



Working with Starting Points in Synergetic Play Therapy®
Example

“Starting Points” is a way to conceptualize where the child is starting/the initial challenges in the therapy process to help the therapist begin to identify what the child’s empowerment/overcoming of their challenges will look like. “Starting Points” is used in tandem with “The Therapeutic Stages in Synergetic Play Therapy” diagram as a way to track the child’s progress. Note: Each time the child enters a new “Working Stage”, it is important to reassess the “Starting Points” as the child is beginning a new layer of their process.

Instructions: Under the “What I see-initial challenges” column, write down one thing you observed in the session related to the client’s initial challenges. This is the child’s starting point. Directly across under the “What I would like to see- transformation of the challenge” column, write down what the transformation of the initial challenge/starting point would be.

Child: Jo
Age: 8

Starting Points “What I see-initial challenges”	Overcoming the Challenges “What I would like to see- transformation of the challenge”
Crouched posture/ tight / contained	Body open/ able to take in sensory information in an open stance
Play symbolically filled with themes of lack of safety and protection	Play symbolically shows safety and protection
Hypervigilance in the play not knowing what to expect	Play becomes more predictable and therapist/toys are given a “heads up” about what to expect
Little eye contact	Increased eye contact
Hard to focus on one thing	Able to focus on play/object for an appropriate amount of time
Has trouble taking a deep breath- breathing is very shallow	Able to take a deep breath and have more regulated breathing