

**Registration
Open!**

ISST 2026 Intensive Training Week

Ephesus Retreat Center – İzmir, Turkey

A week of focused learning and connection in the
ancient city of Ephesus

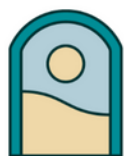
Intensive Training Weeks in Sandplay

Week One: 2 Nov - 8 Nov 2026

Week Two: 16 Nov - 22 Nov 2026

The ISST Board is excited to announce that the 2026 ISST Intensive Training Week will be held at the magical Ephesus Retreat Center in Turkey. Nestled in the mountains near the ancient city of Ephesus and close to the Aegean coast, this retreat center offers a special place for reflection and connection. Each ITW will be attended by up to 35 participants and 6 faculty, comprised of ISST Teaching Members from multiple countries.

An Intensive Training Week is an enriched, immersive, multicultural experience including lectures on special topics in Sandplay theory and practice, case presentations (children, adolescents, and adults), group supervision, experiential activities, time in nature, and a mid-week excursion to explore the nearby historical and cultural treasures. Participants will have the unique opportunity to experience the ancient site of Ephesus and the powerful presence of Artemis, the ancient goddess of fertility and abundance, whose temple was once one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Another feminine archetypal force will be encountered through the visit of Mother Mary's Shrine, which has been a significant pilgrimage destination for centuries. We hope you can join us!



ISST
sandplay

International Society for Sandplay Therapy
Associazione Internazionale della Sandplay Therapy
Internationale Gesellschaft für Sandspiel Therapie
國際箱庭療法学会

Schedule

Week One

November 2-8, 2026

Arrival Day: Monday, November 2

Arrival: Check-in begins at 3:00 PM

Welcome & opening ceremony

Opening dinner, 7:30 - 9:00 PM

Week Two

November 16-22, 2026

Arrival Day: Monday, November 16

Arrival: Check-in begins at 3:00 PM

Welcome & opening ceremony

Opening dinner, 7:30 - 9:00 PM

Daily Program

- Symbols, Archetypes, and Jungian Theory
- Sandplay: Body, Mind and Spirit
- Cultural Mythology and Fairytales
- Mapping the Sandplay Process
- Paper Writing Workshops
- Evidence Base of Sandplay
- Case studies (child, teen, adult)
- More details to follow!

Social Events

Ancient Sites Excursion, Thursday, Nov 5

Gala Dinner, Saturday, Nov 7

Social Events

Ancient Sites Excursion, Thursday, Nov 19

Gala Dinner, Saturday, Nov 21

Departure Day: Sunday, November 8

Closing session and ceremony

Departure, starting at 1:00 PM

Departure Day: Sunday, November 22

Closing session and ceremony

Departure, starting at 1:00 PM

The program offers up to
36 ISST training hours and
8 ISST group supervision hours.





Accommodations

For an immersive, connective, and introspective experience all meals, training, and supervision sessions will be held at the serene **Ephesus Retreat Center**.

Each spacious room at the center has been designed with its own specific atmosphere, so that each guest can connect in a unique way with the surroundings. Feel free to explore their website, knowing that all reservations will be made for you by the organizing committee through the registration process.

Participants will have the option to stay in a double, triple or single room. We invite you to share a room with other Sandplay passionates. We can tell by experience that this can plant the seeds for lifelong, international friendships.

Since the number of single-rooms may be limited, participants may also have the opportunity to stay in a partner hotel, 15 minutes away from our location. If these accommodations are needed, daily transportation to the retreat center will be arranged by the organization.

Address:

[Ephesus Retreat Center](#)

Ciftlik Evleri caddesi No:16

Acarlar Mahallesi

Selçuk- Izmir





Connecting to the Land's Wisdom

Excursion

The participants will have the opportunity to explore significant sites that have hosted a rich variety of civilizations in the past.

- **The Ancient City of Ephesus:** Considered as one of the best-preserved ancient cities in the world, was a center of trade and culture, with an influence on the development of philosophy and medicine. Besides its decisive role in facilitating the spread of Christian faith, this site was also connected to the veneration of the Goddesses Artemis and Cybele from the Greek and Anatolian traditions.
- **The Ephesus Museum:** The 64,000 pieces exhibited date back to the Hellenistic, Roman and Early Christian period mostly. Among the remarkable artifacts contained in its collection; one can find the famous Artemis statue, the head of Socrates, the Egyptian priest, Eros with a Rabbit and the Priapus statues.
- **The Temple of Artemis:** Dedicated to the ancient goddess of fertility and abundance, this was the first temple in antiquity built with marble and was once one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
- **Mother Mary's Shrine:** Significant pilgrimage destination for centuries, it is believed that Apostle John brought Mary to that location after the crucifixion of Jesus and that she was kept safe there during her last years.
- **The Basilica of St. John:** Built by Byzantine Emperor Justinian, this basilica was one of the biggest edifices of its period. St John, who was one of the 12 Apostles, spent the last period of his life in Ephesus and it is believed that his sepulture still lies there.
- **Isa Bey Mosque:** Built in 1375, this mosque has been used as a caravanserai in the 19th century. It is also known for its mosaic tiles inspired by the Seljuk dynasty.

Guest Lecture

A local speaker will present to the group the area's hidden wisdom on a deeper level.

She will take us on a journey to the Aegean shores where East meets West, following the traces of Greek and Anatolian goddesses. We will discover how Artemis was reborn in the light of the moon as "Artemis Ephesia", a living continuation of Anatolia's ancient Great Mother tradition.

This Goddess is not only a symbol of fertility and abundance, she is also the bearer of nature's wild power and cosmic energy. This powerful Archetype has the potential to awaken buried ancient knowledge and much more in each of the individuals encountering it.

The Speaker: Dr. Ebru Özlem Albayrak, a psychiatrist working with children, adolescents and adults, who uses sandplay in her private practice for more than 10 years.





Meet the Teachers and Organizing Committee

Nil Akat MA (Turkey) is our local organizer host. She is a clinical psychologist, specialized in trauma-work and founder of the Turkish Sandplay Developing Group. She started her training in Sandplay through the Swiss Society in 2015. She organized two Intensive ISST Certified Sandplay Training Programs in her country since 2018. She wrote two chapters about Sandplay in books published in Turkey and an article for the Russian Sandplay Journal. Nil also got involved in the preparation and editing of the Turkish translation of Dora Kalff's book. She maintains a private practice in Istanbul, working with adolescents and adults mostly.

Braam Beetge MA, CST-T (South Africa) is a counseling psychologist and Jungian oriented psychotherapist who specializes in Traumatology. He is a founding member and the current president of the South African Sandplay Therapy Society (SASTS), a Teaching Member of ISST, and current ISST board member. He has contributed articles to several Sandplay journals and a chapter named, "My Souls' Call Toward Sandplay Therapy" in the book, *Into the Heart of Sandplay*. He maintains a private practice in Paarl, South Africa and teaches Sandplay there, as well as in Turkey.

Mariana Taliba Chalfon PhD, CST-T (Brazil) is a clinical psychologist and Teaching Member of the International Society for Sandplay Therapy. She has published research on Sandplay Therapy and has served on the Board of the Brazilian Institute of Sandplay Therapy since 2020. Since August 2025, she has served ISST as Vice President for the Americas. Mariana maintains a private practice in São Paulo, where she offers individual Sandplay Therapy and professional supervision.

Lorraine Razzi Freedle PhD, CST-T (USA) is a neuropsychologist, sandplay teacher (STA/ ISST), and author of the book, *When a Goddess Erupts: Pele in the Psyche of Women*. She has published research articles in sandplay, neuropsychology, and trauma and co-produced the documentary film, *Fire and Sand*. Dr. Freedle teaches at Southwestern College, Pacifica Graduate Institute, and the Trauma Research Foundation. She serves as past-president and current Board member of STA, Research Editor for the *Journal of Sandplay Therapy*, and President-elect of ISST. Dr. Freedle maintains a private practice in Hilo, Hawai'i dedicated to international Sandplay training and practice.

Ulrich Gundermann, IAAP, CST-T (Germany) is a Jungian child analyst who obtained his Diploma from the C.G. Jung Institute of Zurich in 1998. He is a Teaching Member of ISST who has served on the ISST Board of Directors, the C. G. Jung Institute of Stuttgart Board of Directors, as a lecturer and supervisor at C.G. Jung Institute Stuttgart, and as chairman of C.G. Jung Society of Freiburg. Living in Chile from 2019 - 2023, he helped to coordinate training for the Chilean Sandplay Group. He continues to serve on the ISST Board, is editor of the ISST Newsletter, and maintains a private practice providing personal Sandplay process and supervision.

