



Gestalt NEWS Foundation

BIANNUAL INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION NEWSLETTER OF GESTALT FOUNDATION PSYCHOTHERAPY & TRAINING CENTER
SPRING-SUMMER - ISSUE 35



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PROLOGUE: FORE-CONTACT

A few years ago, my then teenage brother needed knee surgery on his left leg due to a serious sports injury. After painful surgery, he was bedridden for about two months until he recovered. Then, he had to follow a specific physiotherapy recovery program. I vividly remember how much his left leg had atrophied musculoskeletally, while his right leg, which was the strong and supportive limb, had doubled in size and strength. Throughout the physiotherapy exercises, he experienced intense pain, fear and despair. He didn't even dare to put his left foot on the ground and was in a constant state panic and insecurity that he would lose his balance and get hurt. He only trusted his strong, healthy leg and used this leg in all his failed attempts at walking. So, his physiotherapist encouraged him to try new exercises. Instead of getting up immediately to walk, she instructed him first to wiggle the toes of his left foot, then to place his foot on the ground while sitting in a chair, and only then to stand up by leaning on his right leg and a crutch. In this way, and at a slow pace, he gradually began to trust his weak leg. It was as if he remembered again that this is also part of his body. He continued to do these exercises for a long



time, until finally he was able to walk again. This process took a long time and I remember how much pain, frustration, anger and loneliness my brother felt then. My connecting with this memory was the reason I decided to work with polarities. My brother's experience mirrors the healing journey of a person working through their polarities in the therapy room. Following on from this, I will try to highlight the process by which polarization forms and is consolidated, through the lens and interaction of the personality function, and how it appears in neurosis and personality disorders. (G. Skottun, 2022)

COMPLEXITY AND POLARITIES

The world, and the individual's interaction with it, is characterized by complexity. What does this mean? In any given moment many phenomena and processes are emerging in the field where people, in turn, encounter many different possibilities, directions and options. Within this range of endless possibilities, individuals can do and be many things at a time. It is in this very ability to be more than one thing depending on the field that the potential for growth and exploration of the world can be found. (G. Skottun, 2022) Ultimately, however, the focus will turn to one potentiality of the field, depending on the...

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**Creative
Indifference**

**Gestalt
in Organizations**

**Free
Expression**

EDITORIAL NOTE

June 2022... The 35th issue of Gestalt Foundation News, an issue that connects 2021 with 2022... The 2021 workshops via the online platform and the 2022 live, in-person workshops! We could say these are two ends

that meet even though they are also extremes. So, the question is: What is it that unites them?

On the one hand, we have the online workshops where everyone is alone, in front of their screen, amidst the fear of the pandemic but trying to focus on the square screen of the ZOOM platform, on the faces, in their every detail, eyes, eyebrows, neck, ears, hair, shoulders... Vision fully activated! And hearing... two drums extended towards the environment to «catch» as many signals as they can through the sound of breathing, the tone of voice, the timbre of the words to activate an understanding and meaning of the moment. One might say the intersubjectivity of experience is restricted... But is it restricted?

On the other hand, workshops with physical presence, with masks worn inside but not outside! We missed them... At first, they alienate us. We remain awkward and we don't know how to behave... Should we get close? Will we hug? Will we kiss? How? Yet all the

senses are activated... Smell finds space, touch tingles, movement is spontaneous, constant focus can easily be withdrawn.

They are different, I don't doubt that. There is another kind of joy, a different kind of sharing, another type of truth in contact! But only for the former way, not the online one? If we stick to YES and NO, we simply end up in a polarization that deprives choices of possibility and creativity, a polarization that deprives investigation and expansion...

What is it that unites them? It is Contact, the first and simplest reality! As Perls, Hefferline and Goodman say, Man is a creature of «betweenness», his empirical world relationally emergent, organizing and being organized simultaneously in each situation. «Between» is the real place and bearer of what happens between people. At this point, at ground zero, at the point of creative indifference, polarities integrate, YES and NO fade away, the gap loses its structure and the dynamics of interaction, the magic of contact emerges.



