CHAPTER 4

OVERVIEW: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

Findings represented in this chapter relate to Janet’s agentic behaviour as well as to findings pertaining to the explication of the Gestalt playtherapy process, which was used to enable agency. The presentation of the findings was predetermined by the structure of the methodology. Firstly the baseline findings are exposed. This step is followed by the presentation of the findings of the intervention stage. Thirdly the post-intervention findings are submitted to enable comparison.

2.1 BASELINE FINDINGS

Baseline-data from all the data sources was synthesized to introduce Janet as she presented prior to treatment entry, uncovering different perspectives of Janet’s story. An attempt has been made to expose the viewpoints of the parents and teacher within the phenomenological position in which they were presented. For the purpose of this report Janet’s mother will be referred to as Pat, her father as Joe, her sister as Melly and her teacher as Sue.

2.1 BASELINE FINDINGS EXTRAPOLATED THROUGH QUALITATIVE MEASURES

Capture and analysis of the baseline data was a preliminary step, which needed to be completed before the intervention was introduced. It was considered important that the reader is fully informed about how Janet’s agency manifested prior to the implementation of the facilitative process of playtherapy. For this reason the baseline data are synthesized in this chapter to formulate a baseline statement of agentic functioning. The discussion and synthesis of all the other findings is undertaken in Chapter 5.
2.1.1 PERSONAL BACKGROUND HISTORY

Critical information regarding Janet’s early development indicated that Pat’s bond with her mother was poor. Pat’s stepfather was described as “unpleasant and violent”. His actions resulted in the committal of Pat and her brother to a children’s home\(^1\) to restrict the stepfather’s negative influence.

Pat fell pregnant with Janet at the age of 18 years, while she was still at school and living at the children’s home. During her pregnancy Janet’s biological father repeatedly physically abused Pat. Once she needed to be hospitalized after an assault, where-after the relationship was terminated. Janet was delivered on full term of gestation with a birthweight of 4kg by normal vertex delivery. Her adaptation to neonatal routines was difficult. She was colicky and was described as having been “very clingy, fretful and demanding”.

Janet’s early development was marked by numerous transitions. Pat needed to earn a living and Janet was placed in her maternal grandmother’s care, despite the disharmonious relationship between Pat and Granny. Pat visited her baby over weekends. She was trapped in very difficult personal circumstances. Her live-in job as a housekeeper/receptionist led to her employer\(^2\) taking sexual liberties with her. The need for an income and feeling intimidated by this employer kept her in the position. Pat left this unsuitable employment-situation when she met Joe (Janet’s stepfather).

Joe stated that ”Pat did not trust men and she did not want a binding relationship. It took me a long time to get her to trust me and now we are inseparable”. When Pat moved in with Joe, Janet was re-united with her mother. Joe professed to love Janet as if she was his own daughter. After Melly was born in 1999, Joe and Pat got married. Janet was, according to her parents, unaware of the fact that Joe was not her biological father. Joe is a musician by profession and officiates as church-organist. Parish-events (weddings, funerals and celebrations) form an important part of this family’s life. Janet was compared to Melly,

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1 This information about Pat’s unhappy childhood emerged in the initial interview with the parents.
2 This employer had subsequently been convicted in the “teddy bear rapist case”.
who was described as more talented in every way. Sibling rivalry was identified as a problem, aggravated by Melly dominating her older sister. Janet’s developmental milestones\(^3\) were reached at the expected intervals.

Joe expressed that he had been concerned about Janet (aged four at the time), after Pat’s parents had visited, when Janet had been very withdrawn. His anxiety that Pat’s stepfather might have intimidated the child could not be substantiated\(^4\). The parents consulted a social worker at that time to explore why Janet was so withdrawn, but no issues surfaced\(^5\). The comment on Janet’s withdrawn behaviour after the grandfather’s visit was viewed as significant by the researcher.

Janet was sickly and she had a tonsillectomy in March 2002. She was uncomplaining when sick but appeared to feel a lot healthier since the operation.