Teachers/Committee (continued)

Jacquelyn Kelley, LCSW, CST-T is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, a Certified Sandplay Therapist-Teaching Member (STA/ISST), and the current President of Sandplay Therapists of America. Jackie is Certified in Thanatology and recently retired as a Social Worker for Knights of Comfort Hospice in Dallas/Ft Worth. She is currently an STA Representative to ISST and member of ISST Certification Committee. She has presented and taught both nationally and internationally and has published in the *Journal of Sandplay Therapy*. She is dedicated to spreading sandplay as a tool for healing and growth and maintains a private practice in Plano, Texas.

Takuji Natori MA, CST-T (Japan) is a clinical psychologist, clinical supervisor, and professor of clinical psychology at Kyoto Bunkyo University in Kyoto, Japan. He has served on the ISST Board of Directors and is currently serving his 2nd term as President of ISST. Having begun a collaboration with James Hillman in 2000, his practice is based on Archetypal Psychology. From 2002 - 2004 he studied at the C. G. Jung Institute of Zurich and also trained with ISST Teaching Members Hayao Kawai, Yasuhiro Yamanaka, Yasunobu Okada, and Kazuhiko Higuchi. Takuji Natori maintains a private practice in Kyoto.

Natasha Salter-Ling D. Clin. Psy., CST (United Kingdom) is a licensed clinical psychologist, ISST sandplay therapist and is currently a trainee analyst with GAP (The Guild of Analytical Psychologists) in London. She is the co-chair of the BISS, a member of the ISST board, website and newsletter committee. Natasha works in schools, the voluntary sector and private practice with children and adults. She teaches on the BISS training and has published in the *Journal of Sandplay Therapy*, as well as on the psychological impact of infertility and the use of clay therapy. Her passion for Sandplay was sparked by contact with ISST sandplay therapists whilst living in the US and the Netherlands.

Sylvia Simonyi-Elmer DCS, RP, CST-T (Canada) is a Registered Psychotherapist and Play Therapist specializing in working with children and youth. She is a Founding Member of CAST (Canadian Association for Sandplay Therapy) . She currently sits on the ISST Board of Directors and is in the Certification Committee. She also held the position of Honorary Secretary of ISST in the past. She is a Teaching Member and International Case reader with ISST. She contributed a chapter called, "Internalizing the Sandplay Container: Holding the Container within the Psyche" in the book, *Into the Heart of Sandplay*. She maintains a private practice in Kingston, Ontario, Canada and provides personal Sandplay process, training and supervision.

Questions? Contact us at
itw2026turkey@gmail.com



Registration Procedures

If you are interested in attending, we encourage you to **register as soon as possible**. Registrations for the ITW will be processed in the order they are received with a priority system in effect.

Priority acceptance will be granted to registrants from the developing regions (Turkey, Greece, Middle East, Bulgaria, Hungary, Eastern Europe, Russia, neighboring area). Priority will also be granted to Independent Router Candidates, students from any ISST developing groups, and students from countries with limited access to ISST training.

After the registration form is submitted and reviewed you will receive payment instructions and will be asked to confirm your registration by submitting payment within 30 days of notice of acceptance.

Registrations will continue to be accepted until each ITW week has filled with up to 35 participants per ITW. If registration requests exceed 35 per ITW, a waitlist will be established and spaces offered as they become available.

REGISTER HERE



Registration Fee

1700 CHF double room (both occupants are ITW participants)

1400 CHF triple room (limited availability, all occupants are ITW participants)

2040 CHF single room (limited availability on-site)

Registration Fee Includes

- 6 nights lodging; Monday through Saturday nights at the Ephesus Retreat Center or the designated overflow hotel if needed
- All meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner), morning coffee breaks, afternoon coffee/snack breaks from Monday evening through Sunday morning with breakfast included
- Gala dinner
- Up to 36 hours of training towards ISST certification
- Up to 8 hours of group supervision towards ISST certification
- Ground transportation for the excursion to the ancient sites





Registration Fee does not Include

- Airfare and/or ground transportation to and from the hotel.
- Any additional hotel fees incurred above the standard ITW room rate covered by the registration fee.
- Any meals a participant chooses to have off-site, entry fees to off-site activities, translation services, travel or medical insurance.



To check policy for your country regarding
visa entry into Turkey,
click here.

Cancellation Policy

Cancellations received in writing:

- until June 30, 2026 will result in a full refund, less a 150 CHF administration fee.
- until July 31, 2026 will result in a partial refund of 50% of fees paid.
- until September 15, 2026 will result in a partial refund of 25% of fees paid.
- after September 15, 2026 are non-refundable.

*We look forward
to seeing you
in Turkey!*