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Creative Indifference (Part 1)

Creative Indifference is a central idea of the German philosopher Salomo Friedlaender, embraced by Fritz Perls, and is for many (e.g. Frambach, 2003) a dominant influence in the creation of Gestalt therapy theory. Apart from its importance, it was also one of the main topics of the last conference of E.A.G.T. in Budapest in 2019. We heard a lot and realized how misunderstood this concept is to this day, which inspired us to choose it as a topic in Gestalt Foundation News. Salomo Friedlaender (1871-1946) was a German of Jewish origin, a philosopher and satirist, a member of the expressionist artistic and philosophical circle of the Bohemians of Berlin and Paris. The central concept in Friedlaender's philosophy is 'Creative Indifference': creative because it 'gives birth' to phenomena and 'Indifference' because it can develop in more than one direction. (Note: We use the definition of 'non-differentiation' rather than 'apathy' or 'disinterest' that are often erroneously applied to the term 'indifference'.) The «zero point» is both the centre and the beginning. As Frambach (2003) states about Friedlaender's key philosophical insight, the most general feature of any possible phenomenon is differentiation that can reach extremes. For a phenomenon to be perceived, there needs to be a corresponding opposite,

it needs to be different from something else. How does differentiation «give birth» to phenomena? The fundamental principle of creation that structures this differentiation of phenomena is that of poles, of authentic opposites. Everything we perceive is within a logical unity of mutual opposites (such as light-dark, big-small, bottom-top, negative-positive), called polarities. Friedlaender's philosophy focuses precisely on this undifferentiated intermediate point. We focus more on poles than non-differentiation. The unity of polar differentiation is at the middle point, the zero/naught point, the point of indifference. It is the objective reality and the creative principle of all phenomena. Friedlaender emphasizes the living, creative centre using a multitude of terms, precisely so as not to get caught up in one word/concept: self, entity, subject, individual, identity, person, mind, soul, absoluteness, infinity, will or freedom (Amendt-Lyon, 2020). We confuse the effects (polarizations) with the one who creates them, primarily non-differentiation is the bare soul, the human soul. Psychological differences are in relation to the soul as clothes are in relation to the body (Frambach, 2003). Friedlaender saw non-differentiation as liberating, in that the individual finds his centre, integrates a multitude of experiences and situations, tolerates ambiguity and ambivalence, and finds what he

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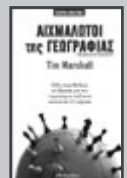
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calls their «heart». Simply put, starting from an undifferentiated middle point, we can find the appropriate balance, given the needs of our present situation (Amendt-Lyon, 2020). The influence of Friedlaender's philosophy on the theory of Gestalt therapy is already evident and will be discussed in more detail in the following article.

Antonia Konstantinidou, George Giaglis

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The Influence of Friedlaender's Philosophy of «Creative Indifference» on the Theory and Practice of Gestalt Therapy (Part 2)

In this second part, we will discuss the most important, in our opinion, influences of Friedlaender's philosophy on the theory and practice of Gestalt therapy. The influence of Friedlaender's philosophy is most clearly seen in Fritz Perls' conception of the «zero point,» that undifferentiated centre from which all pole points are accessible (Perls, 1969, p. 14-16). Being trapped in a rigid pole creates incomplete experiences and reduces the functioning of the organism (Frambach, 2003). By consciously staying in the centre, we practice the creative ability to see both sides, thus gaining as spherical, free, and undistorted a view as possible. This undifferentiated centre becomes the source of all creativity and development. Friedlaender's constant search for balance between the poles also influenced Perls' understanding of the organism, homeostasis, and organismic self-regulation (of Goldstein, Smuts, and Reich). Man as an organism self-regulates homeostatically in a constantly changing world through living, complex, and balancing processes. We need to keep in mind as Gestalt therapists when dealing with phenomena (e.g., symptoms, problems) that they are part of a complex, multidimensional series of homeostatic processes. According to Laura Perls (1992), both in art and in psychotherapy, we are called upon to create from scratch, to organize chaos, to readily embrace conflicting alternatives and different perspectives. In this sense, the human condition is a constant balance between two poles: that we are unique, which gives us the impression of extraordinary importance, and that we are mortal, which causes us fear and despair. In addition, Gestalt's theory of self seems to have been heavily influenced by Friedlaender's philosophy (although there is no direct reference). The self is described as spontaneous, in a middle position, which embodies the poles of activeness and passivity, both intentional and dispassionate (Frambach, 2003). Taking up the baton and talking about polarities, Zinker (1977) states that the expansion of the self towards one pole leads to the expansion of the opposite pole as well. Therefore, accepting contradictions, ambivalence, ambiguity and being able to experience the relationship between these inner aspects helps us to be balanced. Also, Staemmler (1997) suggests that Gestalt therapists need to have a «cultivated uncertainty» that reflects the dialogic approach. In other words, he suggests that we practice Creative Indifference, to maintain a sense of cooperation with our clients and to anticipate the possibility of change even before it is clearly visible. Another point where

