

Certificate

Clay Field Therapy®

2020-2021 Colourfully, Singapore

Cornelia Elbrecht
Art Therapist AThR, SEP







The Clay Field is a flat rectangular wooden box that holds 10 – 15 kg of clay. A bowl of water is supplied. This simple setting offers a symbolic "world" for the hands to explore. There will be no art work to be taken home. The hands enter the Clay Field and move in it; in their ability or inability to "handle" the material they tell the client's life story. The hands then can be encouraged to find ways to deal with situations and events, to complete actions that previously could not be coped with.

This unique art therapy approach is recognized in Europe as a discipline in its own right. Over 500 Clay Field Therapists are currently practicing in numerous institutions. It is part of the curriculum in schools for disabled and disadvantaged children; it is widely used in women's shelters, refugee centers and to facilitate trauma healing.

The four workshops will look at the application of Clay Field Therapy

- Experientially
- Via videoed case histories
- Through understanding core aspects of its theoretical basis

"Due to the texture, weight and resistance of the clay, the material demands physical effort. Very quickly the head – and with it our cognitive conditioning – is pushed aside to make way for the more "ancient" urges of our libido.

There will be no finished product, no artwork to show to friends, no sculpture to be fired in a kiln. At the end of a Clay Field session, only intense body memories will be taken home. The kinaesthetic motor action combined with sensory perception will have lasting therapeutic benefits, especially in cases of developmental delays and trauma healing.

Touch is the most fundamental of human experiences. The first year of our life is dominated by the sense of touch. Tactile contact is the first mode of communication we learn. Our earliest stages in life are dominated by oral and skin contact between infant and caregiver. Our earliest body memories and our core attachments were formed when we relied on sensorimotor feedback to feel safe and loved. Love as well as violence is primarily communicated through touch. Our boundaries are invaded through inappropriate touching. Sexual experiences are overwhelmingly ruled by the sense of touch – and so are medical procedures, as well as all other events that happened to our bodies.

Work at the Clay Field involves an intense tactile experience – it can link us to a primordial mode of communication, to a preverbal stage in our life. This is the truly beneficial quality of clay in a therapeutic context. Its regressive qualities will allow a therapist to address early attachment issues, developmental setbacks and traumatic events in a primarily non-verbal way, contained in the safety of the setting.

Toddlers may pile simple building blocks on top of each other and then enjoy knocking them down over and over again, thus learning creative destruction as a way to achieve object constancy (Winnicott 1971). Such play prepares children to cope with the real world as a continuum of constant change, of encounter and separation, of comings and goings of loved ones and events, of endings and beginnings. Trust is gained from the ability to



survive such changes intact. Work at the Clay Field involves a continuous process of destruction and creation, because the material is both limited in its amount and unlimited in its possibilities. We can create at the Clay Field only if we dare to destroy the smooth surface and continue to have the courage to take something apart that we have put together before. We can learn to survive change; to grasp and handle it. In this manner the work can assist in dealing with the emotional injuries we suffered from overwhelming change and destruction in the past.

Pre-school children learn primarily through touching and handling objects. During the evolution of mankind, the cognitive brain was shaped through skilled hand movements; with our hands we learned to understand the world (Wilson 1999). These innate language skills become reactivated through handling things and through observing the handgestures of our caregivers, as a recent study at the University of Chicago showed (Rowe 2008; 2005).

School children will create three-dimensional representations in the clay – 'real objects', figures, scenes and landscapes that have meaning and emotional values attached to them. At the Clay Field adults and children alike weave these developmental layers into a complex web of biography, formative kinaesthetic body memories, frustrated or traumatized internalized patterns of behaviour and the search for more authentic impulses and holistic structures." From C. Elbrecht, Trauma Healing at the Clay Field 2012

Sensorimotor Art Therapy

In recent years "sensorimotor" has emerged as a term to describe body focused psychotherapies that use a bottom-up approach. Instead of a cognitive top-down strategy, sensorimotor art therapy encourages the awareness of innate motor impulses in the muscles and viscera, also as heart-rate and breath. The expression of these motor impulses followed by their perception through the senses, allows the development of new neurological pathways that can bypass traumatic memories; such an approach is capable of restoring wholeness and wellbeing.