### 2.1.2 BASELINE FINDINGS OF JANET’S BEHAVIOUR AT PRE-SCHOOL

The interview with Sue (Janet’s teacher) exposed Janet’s agency trends as they were manifesting at school. Janet separated easily from her parents, but she never integrated into the group. “She stays behind when everybody is ready and spends a lot of time in the bathroom, just playing with water.” Janet was not able to participate in the activity programme. “She is just doing very little if anything, she does not yet draw anything you can recognize.” Janet was unable to engage in any form of construction. She could partially dress herself, but struggled with shoes. She could not care for her possessions and never had her things together. She liked exploratory play like rolling and cutting playdough.

Socially Janet remained on the periphery, “other children just tolerate her, they are not nasty to her.” Emotional expression was only noticed when Janet was fighting with her

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\(^3\) Pat confirmed that she had looked out for developmental progress during her weekend visits.

\(^4\) Joe had forbidden Pat’s stepfather to visit.

\(^5\) The researcher contacted the social worker to verify information. It was established that no traumatic experiences had been elicited. The social worker had concluded that family conflict had precipitated the consultation.
sister. “She fights a lot with her sister.” Outside the context of the sibling conflict “I never know when she is upset, she just disappears. That is why I said she finds it difficult to establish her own identity, she is just there. It sounds all a bit nebulous when one talks about her.”

Sue mentioned that Janet’s family appeared to be “chaotic” (lacking in structure) and that Joe was sometimes indiscriminate about what he spoke of in front of children. He described graphic details about funerals where he had played the organ, when fetching the girls, in front of her group. Sue thought it to be inappropriate and was wondering what he was talking about at home in front of his children.

2.2 BASELINE FINDINGS: QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

The results of the standardized tests were profiled and scored against standardized age-norms. (Profiles in the appendix section: Appendix 3)

° Results on the Developmental Test of Visual Perception (DTVP-2, 1993)
  Janet’s combined total scores for visual perception distributed into the low average range; Motor Reduced Visual perception and Visual-Motor perception also fell into the low average range. On individual analysis she presented with borderline scores in the subtests of Position in Space and Visual Closure. These scores did not lower her total scores significantly.

° Results of the Draw a Person Test 1988 (DAP) (profiled on Appendix 3)
  Janet presented with a standard score of 74 on DAP, which positions her in the borderline range for her age.

2.3 BASELINE FINDINGS: QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE MEASURES COMBINED

In occupational therapy diagnostic reasoning information is gathered through qualitative and quantitative sources. A child is never tested without observing behaviour qualitatively.
2.3.1 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS OF JANET DURING THE ASSESSMENT

On the first meeting Janet entered the playroom with self-conscious movements. Her facial expression was bland and initially she avoided eye contact. During the formal testing she responded well to the structure, her movements freed up and she returned the tester’s gaze. Her eye-hand distance and her pencil grip were appropriate. She participated well within the predictable structure of standardized testing, and seemed to like doing the assessment tasks.

2.3.2 CLINICAL OBSERVATIONS RELATING TO NEUROLOGICAL MATURITY

Janet was right-hand dominant, she presented with age-appropriate equilibrium reactions, her protective reactions were good, postural tone appeared average and bilateral integration was appropriate. She could hop, skip, stand on one leg, march, perform starjumps, kneewalk, run up the staircase and she could catch and throw in an age appropriate manner. No signs of sensory defensiveness or hyperactivity were noted at that stage.

2.3.3 PLAY OBSERVATION BY EMPLOYING THE PRE-SCHOOL PLAYS-SCALE (PPS, 1974)

Janet’s play-preferences lay with the grossmotor equipment. Her responses were random, exploratory and not goal directed but very energetic. Janet’s attention was fluid and she never pursued an activity for long enough to develop an interest in a game. Her grossmotor play distributed into the age range typical of a child of 48-60 months. Material management could not be assessed since Janet avoided engagement with fine motor and construction tasks altogether. This verified her teacher’s observation, of Janet’s inability to engage in creative and representative activities.