the influence of Friedlaender's philosophy can be seen is in Perls' attempt to integrate the perspective of Gestalt psychology. Perls uses the concept of Gestalt psychology «figure/ground» and reinforces it with differential perception. Perls (1972, p. 70) describes the undifferentiated ground in terms of «nothingness» and «fertile void.» The goal is to emerge from an undifferentiated ground with clear, distinct, well-formed figures, free to change through interaction with existing conditions. Accordingly, Robine (2003) speaks of the importance of fore-contact, the chaotic, fuzzy, diffuse phase before a figure is formed. He warns of «premature differentiation», our tendency to ignore the perception of the here and now and rely on our preconceived assumptions and thereby maintain a sense of stability and continuity. Robine (2003) suggests that instead of taking at face value the problem or figure which the client chooses or decides he wants to work with, we can introduce some uncertainty and questioning. This allows for a return to the 'id of the situation', an undifferentiated condition in which we can together disentangle, deconstruct, mix things up and reconstruct the figure. We support our clients through disruption and temporary chaos and invite them to play, until a task becomes a game. We interrupt clients when they are reciting a pre-constructed narrative, to return them to the fore-contact phase, to the 'workshop' of meanings, where they can create a new figure with meaning. By presenting a selection of the influences only, we can see why Friedlaender's philosophy is considered by many to be the foundational philosophical background of Gestalt therapy. Whenever we work with the search for balance, the effort to recover the middle ground, the integration of opposites, the disidentification with rigid, non-functional poles, we are essentially putting into practice concepts from Friedlaender's philosophy and his «non-differentiating» approach.

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...present need. And to make «good» contact, it will be something specific and unique every time. Otherwise, the need will be perpetually fleeting, unfulfilled and fragmented. This is because, according to Gestalt theory, the individual's experience takes form, emerging as a figure against the background (Jacobs). Figure and Ground interaction is a relationship of polarities. Whenever the individual recognizes one side of himself, in the shadows lies the presence of a polar opposite. It exists in the background, giving dimension to the present experience, though when strong enough it can appear as a figure in its own right. When this strength is supported, integration of polarities can occur. (Polster, 1974) The emergence and development of a figure in this phase is facilitated by the personality function, which consists of the individual's ability to organize the outcomes of previous contact experiences (Spagnuolo-Lobb, 2001), with a stable and structured sense of his/her self-identity and the impact it has on the environment and others. (Delisle, 1999) In other words, the person needs to answer the question 'who am I', in order to proceed to the contact stage. So, this is where the existential significance of the theory of polarities emerges; the whole of reality can be explained and perceived by the individual with polar associations such as life-death, good-bad, contact-withdrawal, strength-vulnerability, pleasure-pain, etc. To answer the question who/what am I, he will enlist opposite qualities. To respond and cope with a complex situation, he will deconstruct it into smaller manageable parts, often sorting grey into black and white, into either/or categories (Brownell, 2010). So, polarization, as a constant process, is a natural way for the individual to manage the complexity of the world, and to be able to exist in it and with it. Underlying the above process is the existence of internal conflict. In fact, even the healthy individual experiences this conflict (Perls, 1969). However, the unified structure of his personality and a clear sense of diversity and differentiation facilitate the resolution of this conflict. This occurs because we can adapt and move through the entire range of polar behaviours, depending on the given situation. All the potentialities on the continuum of poles (extremes and in-between) are supported enough to be mobilized. Opposing qualities are integrated into a whole and conscious self. But when does polarization as a natural way of perceiving and manipulating the environment cease to be functional and disrupt the individual's homeostasis?

FROM POLARIZATION TO POLARITIES

The answer to this question in my opinion is summed up in this: the individual is a spiral of interrelated polarities related to his history and inner reality.

THE HISTORY

So, let's start with the story of a polarized person. As mentioned, the identification of polar opposites is a natural process of handling complex conflicts. The difficulty arises when polarization turns into a hard and rigid aspect of the personality. Then the person forgets that there is grey between white and black and tries to forget or completely deny the opposite pole. This alienation of the individual from parts of his personality is a result of his lived experience. Let's take for example a child who grew up in a strict and demanding family environment. From an early age, his parents told him that he must always be correct and consistent, and that he must never disobey them. Any attempt by this child to differentiate was thwarted and treated as 'misbehaviour'. Thus,

POLARITIES &

we see how the child's gradual alienation from his «bad-disobedient» side is nothing more than a creative adjustment to a rigid field. An adjustment made to equalize the deep wounding of his core, what Bennet Shapiro calls «the natural child» (Shapiro, 2009). As children we are spontaneous, we express ourselves in the environment to satisfy our needs and if the environment is a constant source of rejection and deep wounding, then in order to survive we adapt our behaviour to the opposite pole. We become what significant others expect us to be in order to avoid being hurt again and again. It therefore becomes clear how polarized attitudes are linked to beliefs and assumptions about how one should be in order to be accepted by others. In this way, the polarization of the child, and then the adult person, becomes a fixed gestalt, a rigid and inflexible pattern of relating, formed by blind spots and hidden poles that are unacceptable to the person. He develops in the present a neurotic mechanism for self-regulation, a selective awareness through which he can identify with only one side of his personality, the opposite remaining in the background (Jacobs). The pole that was not accepted by the environment at some time in the past, ends up not being accepted by the person himself in the present.

INNER REALITY

Through the above process, the person makes contact with only one aspect of himself and is trapped in a one-sided perception of his personality. It is as if he freezes into a socialized self-concept (Polster, 1974) like the little child in the example: «I am only obedient and I never make mistakes.» He can only accept this quality - he can see and experience only this. Anything contrary is out of his awareness and gradually atrophies, experienced as «of no use». Much like my brother's wounded leg atrophied. The individual then deals with his experiences by believing in absolutes and developing techniques to manipulate the environment (Perls, 1969). Even if at some point he connects with the unacceptable pole, the pain and conflict can be so intense that, in order to endure, he splits himself and renounces his «bad side». Consequently, the polarized person builds and consolidates an unhealthy self-concept, which consists of acceptable and unacceptable ego traits. He has decided that he was, is, and will always be one particular thing. He is not aware of the many opposing forces within him, nor is he willing to see himself within them. He forms a distorted image of his personality, which is often highlighted by the discrepancy between how the person sees himself and how others see him. Here, according to Perls, there is a layer of confusion that separates self-perception from personality (Perls, 1969). What I have decided I am overrides what I can truly be. Polarization as a figment of introjections, overshadowing my personality. It is as if self-awareness and personality are polar opposites of the self. And this is how we arrive at what was mentioned above as 'inner reality': that is, the set of accepted and unaccepted characteristics of the self, which create my inner world and shape my self-perception. My inner reality is deeply connected to my history and experiences; it was constructed for the benefit of my organismic self-regulation but now it is splitting and fragmenting me. According to the above, we see how polarizations appear as an

PERSONALITY

element of the individual's neurotic self-regulation. The personality function disorder, as a dissociation between true personality and self-perception, affects the continuity of contact, resulting in the loss of its functions (Spagnuolo-Lobb, 2001). When the answer to 'who am I?' (as a preparatory stage of the contact) is determined by a polarized perception of my identity, then my contact is oriented with the compass of this perception. Polarized self-perception = polarized contact. That is, the «I» loses the ability to be flexible and adaptive to everything new in the interaction with others, and there the person

WHAT IS A PERSONALITY DISORDER?

Before moving on to explore the relationship between personality and personality disorders, it is useful to state a definition of the latter: A personality disorder is the way in which the person organizes his experience when the control and observation of reality at any given moment is out of reach. There, the person experiences subjective discomfort or a significant transformation in his social or professional functioning. (Delisle, 1999) According to Delisle, it is important to keep in mind some more parameters that complement the above definition. Therefore, a personality disorder is the formation of rigid and maladaptive interactions in interpersonal contact. Also, the characteristics of a disorder can manifest in many different contexts and lead to a significant impairment of the individual's social functioning. And finally, personality disorders are the expression of a



experiences anxiety and deep conflict.

But what happens when polarities emerge and consolidate in the field of psychopathology and specifically in personality disorders?