Work at the Clay Field is a sensorimotor, body-focused, trauma-informed art therapy approach. It is not necessarily concerned with an image-making process, but supports the awareness of body memories. While these memories are always biographical, the therapy itself is not symptom-oriented. Not the specific problem or crisis becomes the focal point, but the option to new answers and solutions as they are embedded in the body's felt sense. Such sensorimotor achievements are remembered similar to learning how to swim or ride a bike. They are lasting achievements that can transform even early infant developmental set-backs; they assist in finding an active response to traumatic experiences. They allow us to rewrite our biography towards a more authentic, alive sense of self.



Cornelia Elbrecht

Cornelia Elbrecht BA. MA. (Art Ed), AThR, SEP, has more than 40 years of experience as an art therapist. She is also a Somatic Experiencing trauma therapist (SEP). She is the director of the Institute for Sensorimotor Art Therapy.



She has studied at the School for Initiatic Art Therapy in Germany, also Jungian and Gestalt therapy, Bioenergetics and bodywork. She is founder and director of the Institute for Sensorimotor Art Therapy, School for Initiatic Art Therapy. She worked as founder, coworker and trainer in 'Neuenzell', a centre for self-awareness and meditation in the Black Forest. She is the founder and director of 'Claerwen Retreat' in Apollo Bay, Victoria.

She has lectured in Art Therapy at RMIT, Melbourne. Cornelia is a registered professional member of ANZACATA, the Australian, New Zealand and Asian Art Therapy Association and IEATA International Expressive Arts Therapies Association. Cornelia gives courses and individual sessions internationally, throughout Australia and in private practice at Claerwen Retreat in Apollo Bay, Australia.

Publications:

Some of Cornelia's publications have been translated into over 20 languages worldwide.

- 2019 Elbrecht, Cornelia; Deuser, Heinz: Work at the Clay Field. Online Masterclass. www.sensorimotorarttherapy.com
- 2019 Elbrecht, Cornelia; Online Training: *Certificate in Healing Trauma with Guided Drawing.* www.sensorimotorarttherapy.com



- 2018 Elbrecht, Cornelia; *Healing Trauma with Guided Drawing; A Sensorimotor Approach to Bilateral Body Mapping.* North Atlantic Books, Berkley, California.
- 2015 Elbrecht, Cornelia, Antcliff, Liz; Being in Touch: Healing Developmental and Attachment Trauma at the Clay Field. Children Australia, 40pp 209 220 doi; 10.1017/cha.2015.30. Volume 40 Issue O3. Interpreting neuroscience, creating evidence a collection of Australian based Trauma informed Research and Practice Sept 15. http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_s1035077215000309
- 2015 Elbrecht, Cornelia. *The Clay Field and Developmental Trauma*. In: Malchiodi, Cathy Ed., *Creative Interventions with Traumatized Children*. Guilford Press, Pennsylvania.
- 2014 Elbrecht, Cornelia, Antcliff Liz; Being Touched through touch: Trauma treatment through haptic perception at the Clay Field: A sensorimotor art therapy. INSCAPE, International Journal of Art Therapy, 2014 http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1745482.2014.880932 Routledge.
- 2013 ANZJAT, the Australian New Zealand Journal of Arts Therapy Vol 8, No. 1, 2013, p.67 review of: *Trauma Healing at the Clay Field* by Maggie Wilson.
- 2012 Elbrecht, Cornelia. Trauma Healing at the Clay Field, a sensorimotor approach to art therapy; Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London/Philadelphia.
- 2011 Elbrecht, Cornelia; Deuser, Heinz: Work at the Clay Field. Set of 7 DVDs.
- 2011 Elbrecht, Cornelia. *Die Wandlungsreise*. Der Prozess des Geführten Zeichnens, eine initiatische Kunsttherapie. Rütte: Johanna Nordländer Verlag.
- 2006 Elbrecht, Cornelia. *The Transformation Journey. The Process of* Guided Drawing An Initiatic Art Therapy. Rütte: Johanna Nordländer Verlag.
- 1999 Guided Drawing, Drawing as Meditation, in Golden Age Issue 41, March May 1999
- 1995 Guided Drawing, in Australian National Art Therapy Association Newsletter Vol VII Winter 1995
- 1990 Das Geführte Zeichnen auf dem Hintergrund der Initiatischen Therapie, in: Die neuen Kreativitätstherapien, Handbuch für Kunsttherapie, Hrsg: Hilarion Petzold, Ilse Orth Guided Drawing on the background of Initiatic Therapie, in 'The new Creative Therapies, Handbook for Art Therapy, editor: Hilarion Petzold, Ilse Orth
- 1988 Das Geführte Zeichnen in: Integrative Therapie, Zeitschrift für Verfahren Humanistischer Psychologie und Pädagogik Guided Drawing, in: Intergative Therapy, Journal for Humanistic Psychology and Education



Course Outline

The Clay Field Therapy Training Program comprises a series of 6 modules as an advanced training for a limited number of interested professionals and students. The aim of the courses is to enable its participants to integrate Clay Field Therapy into the existing framework of their current practice, be it as art therapist, expressive arts therapist, play therapist, counsellor, social worker, teacher, nurse, artist or psychologist. The focus will be on the experience of Work at the Clay Field in an environment suitable for personal development. At the same time the approaches and techniques will be made transparent in order to make it possible to acquire profound techniques of working with the Clay Field in a therapeutic way. The 16O group hours will include individual sessions, seminars, co-counselling and supervision. The six 3-day workshops should equip participants with fundamental skills to work with the Clay Field in a therapeutic way.

Dates:

Participants are asked to commit to the entire training. The maximum group size will be 16. 4 assistants will support the process.

The proposed dates for 2020/21 are as follows:

Module 1: 13, 14, 15 March 2020
Module 2: 21, 22, 23 March 2020
Module 3: 2, 3, 4 October 2020
Module 4: 9, 10, 11 October 2020
Module 5: 5, 6, 7 March 2021
Module 6: 12, 13, 14 March 2021

Cost:

Certification fees: \$4800 (18 days of training)

corresponding to \$800 per module of 3 days

Early Bird: \$4200 (18 days of training)

corresponding to \$700 per module of 3 days, for applications completed before 15/11/19.

The cost covers tuition fees including all course and art materials.

A deposit of \$800, or \$700 for early bird (until 15 November 2019), is due on application. Should an applicant be not accepted the otherwise non-refundable deposit will be returned in full. The deposit will roll over and account as part payment for the last module in 2021.

Invoicing is done progressively, by semester.

Should someone be unable to attend one module, an effort will be made to find compensation on an individual basis to enable the student to catch up with the rest of the course material. In order to receive the training certificate at the end, the required hours must have been attended.



Course Structure

The modules will not strictly focus on the course content lined out below, as the group's needs and special interests will also be taken-into-account. However, all modules need to be completed in order to receive the certificate of completion, which authorises the participant to work as a fully qualified Clay Field Therapist.

All workshops will dedicate a significant amount of time for participants learning to actively facilitate sessions, practising with each other.

Part I: Working at the Clay Field with Adults

Module 1: 13, 14, 15 March 2020 Introduction:

Clay Field Therapy is a powerful tactile medium that uses a bottom-up approach to re-structure and transform implicit memory. It can reach into the autonomic nervous system through its predominantly non-verbal and kinaesthetic approach. This sensorimotor art therapy is as unique as it is powerful. It is particularly useful in the context of working with children, with developmental setbacks and trauma

- Individual art therapy sessions at the Clay Field facilitated by the trainer
- Co-counselling practice sessions with the Clay Field
- Understanding the structure and dynamics of the field
- Understanding the haptic language of the hands
- Creating trauma-informed safety for clients
- Trauma Healing at the Clay Field
- Aspects of trauma healing, in particular Pendulation

We will learn to identify the dynamics of the Gestalt Formation Process through:

- How fundamental experiencing progresses from diffuse motor impulses to sensory awareness and from there to fulfilment and cognitive integration.
- The structure of the Primary Gestalt and the Optimal Gestalt
- Afference and re-afference

Module 2: 21, 22, 23 March 2020 The Nine Situations at THE CLAY FIELD ®

Prof. Heinz Deuser has mapped out 9 stages, "situations" as he has called them that characterize the Work at the Clay Field. These are partially based on D. W. Winnicot's theories on a child's developmental stages, but also relate to the human need to create



mythical correspondences. The first four situations apply to children working at the Clay Field, adults will then go further, at times.

A particular focus will be given to these Nine Situations and how these situations are being acquired in the Clay Field:

Seminar:

- Reliability, being reliable to me: Perceiving myself in my body
- Reliability, relying on something other than me: Shifting focus onto an opposite
- Finding orientation: Finding reliability in what is present
- Acquisition of Object Constancy: Acquiring emotional constancy through creative destruction
- Acquisition of Subject Constancy: Establish my own position in a foreign place
- Centering, Grounding: Acquisition of one's own ground
- Shadow integration: Acquisition of one's individuality; self-correspondence, object accordance
- Destruction as self-realization: Taking on the consequences of one's own realization
- Accepting one's humanity: Integration with one's own Other.