Limited imitation of peers was observed regarding pretence/symbolic play. Janet fetched a toy horse copying other children and she galloped in a playful way. Her behaviour fell into the rubrics set out for the age group of 36-48 months.
Participation in social play was portraying the age level of children aged 24-30 months. She operated on the level of pre-parallel play, seemingly enjoying being around others without participating in a structured game. She was able to wait for her turn at the swing. Even though Janet was able to communicate verbally\(^7\), no verbal social exchanges were noted.

### 2.3. SYNTHESIS OF THE BASELINE FINDINGS

Findings exposed critical adverse factors relating to Janet’s early developmental history.

- Janet was born after an unplanned pregnancy to young parents, whose relationship had been unstable and violent, their association breaking up prior to her birth.
- Pat who was still at school at the time of Janet’s conception did not finish her education. Her incomplete education combined with her own unresolved issues predisposed her to be a vulnerable target for exploitation\(^8\).
- Pat’s live-in employment situation and the sexual exploitation by her employer capitalized on her vulnerability and the researcher wants to cautiously propose the speculation that Pat was not fully attuned to Janet’s needs.
- Pat could not physically take care of her newborn baby. This resulted in Janet being placed in the care of her maternal grandmother whom Pat had a poor relationship with. She cared for Janet over weekends. This pattern accounted for an inconsistent primary attachment figure and incongruent care giving.
- Janet was described as a fretful, colicky, demanding and clingy baby. These behaviours lead to the speculation that it could have been difficult to console her and that her needs may not always have been satisfactorily met.
- Current family issues were less antipathetic than in her early childhood. The following current issues were however noted. Janet was not told that Joe was not her biological father. Her parent’s seemed to be unaware that they were comparing their two daughters

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\(^6\) Categories of material management include: manipulation construction, purpose and attention

\(^7\) This was ascertained during the occupational therapy evaluating and confirmed in the individual treatment sessions

\(^8\) Pat was trapped in a victimic life position
and that Janet was always viewed as being at a disadvantage when she was measured up against Melly.

Baseline findings from the formal tests indicated that Janet’s basic performance skills, when compared to age norms, fell into the lower average range. These scores indicated that basic performance components for participation in the pre-school tasks were in place. Her behaviour and participation at school and at home was not congruent with Janet’s underlying performance ability. Janet was unable to engage in an age-appropriate manner according to her teacher. The play assessment added rigour to the teacher’s findings as it deepened transferability and credibility of the findings. Janet’s play engagement did not reflect her potential ability to perform developmental tasks. Deficiencies in the areas of self-expression, participation, and material management, representation and sustained focus were accentuated.

Accounts of Janet’s parents and her teacher reflected their view of Janet as being sweet and compliant but lacking in age-expected competence. Her behaviour had never caused problems. Her disengagement, her lack of focus on tasks and her inability to form peer relationships and her domination by her younger sister reflected a life-position of limited agency.

3. FINDINGS OF STAGE II: INTERVENTION

Findings relating to Objective-2 represented the identification of Janet’s agentic responses. Inherent agency trends, agency patterns of resistance to awareness as well as evolving agency patterns enabled through intervention, were uncovered. Findings relating to Objective-3 denoted enablers of agency, which were made explicit in the analysis of the intervention over the period of six weeks.
3.1 FINDINGS REGARDING JANET’S AGENTIC RESPONSES

Manifestations of Janet’s agency were extracted over the six-week treatment-period. Categorical aggregation on the NUD*IST program assisted in the identification of categories and themes. Table IV provides a summary of the themes and categories of Janet’s agency.

Table IV - Findings of the inquiry - Janet’s agentic responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1: Inherent agency trends “What is that”</td>
<td>-Curiosity</td>
<td>-I want to know how, what and why things are the way they are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Distractibility &amp; impulsiveness</td>
<td>-I want to know but I don't want to be bothered to integrate,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-I want to see it all now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-It is all too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2: Patterns of active resistance to self discoveries “I don't want to feel / know”</td>
<td>-Somatic responses</td>
<td>-Aches and discomfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Diversion: avoiding the subject</td>
<td>-I want to do or talk about something else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-It was not so bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3: Self expansion “I can and I understand”</td>
<td>-Developing competence</td>
<td>-Dealing with practical challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Creating meaning</td>
<td>-Connecting events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Physical manifestations of Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Family Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Grandpa Ronnie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-My brother Gunsha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.1 Theme 1: “What is this”

The first theme that emerged depicted agency trends inherently part of Janet’s behavioural repertoire. The categories that led to this theme depicted Janet’s inherent curiosity and her distractibility and impulsiveness.

