



## «THE WORLD OF EXPERIENCE... A CREATIVE PROCESS»

- p. 2
  - Editorial note
  - "e-therapy" by Gestalt Foundation
- p. 3
  - Working Groups
  - Αξιολογήσεις για ομάδες μελέτης
- p. 5
  - 14th European Gestalt Conference in Madrid
- p. 8
  - «The world of experience... A creative process»
- p. 12
  - 1st Gestalt teenage camp 2022
- p. 13
  - 2nd Gestalt teenage camp 2023
- p. 15
  - Gestalt Foundation collaboration with Epoché magazine
- p. 16
  - Free expression



**Liv Estrup was invited to coordinate the group of Professionals (Advanced program) at the 4-day event, where she shared her experience with the participants in the opening plenary session.**

Thank you, participants, for your warm welcome to The Word of Experience... A Creative Process. A special thanks to Katia, Despina, and Yianna for inviting me. It will stand out as one of the highlights of my sixty years of study of psychology and fifty-year love of Gestalt therapy.

continue on the page 8



## EDITORIAL NOTE

The 37th issue of the newspaper finds us in a form of maturity and development that is «consistent» with its age. I often hear people say to us: «you guys do a lot of things» and I answer: «...now that there are many of us we can do

even more...».

I am happy, I admire, I am moved and «travel,» leafing through the draft of the

newspaper in order to write the editorial note.

A relationship from when I was younger, with Liv, who was my instructor and supervisor during the years I attended the Resnick summer seminars at the beginning of my Gestalt career, turned into a strong, mutually trusting relationship of colleagues. Liv honored us with her presence at the 25 four-day Gestalt workshop with the theme: «The world of experience... a creative process.»

E-therapy, an initiative started during the quarantine, which flourishes and gives hope and support to people who need it all these years and has become a meeting point and interaction of trainees and supervisors. Study groups are a new entry ... a big heartfelt thank you to Atlantida, Michalis and Noti for organizing and coordinating this venture with such generosity, sharing their knowledge in response to the need. You will find comments about

their work in this issue.

Teen camps - laughter, joy, learning, support, friendships, sharing and knowledge

through experience. Our «children», once young campers, grow up and we grow up with them ... and give way to the younger ones who come after them.

The Fourteenth Gestalt conference in Madrid, with the live presence of Gestalt Foundation trainees and graduates at the conference who made an impression to link it with the Gestalt Foundation's new collaboration with Epoché magazine. The Gestalt Foundation, as a center for Psychotherapy and Education of the Phenomenological, Holistic Gestalt approach, has been added to the editorial and publishing team of Epoché magazine. This collaboration is a great honor and pleasure, for which you will find information on the pages of our newspaper.

I wish us all a healthy, happy, full of knowledge and experience academic year.

Enjoy reading!

### **Katia Hatzilakou**



M.Sc. University of Social and Clinical Psychology, Psychotherapist, Gestalt Trainer & Supervisor, member of S.E.P.S. & EAGT (Ex-Chair of NOGT and External Relations of EAGT). Holder of ECP (European Certificate of Psychotherapy). Founding member of the Gestalt Foundation Psychotherapy and Education center, and founding member of EEPG (Hellenic Society of Gestalt Psychotherapy).

## «e-therapy» by Gestalt Foundation

*Gestalt Foundation online social service and volunteering program*

### **Fourth year for «e-therapy»**

The free psychological support and counseling program, «e-therapy», is now a key core of the Gestalt Foundation's social responsibility and volunteering activities.

This is a voluntary action program that was activated shortly after the start of the health crisis caused by the pandemic throughout the world, with the aim of responding to the massive requests for psychological support.

For the fourth year in a row, the extension of this program was deemed extremely important and the Gestalt Foundation decided to support it by reactivating 5 supervisory teams and 65 therapists for the period 2023-2024. Through this specific program, since its inception (March 2020) until today, more than 820 of our fellow human beings have found the support and care they needed to face whatever difficulties they were forced to experience due to

the unprecedented pandemic, through a series of specific number of sessions, via Internet/on-line, with «their personal» mental health counselor / psychotherapist and Gestalt Foundation partner.



Requests for participation in the program have still not stopped arriving at our page!

<https://www.facebook.com/gestalt.therapy.by.GF/>

Finally, it is also important to highlight the voluntary contribution of more than 110 supervisors, therapists and trainee therapists who were activated and offered and continue to offer their services in the context of this action.

The «e-therapy» program continues... with a deep belief from the entire community of Gestalt therapists that together we will be able to overcome this difficulty too!

**Nikolas Raptis**, *Mental Health Counselor and graduate of the Gestalt Foundation, coordinator and administrator of requests for the entire program.*



## RESPONSES

### STUDY/FOCUS GROUPS

«Threefold education: nature, learning, practice.»  
(Aristotle)

The time has come, for a thought we had for years, a need that seems to exist and a request from the trainees, to learn in person with Michalis Yagou, Atlantidas Koutsovangelis-Maliokapis and Notis Papapostolos, who accepted, with particular willingness, our proposal



to organize and coordinate the study groups.

Therefore, within the framework of the training program, the Gestalt Foundation Psychotherapy and Education Center offers the possibility to trainees to participate in rounds of meetings to consolidate, investigate and expand the understanding of the theory.

The meetings have a tutorial nature and each circle will be free and optional.

Our intention in these meetings is to approach the established theory, in a way where the academic character is preserved and reframed, in order to be assimilated creatively.

Following the educational philosophy of GF and the principles of Gestalt Psychotherapy, based on open dialogue, inclusion and equality, our desire is to co-create a context and a learning experience that can work to heal. We therefore invite each participant to explore a different kind of relationship with knowledge, to create a new experience by connecting it to the previous one, and giving it meaning anew. The purpose is to further consolidate the already existing educational process through a prism of personal truth, as memory and emotions are an integral part of learning. The meetings are, at the same time, an invitation to formulate questions, in order to make an organic connection between the understanding of the theory and the personal experience.

The aim is to further confirm the existing resources and enrich them with new ones, as a way of bridging the gap between academic knowledge and creative ambiguity.

At the same time, the group nature of the meetings provides the

ground for this personal experience to be integrated into the public. Through interaction, where both parties co-shape a new place and way of contact, we are given the opportunity to know each other as members of our community...

