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Who am I; What is the meaning of my life? What does it mean to be alive? How should I live? How would I like it? Do I love others? Is there happiness? Why so much misery? Is there justice? Do I feel free? Am I afraid of death? Am I living up to my potential? Am I sucking up life? What will I leave behind? Is my life alive?

Continued on page 8

*Crossing the paths
of Stone...*

*Philosophy
lessons*

*Gestalt
and Child*



Great news for the **Gestalt Foundation... celebrating 25 years!**

Time behind, time ahead... the great river (Ghanas)... healthy years, creative years, smoothly years,

worried years, adventurous years, energetic years, quieter years, happy years, good years!!! Time contracts & expands according to circumstances and we grow by going through paths of evolution, challenge, presence, interest, care, but above all, endless love and commitment to our vision, our work and our participation in psychotherapy and in the wider society. Committed to the principles, philosophy and art of Gestalt therapy. 25 years... emotion... «a sudden emotion is enough to surrender to the depth of our time» (K. Papagiorgis). Staying in the present of the present we feel full of the experiences, the knowledge, the wisdom we acquire. Looking at the present of the past, memo-

ries of essence, presence, loss, success, meeting, team effort, personal, collective are recalled. Memories that have laid and cultivated a soil with good seeds, a fertile soil that enables us to gaze at the present of the future...» and time sculptor of men insane and the sun above the beast of hope» (Elytis)... and to invite the «new» with gratitude to the «old». The «new» contains challenges that we welcome with wisdom, prudence and hope! With faith in our roots and path HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

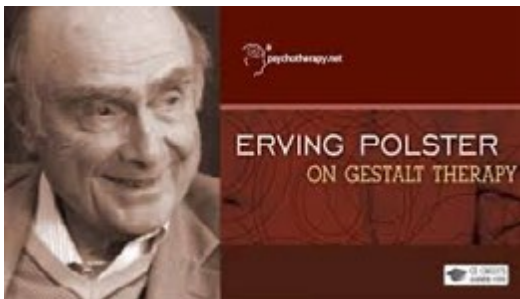
Good reading...



Balliou Despina,

M.Sc. Counseling Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Trainer & Supervisor, ECP holder (European Certificate of Psychotherapy), Member of EAGT's Training Standards Committee (European Association for Gestalt Therapy), Member of the Board of Directors of NOPG (National Organization of Psychotherapy in Greece), Founding member of Gestalt Foundation and of HAGT (Hellenic Association for Gestalt Therapy).

Have a nice trip Erving Polster...



Our beloved, pioneer of Gestalt therapy, teacher, therapist, author, and more... the time has come to say goodbye to you as a physical presence because the final moment has come... on March 22, 2024, exactly 22 days before your 102nd birthday!!! As our dear colleague Angeliki Kyvelou wrote very beautifully and warmly, «have a nice trip Erving Polster. Be in the light

and may your memory illuminate our path. Full of days, with clarity, leaving a valuable legacy. Life is mortality and memory immortality». How does memory work, especially these days? Erv, as he liked to be called, was one of a second-generation group of Gestalt therapists and theorists, a student of Fritz and Laura Perls. He learned from them but he is also one of those who first redefined and developed their work with respect, honesty and appreciation. He introduced on time the principles of Gestalt therapy and their ramifications into the contemporary setting in which Gestalt therapy must be experienced and understood «as it is inevitable that perspectives change and theoretical integration must incorporate the new spirit that these perspectives reflect and they create». He reinforced fundamental principles such as «The Power of Now», «experience is what counts», «healer as 'his' tool» and «healing is too good to be limited to the 'sick'». Lover of live contact, of the work with the senses, of experiment, dialogue, awareness!!! A warm, lively person, with a sense of humor, with an eye on experience and its punctuation, possibilities, choices, awareness and insight. «Every person's life is worth a novel»... This title alone in one of his books shows his belief in working with the experiences of every man thus giving the space for self-esteem and self-realization to bear fruits. So, at this moment let us stop, let us keep in our memory his great work, let us study it again, let us indulge, let us reflect... This is how memory becomes immortality! Have a good journey Erv in the light and light up our paths too!!!