This question very spontaneously brings in me to another question: What is the interactive relationship between personality and psychopathology? How does one affect the other in the realm of experience of the 'here and now' and the 'there and then'? In the end, is it possible to see the elements of personality as separate parts of a whole person or does their phenomenological observation presuppose the observation-investigation of the overall and enduring relational status?

long-term dynamic and are not limited to a finite state or response to unusual situations.

PERSONALITY AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

«Personality is the relatively enduring pattern of recurring interpersonal situations that characterize human life.» (Sullivan, 1953b) (Millon, 2005)

THE INTERPERSONAL PARADIGM

According to this, the most important expressions of personality and psychopathology emerge in phenomena involving more than

one person (Theodore Millon). Within these phenomena the person experiences emotions moving on a scale ranging from reward-satisfaction, to the various levels of anxiety and can lead to situations filled with intense anxiety that in the end the individual disconnects from his experience. This interpersonal condition constitutes the basis for the genesis, development, maintenance and variability of personality and psychopathology, which manifests itself through the individual's constant structuring and re-structuring of interpersonal experience as a way to increase a sense of security (communion) and self-esteem (agency), and to reduce anxiety. This experience forms a timeless framework of learning and meaning-schematic representation of self and others, which ultimately affects the development and formation of self-perception and social behaviour. Put simply, through the constant redesigning of interpersonal experience with the aim of safety and completeness, an adaptive or disturbed pattern of relating emerges on the one hand, and the individual's perception of himself and others emerges on the other. A point of clarification is needed here: An interpersonal situation occurs not only in the observable interaction between two individuals but also in the individual's mind. This means that the person is able to make mental representations of himself and others. He therefore has at his disposal, in addition to the present, the past through memory and the future through imagination. On all three of these levels, he can encounter the interpersonal dimension of the way he relates. Both the immediate present interaction and the internal interpersonal situation influence a person's learned relational strategies and self-perception. Accordingly, psychopathology is inherently expressed through disturbed relationships, either interpersonally and /or intrapersonally. Having somewhat defined the field in which psychopathology emerges and is observed, the next question that arises is this: how do we explain the fact that the phenomenology of psychopathology differs from person to person? This question arises from the following example, where two people with the same personality disorder are described completely differently based on the criteria that is met for the purpose of diagnosis (Delisle, 1999).

Criteria	Mr. A. <Schizoid>	Mr. B. <Schizoid>
does not seek out or value close relationships including family relations	present	absent
almost always chooses solitary activities	present	absent
expresses or seems rarely to experience strong emotions like joy or anger	present	absent
shows little or no desire to have sexual relations with other persons (taking age into account)	present	present
is indifferent to praise or criticism by others	absent	present
has no friends or intimate companions (or only one) other than his immediate family	absent	present
is affectively dull, for ex. Is distant, cold and rarely responds to mimicking gestures like smiles, or nodding.	absent	present

So, this is where the concept of pathoplasticity emerges, which in my opinion embodies and illuminates the interactive relationship of personality and psychopathology. According to the above concept, psychopathology and some other psychological systems mutually influence each other in a non-causal relationship. Although originally used as a concept to describe the interaction of personality and depression, it is now used as a model for the association between personality and psychopathology in general. According to Millon, pathoplasticity recognizes that all maladaptive behaviours, symptoms, and mental disorders occur and are expressed in the broader realm of a person's personality. (Millon, 2005) Thus, psychopathology is seen as a quality of the whole person and not as a 'foreign' body in the organism's experience. That is why it occurs and emerges at the contact boundary, that is, where the functioning of the Personality and the Self emerge. Millon goes on to argue that, based on the above, it would be unreasonable to accept that these expressions of psychopathology are not influenced by the characteristic way in which the individual perceives, thinks, feels, behaves and relates to the environment. And this way is none other than the elements that make up his personality. For example, narcissistic personality disorder may serve to highlight the concept of interpersonal pathoplasticity. A survey of the phenotypic description of pathological narcissism revealed two themes of dysfunction: narcissistic grandiosity and narcissistic vulnerability. These two different interpersonal manifestations of the disorder share a common core in narcissistic pathology, but differ in the interpersonal expression of wounds and defence mechanisms (Theodore Millon). In the example of the narcissistic personality disorder, it becomes clear that the phenotype and phenomenology of the disorder differ from person to person just like the functioning of the personality. The importance of pathoplasticity is multidimensional. It may initially describe the observed heterogeneity in the phenotypic expression of psychopathology. Also, it can be used as a concept to predict the variability of responses to psychotherapy in the context of a disorder. Finally, pathoplasticity accounts for the lack of uniformity in relational regulatory strategies employed by those individuals who otherwise experience similar symptoms

