



The Ongoing Journey: Repetition and Return Through Sand Tray Supervision

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Counselor development unfolds through cycles of repetition and return. Across the course of supervision, counselors repeatedly engage in processes of reflection, conceptualization, and integration that deepen over time. Each new experience invites a return to earlier insights with greater perspective, creating an evolving rhythm that supports both professional skill and self-awareness. These recursive processes reflect the broader human tendency to learn and transform through revisiting the familiar. This paper explores the use of sand tray as a creative, arts-based supervision modality that supports such cyclical processes in counselor training and identity development.

Drawing from my work with counseling interns, I examine how sand tray supervision provides a structured yet flexible process for reflection. Through the repeated act of creating, observing, and processing symbolic representations, supervisees revisit their professional experiences from new vantage points. Each engagement in the sand tray offers an opportunity to re-render understanding, connecting the immediacy of experience with emerging professional meaning. This recurring process mirrors the concept of repetition as structure and as opportunity for transformation.

The paper situates sand tray supervision within Jungian and constructivist frameworks and considers its alignment with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and High-Impact Practices (HIP) in counselor education. Drawing on supervisor and student reflections and session feedback, I discuss how process-based repetition fosters insight, enhances case conceptualization, and supports reflective practice.

By engaging in this recurring cycle of creation and reflection, supervisees develop an integrated understanding of their growth as counselors. This approach illustrates how arts-based supervision methods can offer form, rhythm, and continuity to the unfolding journey of professional development.



Biography

Nouf Bazaz, Ph.D., LCPC, is a clinical mental health counselor, counselor educator, and visual artist whose work integrates expressive arts and trauma-informed approaches to support survivors of war, violence, and persecution struggling with trauma, torture, grief, and loss. She is a professor of counseling at Hood College in Maryland (USA) and is the Mental Health Director of the HEAL Refugee Health & Asylum Collaborative. She holds a Ph.D. in Counseling from The George Washington University and an M.A. in Trauma and Violence Studies from NYU.

Recent Publications

Bazaz, N., O'Connor, S., Barron, A., Byimana, L. Isley, J. (2023). **Torture survivors who engage in advocacy in the U.S.: Review, characteristics and policy implications.** *Torture*. 33(2), 102-118.

Bazaz, N. (2020) **The Impact of Post-Migration Stressors on Mental Health Outcomes for Ethiopian Asylum- Seekers Obtaining Services at a U.S.-Based Center for Survivors of Torture.** *The George Washington University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing*. 28090076.