

**ASSOCIATED CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS
OF
TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY**

Graduate Course Syllabus

Course Number: MFT 677 B

Course Name: Experiential Play Intensive: Playful Therapy

Semester and Year: Summer 2023

Instructor: Tamara Strijack

Course Assistant: Tracy Azevedo

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Office Hours: Tues, Wed, and Thurs

Co-requisites or Pre-requisites: MFT 684 (which includes Neufeld Intensive I)

Semester Hours: 3 Credit Hours

Semester Dates: 1 May – 31 August

Class Dates: July 17 to July 21 [8:30 am – 4:30 pm]

Course Description

Developmental science has long been championing the healing power of the play mode, whether one is a child, an adolescent, or an adult. However, in the field of therapy play is often overlooked and undervalued, often focused more on cognition and behaviour. Play can become marginalized or isolated into a particular model or approach, eclipsing its natural power. In this course, we will explore the purposeful dynamics of emotion and the inherent properties of play — and most importantly, the magical interplay when they come together. We will play with the practical application across the lifespan. What does it look like to bring true play and playfulness into our practice, both in and out of the therapy room? What does it look like to matchmake play and emotion for those you care for and for yourself? With this insight of true play, we can see how play is nature's design to take care of us, no matter what one's role. We look forward to playing together with you!

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, the student should:

1. Foster a deeper understanding of the purpose of emotion and to recognize the emotional roots underlying behaviour - for children, adolescents and adults.
2. Be able to recognize the inherent properties of play, and how play serves emotion.
3. Be able to facilitate practices that encourage the processing of emotion through the play mode both for the client and for the therapist.
4. Be able to matchmake a client to the emotional playgrounds necessary for emotional health and healing, as well as identifying one's own emotional playgrounds as a therapist.

Course Learning Outcomes

- to cultivate an appreciation of the pivotal role of emotion in development, perception, and behaviour
- to be aware of the overall purpose of emotion as well as the purpose of individual emotions
- to build a working model of emotion that can be applied across situations
- to outline the five stages of emotional development so healthy maturation can be fostered
- to be able to recognize and address the emotional roots of behaviour problems
- to increase our understanding of emotion and play and the relationship between them
- to appreciate play as a basic human need for both children and adults
- to bring play to our consciousness so we can compensate for its loss in our society
- to help our clients find the play they need for emotional health and well-being
- to nurture our own playfulness as therapists
- to recognize playfulness as a key indicator of optimal functioning and well-being
- to see play as nature's 'cocoon' for inner transformation
- to understand that play was meant to take care of our emotions
- to see play as natural therapy
- to integrate practices that facilitate outlets for emotion
- to matchmake our clients to their own emotional playgrounds
- to find our own emotional playgrounds as therapists

Required Texts and Materials

MacNamara, D. (2016). Rest Play Grow. Vancouver, BC: Aona Books.

Neuroscience of Play presentation by Eva de Gosztanyi (recording to be provided)

Selected articles and readings will be provided on Moodle.

Course Activities/Requirements

1. **In class participation** (30 hours total) Grade: 30%

2. **Insight Paper:** 2000 words [4-5 pages] Grade: 20%
Using the material from the course, apply your learnings on play and emotion to your own journey. How might these insights impact your experience working with others? How will it impact how you see yourself, and how you see others?

3. **Creative Application Assignments:**
 - A) Choose something from the course that impacted you personally and apply it in a creative way of your choosing (eg. song, poem, collage, painting, dance, sculpture, etc.). Write a short paper (2-3 pages) to go along with your project describing how it ties into the course material and reflecting on what the process was like for you. You can also include how this might impact or influence your work with clients.
Grade: 20%

 - B) Develop a play kit (or a tickle trunk) of activities/primers/prompts/creative expression materials that facilitate emotional playgrounds for those you work with throughout the lifespan.
Grade: 30%

Course Evaluation

In Class Participation, Assigned readings, Triad Work:	30%
Insight Paper:	20%
Creative Application Assignment A:	20%
Creative Application Assignment B:	30%
TOTAL:	100%