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn”

(Benjamin Franklin)

**Michalis Yagou, Atlantis Koutsovangelis-Maliokapi, Notis Papapostolou**, Responsible for coordination and implementation of the study groups

### Assessments for study groups

Noti, Atlantida and Michalis,

I'm really glad I was able to attend the two study groups that took place this year for Year 1 and I hope it's something that will continue in the years to come. I think you had a very nice interaction with each other and with us. I was helped by how willing you were to answer questions and the way you kept the conversation flowing, enriching it with your knowledge and experience. Also, I really liked how you complemented each other. The process helped me better understand the theory I heard this year. As I told the group, I felt like I had questions answered that I didn't know I had, as if they clarified some things and other questions fell into their place. Personally, it helps me a lot more to hear something than to read it. And I think the process that the study groups had was a step up, as I was not only hearing about the theory, but discussing it with my classmates and with you. The way the study group worked seems to work well for me. I found the material you sent us helpful and liked that it had enough information to support the discussion and answer questions, but not so much that it took a long time to process. I have a feeling that the second group that happened this year went more smoothly than the first. Possibly because there were fewer of us. For me it would be even better if the study group could be held more often so that there is more time for each topic. In conclusion, I think the idea for the study group is excellent and works in a helpful way in the educational program. I really appreciate the work that was demanded into making these groups happen and will continue to participate if they go on. Thank you for your effort and time!

Yours sincerely,

**Katerina Papageorgiou**, 1st year of Thessaloniki

**Ioanna Roudou**, 1st year – Online

Study Group 2022 – 2023

Coordinators: Yagou Michalis, Koutsovangelis - Maliokapi Atlantida, Papapostolou Noti

My participation in the study group was important and useful for me. Through this opportunity I was given the chance to iterate/repeat the theory of the training seminars, to focus on different pieces of theory as new questions and concerns emerged during the group, and to delve deeper into concepts and processes. So, the particular experience was informative and enlightening. In addition, through the contact with the other trainees, listening to their own personal perspective and experience and discussing with them, I had the



opportunity to access new stimuli and new information.

Regarding the team coordinators, I feel happy and satisfied that we worked together. I had the feeling that all three of them had a good grasp of the theory we were studying in each case. They were willing to share their knowledge and experience with us, accept questions and discuss any concerns. They gave space and time to the group to express ourselves, to ask, to discuss and at the same time they were open and supportive. I especially appreciate Atlantida's supportive attitude throughout the process, the knowledge (new to me) that Michalis conveyed to us, the beautiful feedback of Noti! For me, the feeling that we were all included at that given moment was very important. They showed interest and care in the needs of the group. They had an equal attitude towards the team and the context was for me safe and collaborative.

As a suggestion, I would like to have study groups more often during the year (maybe 4 times in total), so that the theory is more shared, and we will have more time to delve into each part and include experiential exercises for a more complete understanding. Also, the smaller number of participants in each group seems more functional to me both in terms of time management and the ability to express and communicate.

Thank you!

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Good morning

My participation in the Study Group was very helpful. The coordinators were organized, they managed their time properly and used it in a constructive way, they gave space to all participants with courtesy, discretion, and a very positive attitude, and they were harmonious and complementary to each other. They referred to all the material, creating for us with appropriate exercises an opportunity for interaction and learning, and they explained all the questions and I personally felt encouraged and very calm. I think their work was excellent and I thank them very much for the time they spent with us, as well as for their preparation.

Yours sincerely

**Arsenopoulou Marina**, 2nd year Larissa and Online

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You asked me to evaluate the coordinators who did the study for us. I personally admired their knowledge, the way they put all the theory together. I was taught eleven different chapters of theory which they put all together and made it a single theoretical matrix. They were also very caring towards everyone. I had the feeling that they knew more things and in more depth than previous instructors.

I wish we had more time or more meetings because the information I got in the 2nd meeting was so much that I lost track at the end.

Yours sincerely

**Machi Vaitsi**, 2nd year Larisa and Online

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Good Evening,

I really liked the Study Group process and it is definitely helpful when it comes to exams.

I would like to add that, it would have made more sense to me if the

first day had the same flow as the second.

What made it difficult for me in my exam study was to organize the concepts and connect them together in an easily understandable order. With that in mind and considering that this was done during the second meeting, it would have helped me more if it had been done from the beginning and possibly in the second meeting (which was closer to the exams) where a revision with questions and answers would have been helpful.

As for the coordinators, I have only good things to say. It is evident that they have very well assimilated knowledge and know how to teach. Noti has deep knowledge and can strongly impart her knowledge, Atlantida has more empathetic perception and helped me see the theory from different point of view. Michalis also helped a lot by bringing examples and «explaining» in a way the theory in practice.

Congratulations for the initiative, I am grateful that the skills of the coordinators were made available to us! It was really very helpful.

Thanks,

**Katerina Galiatsou**, 2nd year Thessaloniki

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Good morning.

Regarding the assessment:

I was very happy when they told us about the study group and I wanted to participate. I found it as an opportunity to be in touch with Gestalt's concepts and to be able to understand those that are still difficult for me.

The moderators seemed very good to me. They listened to us, solved our queries, understood our confusion even in questions that might sound simple and were very supportive. They seemed to have good knowledge and good teaching skills, not only in Gestalt matters, but also in philosophy in general.

I would be very happy if the study groups continued next year.

Good luck and thank you very much.

**Chrysoxeni Prokopaki**, 1st year of Athens

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The study groups were helpful mainly because they prepared us for how to succeed in the exams. It was also a small revision of the important points of the theory. All three facilitators were knowledgeable, encouraging and supportive.

Personally, I'm tired of having Zoom meetings on Sundays. I would prefer meetings to be in person and on some weekday afternoon.

I would find it helpful to hold discussion groups more regularly, for example every three months, so that the theory can be worked close to the time of its delivery and studying and to clarify questions that have arisen from the reading.

Thank you and them.

**Sophia Hatzipashali**, 2nd year of Thessaloniki

## 14th European Gestalt Congress in Madrid (XIV Congreso Europeo de Terapia Gestalt)

### 25 years Gestalt and Art: a longitudinal study ORAL PRESENTATION

a process of readjustment in cases of desensitization» The integration of art in psychotherapeutic practice has been established for years as an effective intervention that contributes to the recovery and rehabilitation of mental illness. This integration is often a challenge for mental health professionals, as there is no systematic and reliable way of selecting the appropriate intervention depending on the type of psychological difficulties and the stage of the therapeutic process. Because Gestalt psychotherapy is based on phenomenology and existential dialogue, it is a suitable field where art



***The relationship we develop as humans with Art has an inherently social connotation, and our expression through it can only be a reason and attitude towards the social change we are experiencing.***

The aim of this presentation is the systematic recording and highlighting of tools and techniques that come from the field of visual and performing arts and have been successfully integrated into the methodology of Gestalt psychotherapy. Utilizing and documenting the multi-year experience (>25 years) of 30 Gestalt psychotherapists and their artist collaborators, a systematic recording of strategies, tools and techniques was made, tools and techniques that have been used in individual or group psychotherapy and have been empirically proven as good practices. Detailed reference is made to the goals of each intervention, the therapeutic stage at which it is appropriate and the expected therapeutic benefits. Finally, two things will be discussed, the first is the process of choosing the appropriate tool by the therapist so that the integration of art in psychotherapy is always based on the therapeutic goals and the second is the respect and application of the moral and ethical rules that govern psychotherapy practice when it incorporates artistic expression.