Despina Balliou

The new Board of Directors of NOPG was established

On Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 10:30 a.m. the online Annual General Meeting of the NOPG (National Organization of Psychotherapy in Greece) has started. Among the other issues discussed was the election of 3 new members of the Board of Directors, in place of the three ones who resigned. Despina Balliou, psychologist, Gestalt psychotherapist, founding member of the Gestalt Foundation, Psychotherapy and Training Center, was recommended for candidacy which she accepted resulting in her election as a member of the new Board of Directors. After conducting the online voting that was done for this purpose, the new Board of Directors were elected as follows:

President: **P. Asimakis**

First Vice-President: **I. Korkotselos**

Second vice-president: **T. Bafiti**

Treasurer: **E. Basiuka**

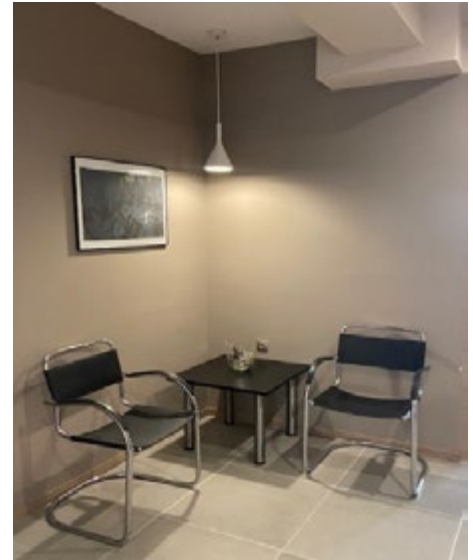
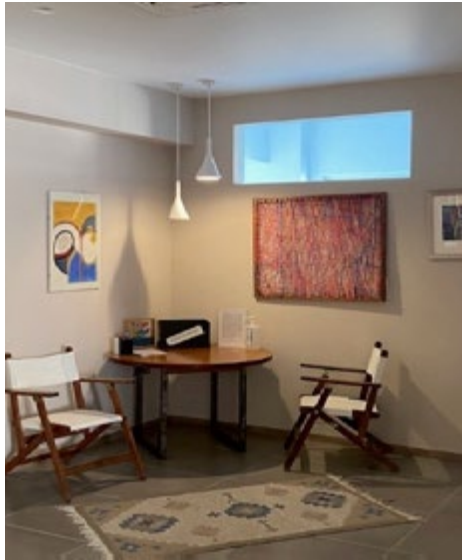
Secretary: **A. Vallidis**

Members: **D. Balliou** and **E.**

Mikroutsikou

We wish them a good term!

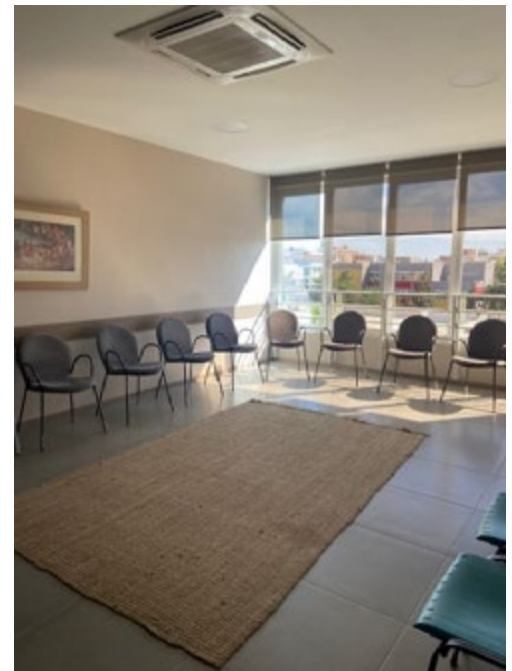
Gestalt Foundation's new facilities in Athens...



It has always been easier for me to get attached with places than with people.
 And this is because people are fickle, unpredictable, unstable.
 The spaces are there... always there.
 As a support, as a constant.
 At the Gestalt Foundation premises, in the center of Athens, I immediately felt safe, like a hug.
 Maybe it was the wood, maybe the fireplace we didn't use, or the paintings, maybe even the lamps.
 Everything seemed familiar and safe.
 When I found out we were moving, I was shocked.
 I liked the space, why change? This is where we met with the therapy group.
 And I had only lived at that space for three months.
 It took me three months to bond to such an extent that at our last meeting in that place I was mourning. Expectations are a big thing...
 Of course, the change of space coincided with a series of successive personal changes that contributed quite a bit to the «drama» and the

refusal to change.
 New job, new year, new building.
 That day I arrived much earlier to «listen» to the space.
 I was anxious.
 And all this, because of a room.
 When I arrived, I realized how much I liked the new space.
 How the familiar furniture stood in new places.
 How, in the end, people are the space and not the other way round.
 How this move also meant development, expansion.
 And when my expectations and fears stopped, then I realized that I was open to accepting new experiences.
 I allowed myself to be cautious as getting to know the place was not much different from meeting new people.
 And so, little by little, I embraced him and let him do the same.