Grading System

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A+	97-100	4.30
A	93-96	4.00
A-	90-92	3.70
B+	87-89	3.30
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.70
C+	77-79	2.30
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.70
F	Below 70	0.00

Course Outline

Day 1: The purpose of emotion

Day 2: The emotional work of play

Day 3: Bringing play and emotion together

Day 4: Fleshing out the practices of play-full therapy

Day 5: Matchmaking to emotional playgrounds

Course Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AT TWU

One of the core values of Trinity Western University is the integration of academic excellence with high standards of personal, moral, and spiritual integrity. The University considers it a serious offence when an individual attempts to gain unearned academic credit. It is the student's responsibility to be informed about what constitutes academic misconduct. For details on this, and on identifying and avoiding plagiarism go to the [University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar](#) .

<https://prezi.com/od62fxnkbmxh/plagiarism-how-to-get-it-out-of-your-life/> (Prezi presentation)

<http://bit.ly/1p00KX3> (Google Slide presentation offering more comprehensive information)

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

Students with a disability who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and include the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office on their website at:

<https://www.twu.ca/academics/academic-professional-support/learning-commons/centre-accessible-learning/equitable>

HOSPITALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

TWU is committed to an ethic of inclusion centered on the principles of Christian hospitality, reciprocity and reconciliation. We seek to cultivate generous learning spaces that are based on respect for differences and are open to diverse views, opinions, and identities that are thoughtfully expressed in a collegial manner. We welcome and value all voices, including those from under-represented groups or those who have been marginalized.

CAMPUS CLOSURE AND CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event of extreme weather conditions or other emergency situations go to:

<https://www.twu.ca/about-us/policies-guidelines/university-policies/campus-notification>

FINAL EXAMINATIONS

A student who is absent from a final examination without an acceptable excuse will be assigned a zero for that examination. Absence due to illness must be supported by a medical certificate indicating the nature of the illness. If an examination is missed for any reason, including illness, the student must notify the faculty member prior to the examination and the Office of the Registrar within 48 hours of the missed examination, giving written documentation explaining the absence.

PLEASE NOTE

The MCS-MFT is a program gearing students for Professional Life. Therefore, students are expected to budget their time and anticipate due dates for assignments. Extenuating circumstances will/do happen. Please learn time management skills, create margins in your life, and plan for them. In addition, late assignments create a backlog that effects the timely return of other student papers

- a) All work is due before class on the day it is due.
- b) Late assignments will be deducted 2% per day. Assignments received after a week after exams (12:00 p.m.) will receive an F.
- c) Only medical emergency or other extreme circumstances will be acceptable excuses for late assignments. Those who have extenuating circumstances delaying their work are required to fill out the necessary paperwork and pay the required fee at the registrar. An incomplete (INC) will be entered on your transcript until all work is completed (15 weeks maximum).

I will do my best to budget my time and return your assignments within 2 weeks of the due date. There are sometimes when I am on other traveling assignments and your papers may take longer to be returned. Well written papers require much less time to grade so please do your part in handing in well written papers.

For philosophical, ethical, and professional reasons, only hand in your best work. Students at a Graduate level are expected to:

- a) Carefully **proofread** all written assignments and to turn in papers free of spelling and grammatical errors.
- b) **Edit** your papers several times so that your thoughts are logical and well organized.
- c) Understand and utilize APA style for all submitted work
- d) Submit papers electronically to Moodle with your name and assignment clearly indicated in the file name (e.g. JHaleyProfIssues). Students should use the “.doc” file extension when submitting papers so that you have no trouble receiving the written feedback in your paper.
- e) All assignments are to be dropped into Moodle. If technology is a challenge, please find someone to help you out: e.g. reduce file size

These factors will be incorporated into the grade. Students with known writing challenges must make full use of the Writing Centre. .

Lastly, what you need to know: Everything you need to know for successful completion of your studies and Graduation is contained in the 2 student handbooks (**Program Guide and Practice Handbook** are available from MAMFT website): Please make sure you thoroughly read and absorb the information. “I didn’t know about that” will not be an acceptable excuse for not fulfilling requirements.