***Yiamarelou Y., M.A. in Clinical Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist***  
***Siampani K., Msc in Counseling and Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist***

**«Incorporating Art into Gestalt Psychotherapy: when Tools and Techniques become the field for a fruitful relationship to emerge.»**

This year the Greek community of Gestalt psychotherapy started creatively and collaboratively with participation and presentations at the 14th European Gestalt Congress in Madrid (XIV Congreso Europeo de Terapia Gestalt). In one of the Greek presentations I had the pleasure of working with Yianna Yiamarelou in order to create and present: «Gestalt Therapy and Art as

and the possibilities it offers can be integrated into the psychotherapeutic process and contribute to the realization of therapeutic goals. In our presentation we gave step by step the healing process and how we used art as a way to support the client to stay and trust what is appearing in the here and now.

Our presentation began with a brief citation of some historical evidence starting from the beginning of the last century, when Brentano, - Hursell's teacher - and a number of philosophers such as Kant, Ponty, etc. as well as, centuries ago, the Greek apathism (which refers to «neither says nor hides, but means») argue that «we cannot define reality, we can only define how it appears to us as a phenomenon in the present». We continued by giving some more theoretical elements with the aim of describing the condition of the patient with whom the therapeutic intervention was worked through the use of art. We mainly talked about the concept of desensitization noting that: "it is a relationship disorder characterized by perceptual and emotional emptiness. This aims to protect the self in cases of painful and traumatic experiences. When this mode of creative adaptation becomes a fixed Gestalt, it acts as a vacuum that swallows up all the spontaneity and energy of the organism." In the case of one client's presentation, a painting she created at the beginning of the treatment showed how her fixed Gestalt swallowed up her spontaneity and energy.

However, as we progressed through our presentation, we were faced with our own creative adaptation, when the technology was unable to display on the projection screen both the painting and all the images we had incorporated into the power point slides, in order to make the presentation comprehensible and illustrate the healing process, using art.

As we wrote at one point in our presentation: «The movement towards the new, the different, the other is the experience of contact as an intermediate process. «We moved as if in a parallel process with that of the theory we were presenting towards the new condition that emerged, with grace and spontaneity, utilizing the relationship we had created in our collaboration with Yianna while we were preparing for this presentation. We asked a colleague who was in the audience to take it upon herself to show the images

which (fortunately) we had made sure to print out in hard copy. (Thank you Marialena Tsiamoura for your immediate and spontaneous response).

Earlier, Yianna and I had created a handcraft to demonstrate how we close a Gestalt session (it proved extremely helpful during this tech challenge we were experiencing). In a similar way we also used the extra two chairs that were empty on the panel in order to show one of the images that depicted their use in the healing process, but the technology refused to support it (the chairs also proved useful in our representation).

In a parallel process of creative adaptation, our audience was physically active, and responded to our difficulty with empathy, humor, understanding, and support.

In conclusion, we managed to create a warm, supportive, collegial atmosphere by all participating in what characterizes us as a community of Gestalt psychotherapists: close contact with each other.

I would be unfair to this experience if I did not include the group of colleagues who dealt with the overall representation of the Gestalt Foundation at the Conference regarding our choice to participate in all 3 categories of conference presentations, poster, oral presentation and workshop. Thus, we made our mark with the poster: «25 years of Gestalt and Art: a common and equal journey of 30 therapists and artists in group and individual therapy in Greece.» In closing, I would like to add that if I were asked in a few words to express my feeling from the experience of the Conference, I would say the words: Collaboration - Collegiality - Co-creation - Meeting - Contact.

**Katerina Siabani**, *Counseling Psychologist, Gestalt Psychotherapist-Educator-Supervisor, MSc in Counseling Psychology, Univ. City – Sheffield U.K., Trained in Art-Therapy and Sandplay Therapy. EAGT member, EEPSP member, ECP holder, author.*

## Poster

### ***Integrating art into Gestalt psychotherapy: When the tools and techniques become the field for a new relationship***

The integration of art in psychotherapeutic practice has long been recognized as an effective intervention which contributes to recovery and rehabilitation of mental illness. Nevertheless, this integration is often a challenge for mental health professionals, as there is no systematic and reliable way of selection of the appropriate intervention depending on the type of psychological difficulties and the stage of the healing process. On the other hand, Gestalt psychotherapy based on phenomenology and existential dialogue constitutes a suitable field where art and the possibilities that it offers can be integrated into psychotherapeutic process and contribute to the realization of therapeutic goals.

**Daktila L.**, *Psychologist, Gestalt psychotherapist*  
**Tsiamoura M.**, *MSc Psychology, Gestalt psychotherapist*

### ***Integrating Art Into Gestalt Psychotherapy: When Tools and Techniques Become The Field For A Fertile Relationship to Emerge***

Balliou D. M.Sc. in Counselling Psychology, Gestalt psychotherapist, Chatzigeorgiou E. Psychologist, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Daktila L. Psychologist, Gestalt psychotherapist, Efthimiadis I. Gestalt Mental health counselor, Gallis D. conceptual and artistic photography, trainee as a Gestalt Mental Health Counsellor, Gkoutzioti I. Gestalt psychotherapist, Hatzilakou K. M.Sc. Social and Clinical Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Katsamakis K. Dancer, choreographer, trainee as a Gestalt Mental Health Counsellor, Mertzani A. MA in Child Care, Law and Practice, Monroy B. Advanced Practitioner Expressive Arts Therapy, M.Sc. in Design and Art Direction, Nikiforou E. Gestalt Mental Health Counsellor and Gestalt graduate, Pappa E. M.Sc. Mental Health Studies, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Raptis N. M.Sc. Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Siampani K. M.Sc. in Counseling and Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Theofilakou Z. MA in the International Psychoanalytic University of Berlin, Gestalt psychotherapist, Tsiamoura M. MSc Psychology, Gestalt psychotherapist, Tur Valverde Guy-Pierre Painter and Gestalt therapist, Yiamarelou Y. M.A. in Clinical Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Zafranias N. PhD in Musical Education, Gestalt Mental Health Counsellor



The integration of art in psychotherapeutic practice has been established for years as an effective intervention that contributes to the recovery and rehabilitation of mental illness. Nevertheless, this integration is often a challenge for mental health professionals, as there is no systematic and reliable way of choosing the appropriate intervention depending on the type of psychological difficulties and the stage of the therapeutic process. On the other hand, Gestalt psychotherapy based on phenomenology and existential dialogue is a fertile field where art and the possibilities it offers can be integrated into the psychotherapeutic process and contribute to the realization of therapeutic goals.

An educational program titled GestArt drawing on and documenting the 25-year experience of 30 Gestalt psychotherapists and artists associates of theirs was created and applied in multiple contexts, schools, therapeutic groups and self-awareness groups with great success. The program systematically recorded and highlighted tools and techniques from the field of visual and performing arts that have been successfully incorporated into Gestalt psychotherapy methodology.

The process of selecting the appropriate tool by the therapist for each case was always done with respect and with the therapeutic goals in mind, and the application of the moral and ethical rules that govern psychotherapy when it incorporates artistic expression.

Gestalt and Art:  
 Theoretical & Practical Contributions to the History of Gestalt Psychotherapy

- The use of materials as a means to explore unique individual qualities





- The deepening of perception through the construction of forms with visual materials, in connection with the theory of Gestalt Psychology
- The parallelism of the way of constructing forms with the formation and experience of the life of the person receiving treatment (Jahie Rhyne, 1971, 1973, 1980, 1996, Vich and Rhyne, 1967)
- The focus on spontaneous creations of individualized experiments (Joseph Zinker, 1971, 1973, 1977)
- Recognizing elements of clients' lives as unique and interesting, like elements of a novel, opens up a satisfying and effective way to manage narratives (Ervin Polster, 1987)
- The use of artistic materials as a catalyst, through a phenomenological view, and not as a means to an end in itself (Violet Oaklander, 1978, 1979)
- The shaping of materials and artistic creation as a symbol of extraordinary importance for the relationship and communication between the individual and the environment, an existential perspective
- Creative growth as a result of communication style processing (Elaine Rapp, 1980; Leedy and Rapp, 1973)
- Gestalt therapy as an aesthetic concept (Francesetti G, 2013)

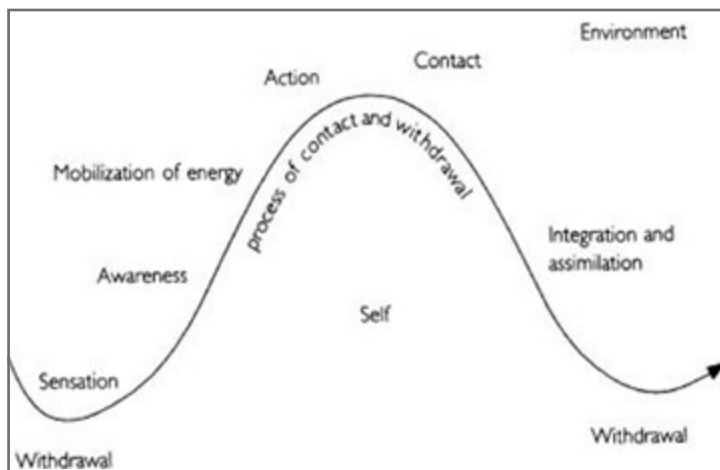
Art and Gestalt through Buber's perspective

- Buber uses the example of art to show how one dimension of reality, the Thou dimension, transitions to the other, the It dimension.
- There is the possibility of a re-transformation of the artistic act from It to Thou, when e.g. the person relates to music with their whole being in an I-Thou relationship and experiences the emotions that it contains and expresses it on an existential level. Thus, a paradox arises since a realized work is simultaneously de-realized, as it passes from the realm of Thou to the realm of It.
- Some form of safety is required for one to come to a real, meaningful dialogue, to be able to show one's vulnerable side but also to allow oneself to be transformed by the contact with the other. (Buber, 1969; 1975; Apostolopoulos, 1991)

Phenomenological Diagnosis: The «What» and «How» of the Process  
Multidimensional:

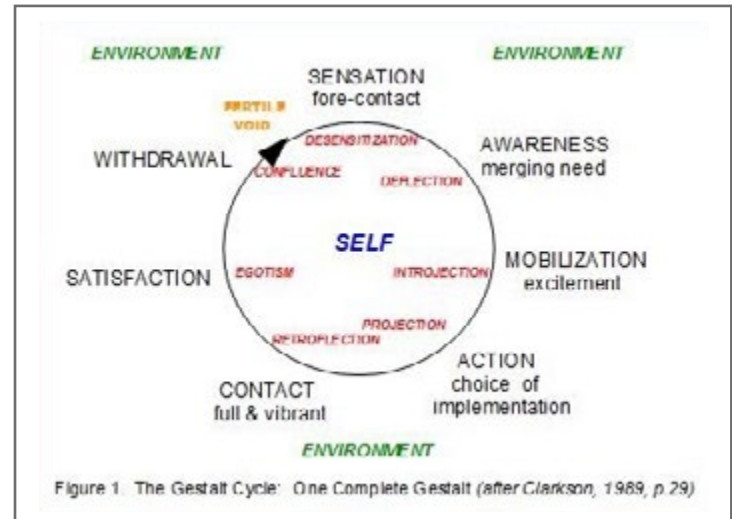
- Subjective dimension: sensations, thoughts, feelings, behavior
- Intersubjective dimension: I-it, I-you, and the space in between
- Transpersonal dimension: field theory, existential facts

Recent Contributions / Guidelines



- The alternation between verbal & non-verbal expressive forms
- Painting with the skilled hand and the less skilled hand
- The need for play in the therapeutic process
- The parallel between the healing & the creative process
- Playing and integrating polarities
- The reshaping of the old elements through the new elements that emerge in the field, both in art and in life

- The creation of a unique shape full of meaning, as a process of formation of human experience (Nancy Amendt-Lyon, 2003)  
GestArt and Social Change



- We are living with very different challenges, even when compared to just the previous generation. We are concerned about the environment, about people on the edge of poverty, about wars. Our world can be unbearably full of challenges. In this ever-changing situation, meeting and utilizing the Gestalt therapeutic approach and the tools of the performing and visual arts can be a refuge, an escape. It can be a safety valve, releasing tension and energy, when nothing else seems possible.
- This model, based on the principles of phenomenology, aims to activate our expressive means, with or without verbal articulation, and leads to transformative experiences and the acquisition of a valuable tool of work in therapeutic fields as well as in any other humanistic and educational field.



**Gesta(l-r)t: Poiesis: motion - emotion - commotion workshop**

“Poiesis «is the procedure through which a person creates something not existing before»

In this workshop, we will try together the procedure of “poiesis”, and, using art as our vehicle, we will co-create what did not exist before. We will observe how a new being (human or other) comes to life, how their character emerges, and most of all we will be there to experiment supporting that being in their life. How am I? How is this being? How do we meet?

How does that little being face up to social change? How does this fact change me?

Let us find out through playing, reflecting, relating.

**Daktila L.**, Psychologist, Gestalt psychotherapist

**Tsiamoura M.**, MSc Psychology, Gestalt psychotherapist

Συνέχεια από τη σελίδα 1

Congratulations to Katia and the other founders for all the years of work to bring Gestalt therapy to Greece. Your 25-year anniversary was a grand opportunity for me to show up personally and authentically. My reward was your showing up in response. I



know creativity to be the miracle of meeting with similarities and differences that brings the development of something new. This conference was a rare opportunity to share my experience of several projects, particularly What's Behind the Empty Chair and Flying Without Wings. Each began with something new that appeared to me – an idea for watercolor paintings representing the skills we have learned for organismic self-regulation and a forgotten interview of Arnold Beisser. What was needed for these creative sparks to grow, was a little nourishment. The first came from Todd Burley, "I think you're on to something," (visual representations of Gestalt therapy theory). The second from the GATLA

Faculty at the Summer Residential training in Denmark. "Yes, we would be interested in learning more about Arnold Beisser and what lead him to write Paradoxical Theory of Change."

There's a Goethe quote that I paraphrase, "You never know what will come to your aide until to step fully into the situation." This makes commitment an important early step in the process... being willing to go forward without knowing where each step will lead. Being open to any possibility and willing to risk blind alleys, being wrong, even potential humiliation.

In addition to support from others, I found structuring time and place has carried me through very difficult hours. Jan Ruckert, my friend, colleague, Gestalt training, poet, and painter, encouraged me, "Just write! Just paint! Set aside the time. It doesn't matter what."

One of my most difficult tasks was to ask for help. I learned I could tolerate a 'no' if I didn't take it as a personal reprimand or criticism. More importantly, I learned that many people were open, even happy to help. They caught my excitement and wanted my success.

My biggest challenge was to make friends with my critic. I often said, sometimes out loud, "I need you, but I don't need you now. Please stay in the background and I will call you in when I am ready." Seeking an outcome, seeking perfection can be the death of creativity in any project's early development. We need time to play with our new toys.

Last, I believe, an under-appreciated part of the OSR cycle. Accomplishment, integration, and appreciation. When this is neglected, the anxieties, work, stress leading up to success, have

# «The world ...a creativi



more synaptic weight than the whole process and is carried to the next opportunity for creativity.

Thank you all for understanding, especially this last piece of the process.

"What would you do... if you weren't afraid?"

You are the future of Gestalt therapy. The world needs your ideas and what you create with them. Nurture yours - support others - make space - ask your critic to hang out in the wings - a applaud.

I have great faith in your journeys.

Sending love,

**Liv Estrup**

**Liv Estrup, MA, MFT California** in private practice since 1970, certified Gestalt therapist 1979, twice past President of the Gestalt Therapy Institute of Los Angeles, American Association of Marriage Family Therapists (AAMFT) - member since 1985, Approved Supervisor 2000, Gestalt Associates Training Los Angeles (GATLA) Faculty since 1999, taught Gestalt Therapy in the graduate program at Loma Linda University for 15 years, Supervisor at Southern California Counseling Center for 20 years, Member of IAAGT and AAMFT.



# of experience the process»



**Fifteen + one notes I took from Gestalt psychotherapist Liv Estrup during the Advanced program, from the 25th Four-Day Gestalt Psychotherapy workshop and I want to share them with you, as the therapist-client relationship is unique, but can also be supportive with the look of the following:**

1. As a therapist, I should be able to stay on the topic expressed by the client, but also in the time it takes, and when the client changes his topic, I should «bring him back».
2. To «bring» into the client's therapeutic process what happens «outside» in his life, inside the treatment room - in between Us!
3. To stay in the feeling of the «other» (customer), since this is important for the customer himself, but also to express it to him.
4. Phenomenology «means» to look at the person in front of me, and to verbally express to him that physical (phenomenological) intense element that comes from the client like moving his leg.
5. To notice in the client that verbal or physical «piece» that by expressing it, to mobilize him to start observing himself.
6. The client's awareness can be further enhanced when I, as the therapist, ask the client to express his childhood story a second time in the present.
7. To ask the client if he allows me to touch him and how he feels about this sensation.
8. As a therapist to the client to report my authentic feeling by containing him.
9. To ask questions to the customer, because in this way I express

that I am really interested in his process.

10. To «give» the client that stigma (fuel) so that when he interrupts his process, such as changing the subject, he not only realizes it, but also admits it.

11. The trauma of each person does not disappear, but it is up to each person to suffer more or less...

12. When the client experiences a trauma (depending on his situation) it is important as a therapist to see with him if it would be beneficial for him to explore a way or act of «repair» (care) of himself.

13. When the session time is up to give even one word to my client as feedback.

14. The theory of the Gestalt approach may be important to me as a therapist, but to the client it may be nothing.

15. The more flexible I am as a therapist, the more chances I have to meet the client.

16. Accepting my own personal process and experience gives me the security to be whole both as a person and as a therapist.

**Ioanna Goutzioti**, Gestalt Psychotherapist, BSc in Psychology, MS in Psychology of Child Development, PgCert in MBA.

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Tuesday afternoon, in my apartment, in the center of Thessaloniki. I have washed and ironed some of the clothes that I might take with me for the four days.

I take the black leather satchel down from the loft. Weathered and worn, the outer layer of leather has begun to sag with time and use. Small irregular pieces scatter onto the floor, and a part of the inner bark of the skin, gray in color, is revealed. In a refreshed mood, I take the wooden box with the leather care tools from the closet, go out onto the balcony and, starting with a large brush, thoroughly clean the areas with obvious signs of wear. Then, with a cloth, I brush the bag with black paint, let it dry, clean once more carefully with the brush and with another small brush I daub on a special soap for leather and spread it carefully. I let it dry again, clean the bag again with the brush and then polish it with a cloth. The result is impressive.

However, some deeper signs of wear and tear are still evident. Maybe if I took care of the bag more regularly it would have held up better over time. I decide to treat the black leather boots that I will wear during the four days in the same way. I put in the bag the clothes I want to take with me, the underwear, the toiletry bag, the charger, close the bag, take a shower, lie down and close my eyes.

The trip to Agria Volou, where we would be staying for the four days, seemed very pleasant to me. I had two of my fellow students in the car with me and I enjoyed their company. We shared our thoughts, some of our experiences and our anticipation for the four days.

Arriving at the hotel where we would be staying, the venue of the

four-day event, we checked in and each of us moved each to our room. I took the shirts out of the sack, hung them in the wardrobe and left the sack near the bed. I took a coastal walk on the waterfront, and the sight of Pagasitikos and the smell of the sea brought me a sense of rejuvenation and calm.

The next morning Liv Estrup was the main speaker of the first lecture. She is a California psychotherapist and artist, director of «What's Behind the Empty Chair: Gestalt Therapy Theory and Methodology» and «Flying Without Wings: Life with Arnold Bessier.» I moved, traveled and reflected throughout her speech and what I probably kept the most is one phrase: Show Up, show up, be there.

The speech was followed by a group process with my fellow students from the first year in Thessaloniki together with the first year in Larissa and the online group. The moderator, a young woman with thick black hair, comfortable clothing and a sturdy frame of glasses, did not speak much, although to my eyes her body and especially her feet, bare of shoes, danced in a loose rhythm that seemed to form words and sentences without vowels and consonants, only punctuation. The group process lasted several hours, and within it there were many minutes of silence, precious pauses for me, rich in meaning. But observing some of my fellow students during these pauses, I noticed signs of perhaps awkwardness, nervous foot movements, arm twitches, and gazes that moved restlessly around the room as if waiting for something to happen. The presenter's feet continued to dance softly, with small movements, as if whispering.

By the end of the group process, I was excited, I didn't know what I taken from the experience, but I had gotten something. The day continued with presentations of group work from other departments and ended with a group exhibition where everyone participated individually. I also participated in this exhibition with a stop motion video I had made a few years ago, a tribute to Sisyphus, the absurdity of the perpetual rise and fall in life, the transformations, interpreted as absurd only by the habit of seeing in perpetuity, in the relative continuity, in the relation of cause and causality. However, it acquires special meaning when we locate ourselves in the moment, in the moment unhooked from yesterday and tomorrow.

The group exhibition, which included installations, paintings, photographs, videos, poems and performances, shook me, moved me and offered me usable insights.

On the third day of the four-day workshop, group works of the Gestalt Foundation's psychotherapy training departments of various years were presented, including those of my own year. We had prepared a video with daily scenes of interaction and the main axis of contact methods. The feedback we received was very encouraging. I felt satisfaction and a sense of motivation. A group process followed again, in mixed groups of learners of all years. The moderator, an older woman this time and a founding member of the Gestalt Foundation, wearing sandals, flowing clothes and a pashmina, had something vaguely familiar about her, matching the gentleness of experience and time with the acumen and excitement

of a child. I left the group process room with a dreamy look and a sense of belonging.

In the evening we gathered for the gala in an outdoor area of the hotel where large rotundas had been set up for a meal. There was plenty of space in the center. A place that in a few hours was filled with people of all ages dancing and having fun. Among those who were dancing, I also distinguished the coordinator with the pashmina, who had so absorbed me in her words with her gentleness and insight as she danced with the enthusiasm of a child. I danced too, hesitantly at first, then liberatingly and liberated, among my fellow students, and people I met for the first time until four in the morning.

The next day, the rest of the classes presented their group work, followed again by mixed process groups. The group coordinator was again the young woman with the thick black hair and the sturdy frame of glasses. Before we all introduced ourselves or spoke, he asked us to each write one word on three cards. I didn't want to share my words, before meeting the group, before hearing their voices. My words were all verbs, indistinctly written. We placed the cards in the center and each chose one. No one chose any of mine, not even me. We split into pairs and worked on the cards we had chosen. The whole time the coordinator had her back almost to me.

We talked a lot with the girl who suggested we work together. In the course of the conversation I felt a gap in our communication, as if I was talking almost mechanically. I didn't understand how this feeling came about, but I chose to set my own limit and when I was given the opportunity to tell the girl that I was fine with the process we had been doing up until then and if she agreed we would stop there. So we stopped, immersed in a long silence, sitting side by side facing each other forward, and having the time and space I needed, and perhaps the girl needed too. I began to observe my body. I was calm, and I was taking deep breaths. Watching the girl next to me, I could see her curl in slightly and look straight down. I started imitating her breathing by looking at the same place she was looking and I felt a tension. I turned my body towards the girl sitting cross-legged, focusing my gaze on hers, on the same spot on the ground where she was looking, and began to take deep breaths. What I tried to tell her without words, without looking at each other, was that I'm here, I'm Showing Up.

The coordinator reunited us in a group, and we shared the experience of the process we did. The girl we worked with spoke first about our conversation and then with intense emotion about the impending death of someone close to her with a terminal illness. She thanked me for feeling me close to her when I turned my body towards her and that she felt supported, that I was there. The coordinator, who the whole time I had the feeling that she was almost with her back at me, said that she too felt supportive when I crossed my legs and turned my body towards the girl. The coordinator was there too, the whole time of the group process the coordinator was there, in all the individual groups. At that moment I realized what I had taken from the group process the first time, from those rhythmic feet that spoke without words. I had seen what it was like to be there, in

space and time, in silence, what it was like to be there with space and time and silence. How can you be there? With a simple twist of the body, a change in the position of the legs.

I left the room, deeply moved, and after the process of ending the four-day session, I started the journey back to Thessaloniki with my fellow students. Arriving at my house I left the sack and looked at it, and looked at myself too and saw that some layers had peeled off and that through these four days I had taken care of me too, in the layers that looked gray under the outer ones, with the same devotion to the procedures, on the brush, on the paint on the brush again, then on the soap and finally on the buffing cloth.

**Gavrielidis Ioannis**, (26-05-2023), 1st year of Thessaloniki

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### ***The unique feeling of «belonging»***

It's a big deal to be heard  
To share the unspoken, the untouched, the unapproachable, the scared..  
Know that here there are two eyes and two ears directed towards you, ready simply to listen to you, to hear you.  
With all their senses directed towards you.  
To let of anything painful and suddenly soften...  
we share,  
here...  
in that circle with so many presences gathered,  
you felt the collectiveness, that sense of belonging,  
the unique feeling of coming together  
to let go

It was like a flock, like a big family.

It wasn't the kind of family of «I know you» and «you know me»,  
of «this is me», «this is you».

It was an «I'm here for you» family. «We're here for you»

It was a give and take family  
of «I hear you» «you hear me»

A family of «you hold me» «I hold you»

An unconditional family that was there and then  
in the here and now...

You saw how valuable it is to be alive and present, to be able to listen, to feel, to listen at any moment.

And suddenly those members who were unknown, it was as if they became familiar figures,

They became ports where you could park your ship, without an anchor...

To stay and let them stay

To hear and be heard

To give and let them give...

It was like a landscape where the sunflowers never turned east at sunset

They remained firm, haughty, lively, gathered together....

As if the sun never went down...

**Savvidou Evangelia**, 1st year of Thessaloniki







## **1st Gestalt Teen Camp 2022 «Gods» and «Demons»... at the threshold of Olympus»**

Last April we decided that it was time to realize what we have been discussing for years as a dream and a wish: to make the first Gestalt teenage camp a reality. The ideas were many and full, the people who contributed

to it were also many, we wondered, we proposed, we relied on older experiences, but we came face to face with new concerns... Despite the obstacles, we managed to adapt creatively and eight teenagers came to Olympus to create the first Gestalt teen camp together. They had their own autonomous schedule, their own room, their meals, the «grown-ups»



looked at us, they knew that «yes, this is the group of teenagers...», but their looks most often had a question...» what are they doing really???» I was there, and I was very lucky to hear their concerns, their laughs and cries, their dilemmas that brought the spice to the gathering, and even their boredom. And I'm also proud of these young people, who trusted us and allowed themselves to experience a world different from what they're used to, that's what they told me, and that's what I'm telling you now.

**Marialena Tsiamoura**, *Mental Health Counselor, Kindergarten Teacher AUTH, MSc Psychology, Gestalt therapist, trained in Healing through a Doll*

In our effort to leave something of what we experienced for the next generation to see, we talked about our favorite songs, collected our favorite lyrics, tweaked them, we twisted them a bit, and that's how we share with you the following text.

We spent nights that never die.  
In these verses are the colors that I cannot change.  
We remember each other, having kept their love.  
Can we do better than this?  
But definitely not yoga!  
Rainy days are a battle.  
At the end of them, I get tired and exhausted.  
Don't worry, your Manitu is watching over you.  
We wear slippers with socks and camping is what we are waiting for.  
We hope to come back since we belong here.

**G., L., M., M., N., N., S., T., F.**







### **Walk in the forest with the MAKE USE kit!**

At this year's camp in Olympus, both the adults and even more so the young people, we had the opportunity to get to know the MAKE USE kit. It is a small «envelope», containing a biodegradable glove and a biodegradable bag, and has been created by the MAKE USE youth group. The purpose of the kit is to leave the public space a little cleaner than we found it!

And that's how it happened! Our journey was long, but the path we followed in the forest rewarded us more than we expected! The teenage campers stocked up some bags at the beginning of the trailhead, as well as a glove, and set off on their journey. The landscape was beautiful and impressive, only Olympus can offer such a landscape. Nevertheless, the observation of the teenagers was incredible. They would spot even the smallest plastic sheets or the ones lying on the ground, every now and then they would stop and bend to pick them up, they would wonder about the most deformed ones, they would climb trees to reach others, while holding each other to reach some rubbish that was on steeper slopes. Soon their bags were so full, that the adults following us couldn't find anything to collect! At the end of the route, happy and happy for what we achieved, we took a correspondingly very happy photo, and the teenagers took with them a new MAKE USE kit to use when they need it.

The MAKE USE group, which supervises the kit, is a group of young people between the ages of 16 and 30, who deal with issues that concern the

young men and women of the city of Larissa, such as the problems of the local society, human rights and democratic values. The main objective of the group is to promote the concept of «Active Citizen» in practice and to influence the people of the local community in order to create a positive dynamic of cooperation in the community and the wider society. The MAKE USE team regularly organizes actions and activities related to the MAKE USE kit, and actions with other themes.

The cleaning we carried out in Olympus was a trigger to rework our relationship with the public space. Even more, it gave us the opportunity to give back to the environment something small in gratitude for what it gives us, and it filled us with big smiles!

For more information about the MAKE USE team, visit the team's site, or the facebook or instagram pages:

<https://makeuse.gr/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MakeUseLarissa>

[https://www.instagram.com/make\\_use\\_larissa/](https://www.instagram.com/make_use_larissa/)

## **2nd Gestalt Teen Camp 2023**

### **«Indian tales...»**

*«...It is the source, the light, the night, the darkness, the dawn.  
It's the smell of fresh mud  
and the hind leg of the fox.  
The birds that carry her secrets to us,  
they belong to her».*

*Clarissa Pinkola Estés*



This year, the teen camp had a little of the old and the new, and a lot of new in the old. And that's because, as much as we already know how it works and how to

prepare, these wonderful teenagers come «brand new», changed, with fresh mood and fresh boredom at the same time, to disturb us, to wake us up, to make us think and to mobilize us to make (as much as possible) a better world for them.

Our schedule was naturally full. We walked in the forest, made dolls, danced, once again discussed whether slippers are worn with socks or without and why, went to the Always Raining gorge, tied with knots and learned about our dog friends. We also split into groups and again into other groups to meet again fresher in plenary, we prepared the Great Game and went wild with the opportunity to trouble the grown-ups with trials, we made our strange portraits, we gave each other other names





and we found ours back again. We left ourselves to the stars, we played, we made slogans and dances, we kept our mobiles, but we already left them, we fell, we hit and made new «wounds», more creative than the old ones. We met, shared, cried, were disappointed, excited, hugged and loved. A lot.

I keep the confluence of the first plural, because in this camp I simply could not imagine myself outside of it. Just like I can't imagine a teenage camp without the «greater community», without the wonderful people who «make» it. A big thank you to the Gestalt Foundation, which gives us the opportunity to find our communities, to Christina and Olympia for the support and trust that everything goes as it should go, to Despina, Katia, Maria, the reference points of inspiration and challenge. Also, to Liana and Eva, for sharing and understanding, and to the wonderful and unique, full of equality and diversity companion in coordination, Fotis. A thank you to the place itself, which took care of us, embraced us, made us one of its own, and to Gestalt itself which is «a mother who holds my hand».

Finally, a huge thank you to those parents who believed that their children at this camp would come one step closer to JOY. And even more so, to these teenagers who were there and dared everything the human mind



can imagine. I am deeply happy to have a small part in their history and proud of them, for what they are and what they are becoming.

**Tsiamoura Marialena**, Mental Health Counselor, Kindergarten Teacher AUT, MSc Psychology, graduate Gestalt therapist, exp. Healing through a Doll





### **Gestalt Foundation collaboration with Epoché magazine.**

Dear trainees,

We would like to announce that our center, Gestalt Foundation, as a center for Psychotherapy and Education of the Phenomenological, Holistic Gestalt approach, has been added to the editorial and publishing team of Epoché magazine.

This magazine is the result of a collaboration between three companies, «becoming» (Hellenic Society of Existential Psychology), the Hellenic Focusing Center (Person-centered and Focusing-experiential Counseling and Psychotherapy) and the Hellenic Society of Phenomenological-Existential Analysis and Psychotherapy (Hellenic Society of Daseinsanalysis) and from its new issue, the Gestalt Foundation Center for Psychotherapy and Education.

The role of Epoché magazine is to put the discourse of psychotherapy in active conversation with the other discourses of society such as philosophy, art, politics, popular sentiment, science, etc. because this dialogue also illuminates its own road.

The common core of the participating centers underlines an attitude: the transition from the inflexibility of single-meaning truths to the acceptance of the multi-meaning, and Epoché magazine aspires to be a powerful exponent of a culture that insists on being inspired by the value of the written word, a written word that is not close to final decisions but keeps open the possibility of questioning, contributing to osmosis through meeting and conversation.

In each issue you will find a significant number of scientific articles as well as other literary texts, poetry, book presentations, information on scientific events and many other interests.

This is a semester magazine and is published by «Eurasia» publishing

every June and December. The new issue will be released in December 2023.

Thank you for your time and we encourage you to browse and enjoy!!!

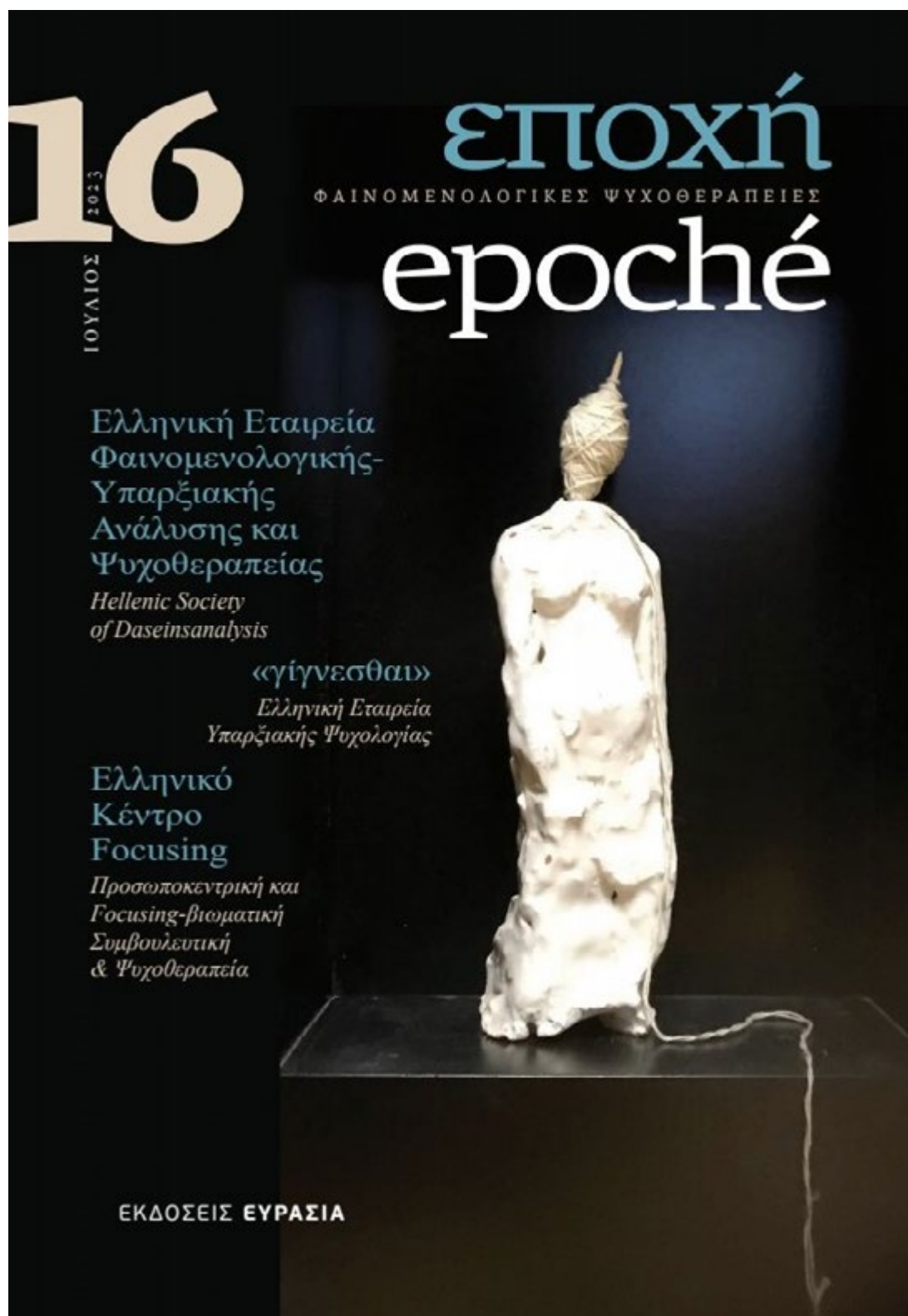
Here is the link:

<https://epoche.weebly.com/>

**Yianna Yiamarelou**

**Despoina Balliou**

**Katia Hatzilakou**



## FREE EXPRESSION



Soul diving.  
Existential reflections.  
My lost selves.  
I set the course.  
I set goals with  
Options and tools.  
I throw myself into the process.  
I love and am loved.  
I fall, I get up, I bounce on  
Here and now I'm holding on. All of a sudden  
I balance with wonder and just like that  
I change with psychotherapy.

Th.N.  
June 22-24, 2023  
Karpenisi  
Thomais Demka

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