Steven Armstrong delivers an informative, well-crafted approach to providing sandtray therapy from a humanistic perspective. He begins the text with an introduction of humanistic therapy and the humanistic philosophy, including the importance of awareness and insight for the client as well as the therapist. This serves as the cornerstone of the approach. There is also a brief overview of the importance and rationale for using sandtray as a therapeutic approach which serves as a reference point and provides a rationale for the approach. The text further elaborates by explaining the importance of the therapeutic relationship and describing the necessity of developing trust with the client through the use of the core conditions of genuineness, empathy, and unconditional positive regard. This emphasis on the core conditions exemplifies the importance of identifying value in all clients and attempting to meet each of them where they are in their journey.

A major strength of the text is the section on enhancing the ability to process trays. There is a chapter dedicated to facilitating change and awareness with clients. Armstrong indicates that the main goal of Humanistic Sandtray therapy is to “facilitate a process of exploration, expression, awareness, and discovery” (p. 75). He shares that this is done through the use of many specific skills to help clients process their trays, such as: recognizing polarities, staying in the here and now, staying with and owning the emotion, and going deeper in the emotion.

Additionally, Armstrong includes with his text a DVD of an actual and unedited sandtray session using his approach. This added video, along with the transcription (included as an appendix), brings the approach to life and fully demonstrates the gentleness and power of utilizing sandtray therapy from a humanistic perspective. The DVD provides concrete examples of the use of polarities, resistance, and grief work. These specific techniques are then tied into the text and highlight how to use the approach.

The text also offers a section on training, supervision, and past research. This section further highlights the importance of learning by experiencing when utilizing this approach with both clients and in supervision. Overall, this text is an excellent resource for any practicing sandtray therapist. It can easily serve as a starting point for a novice in the field or as a reference guide for a seasoned therapist.

Reference: