

ABSTRACT

This explorative case study was undertaken to uncover how transformative self-discoveries were facilitated through Gestalt playtherapy, enabling agency of a single pre-school participant.

Data were captured around the participant's baseline agentic status; emerging agency, facilitated through the intervention and post-intervention agentic status. A content analysis aided thematic coding. Theme 1 identified inherent agency trends and the agency blocks **“what is that”**. Theme 2 dealt with patterns of active resistance **“I don't want to feel / I don't want to know”**. Theme 3 captured enhanced agentic behaviour **“I can and I understand”**.

Through the intervention the participant's entrapped agency was unleashed, leading to an awareness of her 'being', enabling her 'doing' and thereby allowing her to 'become'.

Enabled agency increased the participant's active involvement in her life and her engagement in developmental tasks was increased. Implications of the findings support further investigation and application of this intervention.

Key terms:

Agency; Gestalt playtherapy; preschool development; resistance; being doing and becoming; developmental task fulfillment; self-discoveries; paediatric occupational therapy; health promotion; self-regulation in infants; self-disposition; well-being; ego-development; phenomenological context; adverse environments.