PERSONALITY DISORDERS AND POLARIZATIONS

The above investigation of the relationship between personality and psychopathology, including personality disorders, has been the bridge for me to see how polarities emerge and affect personality disorders. Based on these, it has become clearer to me that polarizations are a personality trait that contributes to the formation of a maladaptive and rigid way of relating. Therefore, polarization, as an element of the personality, comes to play an important role in a personality disorder by affecting the way the disorder is expressed, as in the above example with narcissistic disorder. Moreover, polarizations maintain and sustain the disorder in a way that accentuates the fragmented element of the individual's experience, a phenomenon very pronounced in borderline personality disorder. Also, I would say that the intensity and depth of polarization affects the intensity accordingly, aside from the way in which the disorder is expressed. Finally, and conversely, the characteristic expression of a person's personality can be distorted by a syndrome of psychiatric symptoms and possibly lead to more intra- and interpersonal distress. With this last observation, the two-

way nature of the pathoplastic relationship is highlighted. (Theodore Millon) In the table below (Delisle, 1999), some personality disorders and the polarizations that become strongly present in each of them are indicatively mentioned. In my opinion, these polarizations highlight even more strongly the concept of the interpersonal paradigm, as they show how the polarizing conflict experienced by the individual is a conflict of contact, proximity and mobilization at the contact boundary with the environment (self/others, passivity/ activity etc.)

Personality Disorder	Polarities
Schizoid Disorder	Pleasure/Pain
	Self/Other
	Passivity/Activity
Schizotypal Disorder	Pleasure/Pain
Narcissistic Disorder	Self/Other
Borderline Personality Disorder	Pleasure/Pain
	Self/Other
	Passivity/Activity
Antisocial Disorder	Self/Other
	Passivity/Activity

EPILOGUE - POST CONTACT

My contact with the subject of polarization and the research on it has shown me once again that the observation of psychological phenomena can only be done in the interpersonal field and specifically at the organism-environment contact boundary. Polarization, as a process that emerges during the personality function, is found both in neurosis and in personality disorders and affects the contact and the overall experience of the individual in his/her interaction with the

world. Polarities preserve, maintain, and colour the quality, intensity and depth of the neurosis/personality disorder in the interactive relationship rather than be the cause of it. Through this dynamic relationship it appears that polarization, as a part of personality, is phenomenologically expressed in a unique way from person to person, just like each personality itself. This reminds me of the uniqueness with which someone comes into the therapy room. He comes with his history, his present, his dynamics and what I am called upon to always remember that his experience is his whole world. That in itself is worthy of respect and a good starting point to get a little closer...

Therefore, we never perceive the real state in which we find ourselves until it is marked by its opposites, nor do we know how to value what we enjoy in any other way than the need we feel for it. (ROBINSON CRUSOE, Daniel Defo)

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Third Year Coursework Submission, Elena Agnostopoulou, 3rd year trainee 2021-2022



Σα βγεις στον πηγαιμό για την
 Ιθάκη,
 να εύχεσαι να 'ναι μακρύς ο δρό-
 μος,
 γεμάτος περιπέτειες, γεμάτος
 γνώσεις...

.....
 Τους Λαιστρυγόνες και τους Κύκλωπας,
 τον θυμωμένο Ποσειδώνα μη φοβάσαι
 αν δεν τους κουβανείς μες στην ψυχή σου,
 αν η ψυχή σου δεν τους στήνει εμπρός σου (Καβάφης, Κ., 1911)

A journey, one of the most beautiful and at the same time safe, full of unprecedented experiences and images! For me, this was my first encounter with the «Gestalt Coaching in Business & Organizations» Workshop Series. But what is my drive, my personal motivation? It is the perpetual quest for learning which one can only touch if one accepts the fact that it is conquered through authentic experiences, with fellow travellers who share their thoughts and questions. Companions who are looking for answers, not solutions, on paths perhaps unknown to each of us that lead us to decisions