Workshop:

Co-counselling practice sessions with the Clay Field

Part II: Working at the Clay Field with Children

Module 3: 2, 3, 4 October 2020 Haptic Perception and the Gestalt Formation Process at THE CLAY FIELD ®

In order to "read" the hands of a client the therapist needs to understand certain movements and how they relate to particular developmental stages; stages that express a client's age-specific developmental needs and a process-specific pattern of action.

- The topography of the hands
- Proprioception
- Kinaesthetic messages of the hands
- The Skin Sense
- Sense of Balance
- Depth Sensibility
- Haptic Perception
- Haptic object relations
- The therapeutic dialogue with the hands



In particular understanding, how the sensorimotor base develops through hand-movements beginning in utero and then continues through the first four years of life. Skin Sense, which develops in the first year of life, Balance, which we begin to acquire in the second year, and Depth Sensibility, which is achieved in the third and fourth year, all three form the basis for all haptic interactions.

- The primary sensorimotor base describes children's development in their first four years of life.
- The secondary sensorimotor base allows haptic diagnosis of developmental trauma in older children and adults.
- Understanding the sensorimotor base is essential in order to verbally accompany clients.

Practice sessions will focus on therapeutic dialogue.

Module 4: 9, 10, 11 October 2020 Realizations in the Actional Process of Children and Adolescents at THE CLAY FIELD ®

The Work at the Clay Field with children and adolescents differs in various ways to the way a therapist works with adults. We will look at:

- Age-specific developmental action patterns
- Age-specific self-perception and orientation
- Age-specific body-perception
- Organization in haptic actions and representations: The Clay Field confronts as a container
- Organization in field lay-out: The Clay Field becomes a two-dimensional field; the landscaping of the field; groupings and interconnectedness
- Organization in relational fields: The Clay Field becomes an effect field for qualitative-emotional and actional orientation
- Organization of own positionings: The Clay Field becomes a field for one's own formation: own gain, own appropriation, own position, in factualconcrete depictions and non-simulation games; in intersubjective exchange; in picture stories.
- Organization in experience forms: The Clay Field becomes a field of one's own foundation: one's own world, one's own realization

Seminars, practice co-counselling sessions and videos of children's Clay Field processes will characterize this module. The focus will be on pre-school and primary school children.



Module 5: 5, 6, 7 March 2021 Haptic Diagnosis of the Actional Process of Children and Adolescents at THE CLAY FIELD ®

This module will in particular focus on the hands, arms and body language as diagnostic tools:

- Age-specific haptic organization of the arms
- Age-specific haptic organization of the hands
- Developmental markers of hand and arm movements
- The perception of the clay from infancy to adolescence
- Gestalt Formation in Children's Work
- Different stages of Centering
- The appropriate use of tools
- Child specific trauma interventions
- Child specific body perception
- Videoed case histories
- Dialoging with children at the Clay Field

The focus here will include the development of body posture at the Clay Field from age four onwards and include teenagers and adults.

Module 6: 12, 13, 14 March 2021

Supervision

Please bring filmed case histories for this module, including your own computer in order to avoid technical problems.

This part of the training will allow for the opportunity to review what you have learnt in the context of your own work with clients. Each of you should be prepared (if possible) to present at least two filmed Clay Field sessions. We will watch these and discuss the observations we make. From experience this is a sound way to

- Review the Nine Situations and
- Structure of the Gestalt Cycle from Intention, Primary Gestalt to Fulfillment
- Revisit Haptic Object Relations through
 - Skin Sense
 - Balance
 - Depth Sense
- Integrate the technique
- Sharpen your observational skills
- Get feedback for your personal therapeutic style and its effectiveness

We will also do some Clay Field work and related exercises.



Registration & Contact

To apply for the Singapore 2020-2021 certification program, please fill in the registration form at:

https://www.colourfully.sg/certification-clay-field-singapore



For information about program contents, please contact:

Cornelia Elbrecht

mobile: +61 (0)418 388 539 email: cornelia@sensorimotorarttherapy.com website: www.sensorimotorarttherapy.com

For information about the registration process, please contact:

Annelaure Vuillermoz, Colourfully Pte. Ltd. whatsapp: +65 9876 6860 email: hello@colourfully.sg website: www.colourfully.sg