



## The Association for Sandplay Therapy

*... loving kindness, clarity & humility in the practice of Sandplay*

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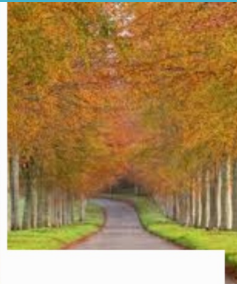
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**We are also holding drawings for FREE gifts.** These are most often miniatures for the sand. **SYMBOLS** you will be proud to offer on your shelves. Go now! Follow us.



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### AST Members Span the Globe



Enjoy the autumn images representing (l to r, anti-clockwise) South Africa, England, Wyoming, USA, Pakistan, Singapore, Romania.



AUTUMN IN THE  
AST WORLD

Our diversity and world view is one of the most spectacular things about AST. Together we gather with sand to heal and serve our amazing clients.

### MEMBER CONTRIBUTION:

*The Bear*  
by Nicola Rickaby, MAST

*So, this is the story of my little bear.....*

*Already a qualified Play Therapist, a number of years ago I was lucky enough to have a week's holiday on the beautiful Isle of Man.*

We'd gone there as my Mother-in-law's family were originally from the Celtic island and she was keen to show us around this beautiful place; famous for the Isle Of Man TT motorcycle races and the Manx cat, which has no tail, to name just two.

Whilst wandering round one of the quaint little towns I came across what my husband called a junk shop; we as Sandplay Therapists of course know these establishments better by Alladin's Caves or Treasure shops! There in the window sat this little bear, pleading with me to bring it home. After disagreements with my family, I later insisted that I return to the shop – that little bear was calling to me and wasn't going to be left behind!

At the time, I hadn't yet decided to begin my new and lifelong venture into the Wonderful World that is Sandplay but something told me the Little Bear was part of my future!

I first remember coming across the Bear as a symbol back in the 1990's in the Medicine Cards book, Bear & Company, Santa Fe, 1988.

In this publication, the Bear's strength is Introspection. Lying on the West of the Medicine Wheel of life, it seeks truth. Bear hibernates in winter to 'digest the year's experience (p.57). Our goals are said to lie in the West, and in order to accomplish our dreams, reflection is necessary. We have to believe that the answers are within us, which reminded me of Jung's belief that the body works towards self healing:

"I realize that under the circumstances you have described you feel the need to see clearly. But your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Without, everything seems discordant; only within does it coalesce into unity. Who looks outside dreams; who looks inside awakes." (C.G. Jung Letters, Vol. I, Page 33)

The bear is Lunar, one which disappears in winter and then re-appears in springtime. Cirlot describes Lunar animals or objects as those which:

"May be taken as those of a passive or reflecting character, like the mirror; or those which can alter their surface-area, like the fan. An interesting point to note is that both objects are female in character." A Dictionary of Symbols, J.E.Cirlot, Dover Publications Inc., Mineola, 2002

Hall's Illustrated Dictionary of Symbols in Eastern and Western Art , The University Press, Cambridge, England, 1994 has this to say about the Bear:

According to the bestiaries bear cubs are born formless and 'licked into shape' by their mother, symbolising Christianity converting the heathen. The bear is an attribute of Saint Euphemia, and of Gluttony, Lust and Anger personified. The nymph Callisto was turned into a bear by Artemis/Diana for losing her chastity. In China it symbolises strength and bravery. Its image is a protection against thieves. The great Panda was an emblem of rank, embroidered on the robes of certain court officials. (p.11 )

So, my little bear symbolises many things; It is my most chosen symbol from my toolkit; the one that I have had to reflect children's wishes that they could take it home with them. For me, I like to believe that it was the one that sparked my own Sandplay journey!



**Will you contribute next month?**  
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