor in Chinese studies at the University of Sydney, says “rather than predicting disaster, traditional readings frame the fire horse year as a period where heightened energy needs to be managed wisely”. Sydney-based feng shui expert Mina Zheng says the key is to stay grounded, balancing the fire with water-element practices such as slowing down, meditating and hydrating can help, contain the fire.

Source: Wikipedia

Dr. Lorraine Freedle, LSCW, PhD, CST-T, is no stranger to Sandplay. Her presence, wisdom, and depth of experience are immeasurable. Her energy is palpable, and felt throughout her presentations, training, and workshops. She is a dynamic force—provoking curiosity, reflection, inquiry, and wonder.

Along with fellow sandplay enthusiasts, I was honored to join her in person on November 11, 2025, as she guided us through “Creation and Destruction: The Living Mythology of Pele in Jungian Sandplay Therapy and Psychotherapy Practice.” She shared her personal witnessing of Pele’s emergence and resilience within her community which has been profoundly instrumental in inspiring her to pen “When a Goddess Erupts: Pele in the Psyche of Women” (2025).



Rooted in gratitude and passion, Dr. Lorraine Freedle captivated participants by sharing her humble beginnings, personal process, and sandplay journey. Through narration, storytelling, evocative imagery, and case studies, she set the stage with an oli followed by the blowing of a conch shell-like sounding instrument for a transformative “creation and destruction” exploration. As Dr. Freedle noted, Pele’s expression through volcanism as lava destroys, at the same time, it creates.

Attendees were invited and encouraged to journey deeply in the Self, while engaging in art, sand, symbols, and verbal expression. This unique and sacred work embodies wholeness, fosters integration as it gently guides one from the inner world toward meaningful engagement with the external world. Participants described their experience as “a sense of community, connectedness, and love” to name a few.

As therapists and counselors, we find deep meaning in supporting the healing of others. At the same time, we are called to continuously tend to our own healing, so that we may remain present, grounded, and able to sustain the work we do. The Sandplay therapeutic modality offers such an enlightening and empowering space.

Thank you, Dr. Lorraine Freedle, for all that you do. Your rich expertise, unwavering engagement, and enduring devotion is deeply cherished and appreciated.

~Ala Kahalekai, Program Chair



Big Mahalo to the Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji Mission for hosting our training!

<https://www.kaneohe.hhbt-hi.org/>



Later in 2026 STH will be hosting a pau hana symbol study led by newly returned Dara Goodwin-Downs about Pokemon as a symbol!



More information to come, and we so hope you'll be able to join us catch them all!



Aloha!

The Big Island Sandplay group in Hilo, HI provides a supportive community of practice in Jungian Sandplay Therapy as developed by Dora Kalff. Participants earn training and consultation hours to become a Certified Sandplay Therapist (STA/ISST).

Details may change. We will send updated schedules throughout the year. Questions?  
Contact Lorraine: [lrfreedle@gmail.com](mailto:lrfreedle@gmail.com)

**STA/ISST Teaching Members:**

Lorraine R. Freedle, PhD, ABPdN

Sherry Renmu Shepherd, PhD

# Don't forget to join STH in 2026!

The membership year begins January 1 of each year and is effective until December 31. Annual membership fees are a modest \$35 per person and are used to provide local Hawai'i Sandplay accredited (typically STA/ISST) professional workshops and facilitate professional gatherings.

Benefits of membership include: discounted STH sponsored workshop fees, free attendance to symbol studies, and being part of a local supportive community of practice for Sandplay therapy

Register at our website today! <https://sandplaytherapistsofhawaii.org/>

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## Please consider donating to the Diana Chee Scholarship!

In honor of our dearly departed friend and devoted Certified Sandplay Therapist, Diana Chee, a scholarship fund has been established to assist others in learning more about Sandplay therapy.

Diana spent her life serving others in her most gentle way, and now the legacy of her service to others will continue on. This scholarship would cover up to 50% of the workshop registration fee for one workshop.

Donate here: [https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted\\_button\\_id=Q6VN9BCAZ22SY](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=Q6VN9BCAZ22SY)



Diana Chee, STH President Sue Bergman, and Emeritus Board Member Pratibha Eastwood at the 2013 ISST Conference in Venice

KA PO'E PULAMA | WINTER 2026

**Professional Development Opportunity**

**Hawaii Private Practice Launch in 9 Simple Steps**



March 16, 2026 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM (HST)  
1 NBCC CE hours presented by Jessica Wong, LMHC



This presentation will take you through the steps to create your own private practice in Hawaii

<https://www.hicounselors.org/>

**3 objectives:**

- To know the 9 Steps Needed to Build Your Private Practice in Hawaii
- To give therapists the confidence they need to know they DO have what it takes to own and operate a private practice in Hawaii
- To direct you to the right resources to get your private practice off the ground

Free for HCA Members  
\$20 for non-members  
Register online at:  
[www.hicounselors.org](http://www.hicounselors.org)



27<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL Hawaii Association for Play Therapy Spring Conference 2026  
April 9 & 10, 2026 | 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
AIA Honolulu  
Earn 12 APT-Approved Contact Continuing Education Hours  
APT Approved Provider # 99-053

**Expanding the Play Space: Playful, Ethical, and Culturally Responsive Integration of Digital Play Therapy**

**Featuring Dr. Jessica Stone, PhD**

Licensed Psychologist | Play Therapy Educator | Researcher

Jessica Stone, PhD, RPT-S brings over 30 years of experience as a clinician, educator, and innovator in play therapy, helping therapists confidently and ethically integrate digital play into their work.  
[jessicastonephd.com](http://jessicastonephd.com)



**Conference Overview**

Children are already playing digitally—this lively, hands-on training invites play therapists to meet them there with intention, creativity, and care. Across two engaging days, participants will explore how digital play can be ethically and playfully integrated into therapy *without losing the heart of play therapy*.

This conference blends experiential activities, live demonstrations, case vignettes, reflective practice, and small-group play to help therapists build confidence and curiosity around digital tools. Emphasis is placed on relational attunement, cultural humility, therapist presence, and ethical decision-making.

Come ready to play, reflect, and leave with practical ideas you can use right away.

**Why Attend?**

- ✓ Playful, experiential learning (not lecture-heavy)
- ✓ Concrete tools you can use immediately with clients
- ✓ Ethical guidance for digital play therapy practice
- ✓ Culturally responsive and developmentally grounded
- ✓ Supportive space to build confidence and curiosity
- ✓ Connect with Hawaii's vibrant play therapy community

**Learning Objectives**

At the conclusion of this training, participants will be able to:

- Define digital play and describe its relationship to traditional play therapy models.
- Identify common digital play themes and link them to clinical meaning.
- Demonstrate strategies for co-play and relational attunement in digital spaces.
- Apply ethical frameworks related to competence, consent, boundaries, and documentation in digital play therapy.
- Integrate cultural values and family perspectives into digital play therapy practice.
- Develop an individualized plan for ethically and developmentally integrating digital play into treatment.

**Daily Schedule**

Thursday & Friday | 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
Includes morning and afternoon breaks and a lunch break each day.  
● Lunch provided for participants registered by March 26, 2026.

**Registration Rates**

- HAPT / APT Members: \$300
- Non-Members: \$425
- Students: \$200

Register through the HAPT website:  
<http://www.hawaiiplaytherapy.net/>  
*\*\* One-day registration options may be available by request.*

**Location**

AIA Honolulu: 828 Fort Street Mall, Suite 100, Honolulu, HI 96813  
Parking and access details will be provided to registered participants.

**Continuing Education Information**

This program is offered by the Hawaii Association for Play Therapy (HAPT), an Association for Play Therapy (APT) Approved Provider. HAPT maintains responsibility for the program and its content.

Participants who attend the full conference will receive 12 APT-Approved Contact Continuing Education Hours.

This training is intended for mental health professionals, including play therapists, counselors, psychologists, social workers, marriage and family therapists, and graduate students under supervision.

<http://www.hawaiiplaytherapy.net/annual-conference.html>



CROSSROADS:  
TRANSFORMATION IN SANDPLAY THERAPY

2026 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ~ JUNE 11-14, 2026 ~ CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



Sandplay Therapists  
of America®

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of America®

<https://www.sandplay.org/>

Registration  
Open!

ISST 2026 Intensive Training Week  
Ephesus Retreat Center – Izmir, Turkey

A week of focused learning and connection in the  
ancient city of Ephesus



Intensive Training Weeks in Sandplay

Week One: 2 Nov - 8 Nov 2026

Week Two: 16 Nov - 22 Nov 2026



International Society for Sandplay Therapy  
Associazione Internazionale della Sandplay Therapy  
Internationale Gesellschaft für Sandspiel Therapie  
國際箱庭療法学会

<https://www.isst-society.com/>

## **\*Important reminder!\***

STH has a travel reimbursement scholarship, and the Diana Chee scholarship. Members can apply for these scholarships that help with attending in-person trainings!

And if you'd like to help support these scholarships through a donation, you can do so by visiting:

<https://sandplaytherapistsofhawaii.org/join-sth>



The Hawai'i Counselors Association (founded 1956) is the state branch of the American Counseling Association.

Through partnership with STH, members of both organizations can attend each others' workshops at the membership price!

<https://www.hicounselors.org/>



Visit the Sandplay Therapists of America site for their monthly newsletter, training information, journal archives and more at

<https://www.sandplay.org/>

# Sandplay Therapists of Hawai'i

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<https://sandplaytherapistsofhawaii.org/>

## President

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Patricia Patrick, MD, STA/ISST

Sherry Renmu Shepherd, PhD.,  
STA/ISST

The STH newsletter is published semi-annually, and is an entirely volunteer endeavor. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, submissions, or accolades, please feel free to contact us at the above address or during the next workshop!

To unsubscribe please email us at [webhead@sandplaytherapistsofhawaii.org](mailto:webhead@sandplaytherapistsofhawaii.org)