3.1.2 Theme 2: “I don’t want to feel or know”

The second theme exposed agency trends, which indicated that Janet was actively but unconsciously resisting contact leading to the diminished experience of agency. Certain
habits of blocking contact had developed. The term habit referring to responses that have become so routinized that they are performed automatically (Parham, 1997). Parham elaborated that habits generated in early childhood decree the framework for occupational choices and agency later in life. The categories dealing with resistance were identified as somatic responses and avoidance of and diversion from the issue at hand.

3.1.3 Theme 3: “I can & I understand”

The third theme identified agency patterns, which emerged as a result of the self-discoveries made, facilitated through the intervention. These were new characteristic ways for Janet to be agentic. The categories related to Janet’s discovery of her own competence and creating of personal meaning. All the findings are illustrated and discussed in-depth in Chapter 5.

3.2 FINDINGS DENOTING THE THERAPEUTIC ENABLERS OF AGENCY

The therapeutic enablers of agency and emerging agency (Theme 3) were so intrically linked that it was considered imperative to discuss the findings pertaining to the second and third objective in such a way that this interactive dynamic process was highlighted. Kielhofner (1999) described the process of viewing interwoven variables as a heterarchy. A heterarchy constitutes contexts or systems, where each context/system contributes simultaneously different but complementary functions towards the whole of the process (Kielhofner 1999). In explicating the enablers of agency from the data, two processes were identified, firstly the Gestalt playtherapeutic process and secondly the self-enabling structure. Conjunctive application of both these processes produced shifts in Janet’s agency patterns. Emergent agency required deeper therapeutic enablement and the therapeutic procedures were dynamically adapted to elicit further agentic responses and intensify Janet’s contact.

Heterarchy was defined by Kielhofner as the cooperating of different subsystems, dynamically interrelated and each contributing in a different way towards a person’s agency.
3.2.1. THE GESTALT THERAPEUTIC PROCESS

The Gestalt therapeutic steps were replicated in each of the five sessions. These steps comprised of:

3.2.1.1 TREATMENT ENTRY

Treatment entry was concerned with establishing therapeutic rapport and creating an atmosphere of readiness for self-disclosure. Janet’s unfinished issues were taken up through indirect strategies such as metaphors to reach Janet’s deeper levels of consciousness in preparation for the projective work to be done. Fazio (1992, 114) refers to this as “see if the shoe fits” for instance by offering a metaphor which reflects key elements of the child’s problem and alternative solutions to the problem but differs in actual content from the problem.”

3.2.1.2 ENHANCING SENSORY CONTACT

The enhancement sensory contact was employed throughout the session but often commenced simultaneously with getting ready for therapeutic work. Janet had difficulties to remain in contact and to promote her connectedness to her environment and people and objects. This step was of particular importance to connect “the me with the not me” (Phillipson, 2001:7). Activities were directed at engaging Janet’s olfactory, tactile, gustatory, proprioceptive kinesthetic, auditory visual senses as well as her sense of rhythm. (Figure 1). Enhanced sensory expenses provoked memories and opened doors to deeper experiences.

3.2.1.3 HANDLING PROJECTIONS

Projections centered on concrete themes (projective tasks done Chapter 3 Table 5). Janet had difficulties to own behaviours and feelings, which were exposed during projections. This was exemplified in the graphic illustration (Figure 1). Projective
activities needed to be structured to contain Janet’s inability to draw representatively, her fluid attention span and to accommodate her concrete level of functioning. The specific Gestalt playtherapeutic techniques that were used during the intervention with Janet are listed below (Chapter 2, 5.3 for descriptions of these processes).

