



## Recertification of SPT Credential, Class 1: Welcome & Understanding the Projective Process

Completion Date of this Module: \_\_\_\_\_

**Webinar 1 & Class 1 are about the foundation and starting to learn about the projective process.**

### Learning Objectives:

- Describe the basics of Synergetic Play Therapy® including the tenets, the history, and the main play therapy influences
- Explain how children use the projective process in play therapy to set the toys and the therapist up to feel how they feel
- Assess and explain the significance of why authenticity is so important in the playroom
- Describe how a SPT Therapist accesses (his/her/their) authentic self and deepens the child's therapeutic process

### What is Synergetic Play Therapy®? (Also known as SPT)

Synergetic Play Therapy® (2008) is a research-informed model of play therapy blending together the therapeutic power of play with nervous-system regulation, interpersonal neurobiology, physics, attachment, mindfulness and therapist authenticity.

Its primary play therapy influences are Child-Centered, Experiential and Gestalt theories.

Synergetics (a term coined by physicist Buckminster Fuller) is the study of systems in transformation, with an emphasis on total system behavior unpredicted by the behavior of any isolated components.

Synergetic Play Therapy honors both the therapeutic powers of play, the science that governs relationships, and the development of the therapist, recognizing that it is ultimately **the interplay between these three systems** that support deep transformation for both therapist and child.

The word itself is also reflective of what is happening in the playroom and how integration and healing occurs. As the therapist attunes to their own internal systems and then attunes to the internal systems of the child, a union of systems occurs. In this union, a synergy forms, allowing for co-regulation to emerge. The co-regulation supports both the therapist and the child in their ability to move towards the uncomfortable thoughts, feelings, and body sensations that they would not have been able to move towards as easily on their own.

During this "synergy of systems", the therapist and child enter something akin to a "Synergetic field" where right hemisphere to right hemisphere communication emerges, allowing for integration and transformation.

Although Synergetic Play Therapy® is a model of play therapy, it's also referred to as **a way of being in relationship with self and other**. It's an all-encompassing paradigm that can be applied to any facet of life, and subsequently any model of play therapy can be applied to it or vice versa. Synergetic Play Therapy is both non-directive and directive in its application.

The Online Intro to SPT course focuses primarily on non-directive application as a foundation.

### Notes:

### **Primary Influences: (see handout)**

#### **The Projective Process:**

- The projective nature of the mind is the brilliant capacity that we all have to see ourselves outside of ourselves. In other words, to look into a mirror. I need to be able to look outside of myself to be able to understand who I am.
- The mind projects its disowned parts onto people, objects, and toys. “Disowned part” means any part of me that I haven’t learned to love.
- We also project our un-integrated painful memories. Specifically, we project the parts of an experience that we haven’t been able to integrate into our lives, make sense of, or regulate through.
- In SPT, through the use of play and relationship, we are helping children integrate the disowned parts of themselves (positive and negative) and move towards the challenging memories, thoughts, and sensations that they perceive as painful so that they can integrate them into their lives.

### **What is Deflective vs Reflective Awareness?**

#### **The Set Up/The Offering:**

*Read Chapter 7 (The Set Up) from Aggression in Play Therapy: A Neurobiological Approach for Integrating Intensity to understand The Set Up*

- The child projects his/her/their inner world onto the toys and therapist, setting them up to experience his/her/their perception of what it feels like to be him/her/them - SPT Tenet
- The Set Up is not a manipulative process. It is an offering of brilliant information to help us understand what it feels like to be the child. The child’s mirror neuron system is looking for templates to copy and attempting to understand intention behind behaviors.

#### Notes:

#### **Therapeutic Stages & Tracking Process: (see Handout)**

The SPT Therapeutic Stages (The Curve) is a tool to help you have language and left-brain dialogue about what’s happening in the playroom, so that you can know where you are in the play therapy process and communicate it to parents and other adults in the child’s life.

- Orient: The child will orient to you, the toys, and the room
- Test: The child will test you. This is a one-time experience. After that, testing is usually part of the Set Up. You will be tested for two reasons:
  - 1.
  - 2.

- Working Stage: Children will do everything in their power to help you understand what it feels like to be them. They will use their verbal stories, play, body language, tone of voice, etc. to help you understand. In the playroom, you may be asked to be an active participant or an observer of their play.

Notes:

**Reflective Questions:**

- What is something I learned that felt really significant?
- What is something I am curious about and want to understand more?
- What questions do I have for your consultant? (if receiving consultation)
- Which questions did I miss in the quiz?

**To Work On:**

1. Get curious about The Set Up/Offering, how others set you up, and how you set others up to feel.
2. If you are feeling courageous, try naming your experience out loud in the playroom just to see what happens.
3. What is one goal I will set for myself to work on before the next class?

**Quiz Review: (Multiple Choice & True/False)**

1. From a Synergetic Play Therapy lens, we want our child clients to engage in:
  - a. “Deflective awareness”
  - b. Insight
  - c. “Reflective awareness”
  - d. Comprehension
2. Another name for “The Set Up” in Synergetic Play Therapy is:
  - a. The Offering
  - b. The Manipulation
  - c. The Presentation
  - d. None of the above
3. Which of the following behaviors is an attempt at regulation:
  - a. Biting
  - b. Hitting
  - c. Avoiding eye contact
  - d. All of the above

4. Maximum healing occurs when a person is:
  - a. Very comfortable within the window of tolerance
  - b. Comfortably uncomfortable at the edge of the window of tolerance
  - c. outside the window of tolerance
  - d. None of the above
5. The “Test” in Synergetic Play Therapy is important because:
  - a. Children need to know they can be themselves
  - b. Children need to know that the therapist is going to be themselves too
  - c. To create a felt sense of safety within the therapeutic relationship
  - d. All of the above
6. Boundaries in Synergetic Play Therapy are:
  - a. Stated at the beginning of the session
  - b. Include setting limits and rules ahead of time
  - c. Organic and when the therapist is no longer able to stay present or when there is a safety concern
  - d. When the therapist is within their window of tolerance
7. Becoming an external regulator *requires* the therapist to:
  - a. Activate their own regulation in the midst of their dysregulation
  - b. Be an active participant in the therapeutic dyad
  - c. Answers A and B
  - d. Always get it right
8. True or False: During sessions, therapists feel so much more than they are consciously aware of making regulation that much more important.
9. It is important that therapists move towards the uncomfortable thoughts, sensations and emotions in the playroom?
10. During a play therapy session, children will borrow the regulatory capacity of the therapist as they attempt to integrate their challenging internal states?