which will help remove any conditions or factors that hinder our effectiveness as executives shaping the business/organizational culture. Personally, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience, having succeeded, to a very large extent I must confess, in emptying my mind of already established knowledge and opinions. The truly valuable space that was created, my trust in the process as well as in all the trainers at the Gestalt Foundation - this was the basic and necessary foundation to support me in «travelling» through these hundred hours of participation in the workshop. Frequently, the fatigue I had because of professional obligations and demands was present. However, the trainers' unique and admirable way of handling this brought new 'wind to my sails', which in turn nurtured the emergence of greater interest and participation! I feel that it is difficult to describe the actual experience in a few lines without diminishing it. The whole environment with this very strong group created only feelings of excitement for the next workshop! It's an experience worth sharing with those who are constantly looking for an even better version of themselves, with their partners, and with the organization or the business where they work! For me, the journey continues, and as it continues, I remember some verses that always help me chart a new path through knowledge:

"I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees...
For always roaming with a hungry heart...
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honored of them all...
How dull it is to pause, to make an end...
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield".
Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Ulysses, 1842 (6-32, 69-70)

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Η Ιερότητα της Συνάντησης!

Εν αρχή είναι ο λόγος και ο λόγος έγινε Μορφή.

Εν αρχή είναι η σχέση και η σχέση είναι η εμπειρία της συνάντησης.

Μια υπαρξιακή συνάντηση που περνάει από την αποσύνδεση στην σύνδεση.

Μια διαδικασία επαφής στο «μεταξύ» και η θεραπεία είναι προφανές! Ο άνθρωπος αναζητά να δώσει ένα νόημα στην εμπειρία. Να δώσει ένα όνομα και η γέννα ξεκινά.

Σκιές που φωτίζονται. Πρόσωπα αγίων και δαιμόνων εμφανίζονται, παρεμβολές άλλων πεδίων. Και αόρατες κλωστές... πολλές αόρατες κλωστές.

Τσαλακωμένα όνειρα, μετέωρες επιθυμίες, εναγώνια κενά, έλλειψη νοήματος που περιμένει να υφανθεί.

Φιγούρες απροσδιόριστες σε αγγίζουν, κλαίνε, φωνάζουν, ...και άλλες φορές παρακαλούν

«Κοίταξε με», «Συμπόνησέ με»!

Πεδία των μαχών με λαβωμένους στρατιώτες. Αθώα θύματα που κανένας δεν βρέθηκε να φροντίσει τις πληγές τους και όλο ρωτούν:

Τι συμβαίνει; Τι έφταιξε; Πώς προδόθηκα; Πόση μεγάλη αδικία;

Εθισμοί με παραπλανητικά συνθήματα αποφυγής και λύτρωσης που

αναπαράγουν πόνο. Και ούτε ένα καλός Σαμαρείτης! Μορφές που εμφανίζονται θαμπές από το Φόντο και καρτερούν υπομονετικά να έλθει η σειρά τους και άλλες επίμονες και βασανιστικές που απαιτούν να εισακουστούν «Εδώ και Τώρα»

Ως Κένταυρος Χείρωνας που κατεβαίνει κουτσαίνοντας από το παλιό του τραύμα τον Όλυμπο ο θεραπευτής γίνεται συνοδοιπόρος, γίνεται αρωγός, μάρτυρας, και συνδημιουργός ενός νέου τοπίου.

Μια Παρουσία σταθερή στην αβεβαιότητα της συνάντησης, ένας ακροατής έτοιμος να στηρίξει. Έτοιμος να φροντίσει.

Καθώς οι δυο τους έρχονται κοντά οι πόνοι της γέννας Μαλακώνουν, και όλα ανοίγουν. Σαν το σπόρο του σιναπιού. Και το πεδίο καρπίζει.

Ένα ταξίδι στο «Μαζί» με συντροφιά το τραύμα όπου η σιωπή μπαίνει σε λόγο, η απουσία κατοικείται, οι νεκρικές περιοχές ζωντανεύουν, και η μεταμόρφωση είναι γεγονός!

Και έτσι σαν έλθει η ώρα η καλή, όπου η επαφή είναι γόνιμη με την ενδοχώρα της ύπαρξης ο Χρόνος υφίσταται ως ανοιχτό πεδίο δυνατοτήτων μια Δευτέρα παρουσία του εύθραυστου εαυτού μας ξεπροβάλλει. Μια ποιητική στάση ζωής στο γήινο κόσμο μας, ως μια ανοιχτή δυνατότητα τρόπου υπάρξεως!

Konstantina Koutroufina, Gestalt Foundation Graduate, Athens, 2020-2021

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