- Polarities
- Deepening Consciousness and Sharpening awareness
- Owning Feelings
- Confluence and responsibilities
- Empowerment and working towards a safe space
- Self Nurturance

### 3.2.2 SELF-ENABLING STRUCTURE

When treatment commenced Janet’s inherent agency trends (Theme 1) were accentuated. The impact of the Gestalt playtherapeutic techniques was maximized by implementing a firm structure, which frustrated Janet’s attempts of contact cutting and increased her contact boundaries. This structure was a conscious therapeutic step, which is reflected clearly in the content analysis, aimed at containing Janet’s resistance behaviour. The researcher summarized this process by means of a model in Illustration I (page 89).
ILLUSTRATION I: MODEL OF ENABLING AGENCY
3.2.3 DISCUSSION OF THE MODEL OF THERAPEUTIC ENABLERS OF AGENCY

In explaining the treatment model, the researcher wants to draw a symbolic comparison. The reader is reminded of an electro-magnet where magnetic field is created by winding an electrical coil around a metal staff and when the electrical current is activated a powerful magnetic field is amplified. In illustrating the process of intervention, the Gestalt therapeutic process is symbolized by the metal staff. This analogy depicts how the effectiveness of the “metal staff”, the Gestalt playtherapeutic process is magnified by winding the “electrical coil” representing the self-enabling structure around it and thereby maximizing the power of the therapeutic potential of Gestalt playtherapy. This symbolic mechanism illustrates the transformation of the dynamics, which maintained and perpetuated the impasse of Janet’s agency. An agentic lifeposition was facilitated. The outward funneling of agency symbolizes self-expansion through creating meaning (through chronological coherence & integration of issues) and developing competence (dealing with challenges and connecting events) (Page 89).

3.2.4 FREQUENCY OF INSTANCES OF FACILITATIVE HANDLING OF SPECIFIC PLAYTHERAPEUTIC STRATEGIES

The categories that were identified around the Gestalt playtherapeutic process were entered into a Microsoft Excel Worksheet. Incidences per sessions were added up and the results were synthesized into a graphic representation to enable comparison how the handling strategies were used over the period of the five sessions (Graphic Representation I: Page 91)

The graph indicated that enhancement of sensory awareness was utilized most frequently. Through increased sensory contact Janet was able to experience her inner self and endeavour to make contact with people and objects in her world. When working on projections.
3.2.5 DISCUSSION OF THE GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

Janet had difficulties to relate the projected feelings and expressions to her own life. This was particularly evident in the third session when the projective play centered on nurturance and family relationship themes and dealt with babies being sick and dying.

Every time when an attempt was made to relate an in-depth issue to her reality, Janet cut herself off. Her resistance in that third session to own feelings around difficult issues precipitated a watershed in Janet’s behaviour at home. The subsequent feedback from Pat was that Janet had started to play in a more organized fashion at home. She started to display purposeful agency. In the fourth and fifth sessions she integrated projections more coherently and she was also attempting more readily to explore in-depth issues.
3.2.6. SUMMARY: FINDINGS PERTAINING TO THE FACILITATION OF SELF-
DISCOVERIES

Contact cutting and blocking was triggered at the point when projected material was to be
related to Janet’s real life experiences. Janet’s habitual resistances to contact were to
change the subject and somatic responses, distracting from the issue at hand.

The categories of the treatment codes were added up over the total period of all five
session. These results were then depicted in a pie graph to illustrate in percentage
representation how the strategies were used to handle Gestalt playtherapeutic steps over the
five-week period of intervention (Graphic representation II) distributed.

Graphic Representation II: Distribution of techniques during the intervention period
3.2.6 STATEMENT OF INTERVENTION PHASE FINDINGS

Findings suggested that a considerable shift in Janet’s agency had taken place, facilitated through the intervention. The facilitative process of Gestalt playtherapy was uncovered and it was established that the ‘enhancing of sensory awareness’ was the technique most utilized. Janet’s tolerance to handle and integrate projections was increased towards the end of the intervention period. A firm explicit structure to maximize the effectiveness of the Gestalt playtherapy process compounded Janet’s self-discoveries. An in-depth discussion of the findings will follow in Chapter 5.

4. FINDINGS OF STAGE III: POST INTERVENTION

Findings pertaining to the fourth objective illustrate post-intervention agentic functioning and ascertain whether shifts in agency were evidenced beyond the treatment room at school and at home.

4.1 POST-INTERVENTION INTERVIEW WITH JANET'S TEACHER

The researcher had intended to conduct a post-treatment interview with Janet’s teacher in the same fashion as the pre-treatment interview. Sue unexpectedly went overseas. She had however offered spontaneous feedback, at the time of the post-treatment play observation at Janet’s school and this information was used as basis for the teacher’s feedback.

Sue was not sure how to define the change that had taken place. She indicated “Janet seems to do more things”. Janet remained with a task for sustained periods and was for the first time able to produce end results. Janet had started to relate to other children, she was having lunch with friends and had become part of the group. This was substantiated by Janet herself who expressed how happy she was at school playing with friends.
4.2 POST INTERVENTION PLAY ASSESSMENT

Another play assessment on the Preschool Play Scale (PPS) was conducted at Janet’s school a week after the final session of closure had taken place. The findings indicated dramatic differences from the baseline assessment. For this reason the assessment was followed by another analysis of Janet’s play, a week later, to verify the observations of the previous post-intervention play assessment.

Material management was observed at this occasion. Janet sat in a group and was attempting to draw a mermaid but her picture did not materialize in the way she had intended. She moved to another table and played with a shape game producing a flower pattern. She persevered with this activity for 10 minutes and used more than ten pieces. She mastered the fine motor control and spatial planning required for the construction. She returned to the drawing table and endeavored to draw the mermaid again. A shift in her ability to persevere was acknowledged. She jumped up excitedly at the successful completion of her mermaid drawing and showed it to her teacher. An interchange of focused joint attention between Sue and Janet was captured. Janet’s material management represented the range set out for children aged 60 months according to the age-rubrics.

Space management was observed during grossmotor-play. Janet was playing with a group of friends a chasing-, hiding-, catching-game. Janet was a key-player and she was pretending to be a lion roaring chasing and wrestling with her friends. Her play was goal-directed. Her interest was sustained for the duration of the outdoor playtime. Her grossmotor play actions distributed into the age range typical of a child of 60 months.

Pretence/symbolic play was evident when Janet pretended to be a lion roaring and taking her friends captive. Then she was held hostage followed by her escaping. The children’s game was purely playful and no overtures of competitiveness were exposed. This kind of repetitive dramatic play without more complex elaboration represented play behaviour of children in the age-band around 48 months.
Participation in a group had shifted noticeably since the baseline assessment. Janet played interactively and cooperatively, indoors and outside. She initiated the chasing game but was equally happy for another child to take the lead. She was co-creating the rules around this game. Verbal exchanges took place, enriched by play-sounds and laughter. Social participatory play represented the rubrics of 60 months.

4.3 FEEDBACK FROM JANET’S PARENTS

After the third session Pat imparted how Janet’s play-behaviour at home had changed astonishingly, and had become more agentic. Janet showed an interest in puzzles. “The most remarkable thing is that she stays with one thing until she is finished, she is completing a picture when she is drawing. She is packing things away before she starts something else”.

4.4 MEMBER CHECKING WITH JANET’S PARENTS

Member checking with Janet’s parents was scheduled to establish if they observed shifts in Janet’s agency. Appointments were cancelled twice due to a funeral and due to Joe’s unwellness. When another meeting was to be scheduled, Joe indicated that they did not have time at the moment but they might be interested in the future. During a telephone conversation Joe confirmed:

J: “I cannot come to see you because of problems I have at work. Thanks for what you have done. She (Janet) is a changed child.”

When asked in which way she had changed he answered:

J: “She is so special. Focused and warm and playing with imagination. Right now she is dressed up as a bride and organizes her sister in the game. Previously it has been the other way round.”

Joe inquired if he and Pat could look at the videos at a later stage. He was informed that ethical reasoning determined that the treatment videos could not be shown.
4.5 MEMBER-CHECKING WITH JANET

Member checking with Janet took place during closure of the therapeutic process. Janet expressed her agency in making a collage of felt body-pieces to compose a person on the felt board (representational activities and material management she had formerly been unable to do). She copied this person onto a piece of paper and her successful drawing filled her with pride. A copy of this picture is attached in the appendix section.

When discussing aspects pertaining to the research, agency was evident when Janet expressed explicitly that she did not want the videos to be shown to the parents and teacher (Chapter 3, 5.3). Janet was fully in touch with herself and with all that was around her. She had a lively facial expression she was focused and alert, she expressed ideas and followed through with her intentions. She also expressed her feelings. She was clearly operating from an agentic lifeposition.

4.6 PEER-REVIEW BY THE KEY INFORMANT

After viewing the videos and studying the transcription reports, the key informant offered her analysis. She then summarized her review as follows: Feedback regarding agency centered on how significant shifts in focus and joint attention had been facilitated through the intervention. Increased agency was evidenced in the quality of engagement. Janet’s ability towards organismic self-regulation with regard to self-nurturing and dealing with difficult memories had been promoted.

The increase of playfulness was rated as remarkable. A transfer of play themes from the playroom into the schoolroom, for instance copying the felt collage and attempting to draw a mermaid, had been highlighted. The ability of joint attention with the therapist was also generalized as illustrated by Janet’s ability of shared attention during play-engagement with friends and with her teacher. All these observations confirmed that a significant shift towards an agentic lifeposition had taken place.
4.7 SUMMARY: A COMPARISON OF BASELINE AND POST INTERVENTION AGENCY

A comparison of the findings of the Preschool Play Scale pre- and post intervention is tabulated in Table VI.

Table VI: Comparison of baseline and post-interventions findings during PPS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF AGENCY</th>
<th>BASELINE</th>
<th>POST INTERVENTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Readiness to engage</td>
<td>Janet was nowhere to be found. Missed the plot (did not get the game)</td>
<td>Janet was in the middle of the group during drawing and outdoor playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task approach</td>
<td>Janet did not orientate to a task. Her responses were incidental and random.</td>
<td>Janet was able to pace herself she temporarily left a task that was not working out (drawing) and returned to it later. Focus and planning were involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task completion</td>
<td>Janet never attempted to complete a task</td>
<td>Janet was able to work towards an end result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>By being uninvolved Janet did not need to ideate possible solutions. She did not engage in steps towards getting towards a goal.</td>
<td>Janet left the activity that was not working out, did something else and returned to the former task. She found solutions in practical situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking events</td>
<td>Since Janet was not in self-contact she was not present in her life. She responded to events as insular moments, apparently not comprehending interrelationships.</td>
<td>Forward projection (feed-forward) as well as reflection (feedback) was utilized in responding to events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humour</td>
<td>Humour was imitative and lacked depth</td>
<td>Janet laughed and appropriately responded to the fun of playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>None other than an isolated exchange with her sister</td>
<td>Interactive playing all the time exchanging rules of the game and adding to the expression to it. Exchanges with her teacher take place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Janet was imitating some other children without being in touch with their game.</td>
<td>Janet was directing the lion-game but was also cooperating when others changed the rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Janet played energetically but her running around and climbing was not done with purpose.</td>
<td>Janet played energetically her actions were purposeful and appropriate for the game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playfulness</td>
<td>Her actions were non-productive lacking of imagination and self expression</td>
<td>Playfulness, as true expression of the inner self was evidenced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained attention</td>
<td>Janet did not engage in a focused manner, her attention was fluid</td>
<td>Sustained attention was exhibited during indoor and outdoor playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint attention</td>
<td>None present</td>
<td>Instances of joint attention with teacher and with individual as well as a group of children was demonstrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>Very limited in imitating the horse-game</td>
<td>Repetitive theme with fairly concrete content but leading to rich and playful expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of Joy</td>
<td>Janet appeared disinterested, with bland, superficial emotions</td>
<td>Janet was expressing life force and exuberance during her play</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this table it is unmistakable that shifts in agency were noticed beyond the clinical setting. An in-depth discussion of the findings is conducted in Chapter 5, to deepen the reader’s understanding and insight on how answers were found to the research questions and how the participant Janet was enabled to develop an agentic life position.