Skafida Varvara, 1st year trainee of GF Athens 2022-2023





3-day experiential workshop in Sifnos

«Crossing the paths of Stone, in White and Blue»
June 2023... Meeting place:
Sifnos...

Between the sky and the earth, the rain and the soil, the wind and the stone, the meltemi and the sea «...poetically dwells the man...» (Helderlin) and creates the path, the dry stone, the haystack... «The uplifted gaze spans the distance that separates us from heaven, but remains on earth. This intermediate provides the measure for man's abode» (M. Heidegger).

In this in-between space, there are the roots, the memories, the history in the here and then... there is the space, the place, the belonging in the here and now... there is the creation, the abode for the hereafter... We all met in the courtyard of a monastery and walked paths, some easy and some difficult... sometimes all present together and sometimes some present and some absent... but always all together... We exchanged glances, shortened our pace to walk side by side, we counted each other's breaths, delved into the inner paths of our soul and history, and emerged to share our experience. Levinas in «ethics and infinity» wonders if «I exist together» means that I share existence and how, if anything, this sharing is achieved. To answer a little further down that «they say it is the fact that in front of the person I



am not limited to his opinion, but I respond to him» and that this is more important than what was said. Traversing the paths of Sifnos a sense of connection emerged within me, beyond what was said... The connection with nature, the light, the colors, the smells, the tastes... an endless communication with and through the senses... images etched deep in the memory and illuminated others submerged in the darkness of oblivion... The contact with this condition as an integral part of experience and contact with effort and toil... Our aim is «to try»... rather than to «make it». Interacting with others... all the same and all different... all with a deep feeling of loneliness in the face of the fear of dying and all with an insurmountable need to understand each other, so that this feeling can be softened... However, the important thing is not to understand each other. The important thing is to meet and respond to each other with responsibility, to connect and within this belonging, to form a meaningful dwelling. So, we met, counted our breaths, developed bonds, danced between light and dark, swayed between the divine and the human, tested,

left behind, reunited, embraced, left our footprints on the trails and the drystones, and celebrated this encounter... Now we will also exist on these paths... the next passers-by will feel us and think about us... and they will, in turn, leave their own traces. The sunlight diffusing over the white and blue made all the colors more vivid and the images, imprinted in my memory, more intense! I remember everybody's faces at our last dance... Despina, Costa, Nia, George, Electra, Panteli, Eva, Eugenia, Georgia, Iota, Maria, Gogo, Maria, Claire, Katerina, Vasso, Fotis, Vasilis, Yannis, Antonis, Angeliki, Venetia, Anna, Riga, thank you for the safe place we created together and I am grateful to you... Your feeling resonates within me...



«Fate will switch elsewhere the lines
on your palm, like a yardmaster;
within some moment Time will affirm this.
How else can it be, since pairs love each other»

Odysseus Elytis

Kyriakou Evangelia, Psychologist (graduated from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), Gestalt Psychotherapist (Gestalt Foundation), Gestalt Consultant for Businesses and Organizations (G.P.O.) (Gestalt Foundation).

June 2023... Meeting place: Sifnos...

Experiential psychotherapy seminars and theater are two of my favorite activities. The second one, I have been watching since I was very young, the first ones started to participate and experience their benefits in the last decade I have been doing therapy. In my process they serve a common purpose. They heal the soul and open the «lid», allowing access to what (modern?) lifestyle invites us to avoid - the contact with our feelings! As far as I'm concerned, at least, theater, together with music, worked psychotherapeutically, before psychotherapy, as it created emotions for me and freed me from my overload of crying, of feeling overwhelmed, of sorrow. They showed me what empathy means, made it tangible, visible! The reason for this text is the experience I had at the recent workshop organized by the Gestalt Foundation, in Sifnos. It wasn't purely a psychotherapeutic workshop, it was also walkable, nature-based and had a performance, among other things! The workshop was titled «Walking the Paths of Stone, White and Blue» and, as the title suggests, there was a lot of... walking! It had journeys on physical and mental paths that I will never forget. It is difficult for me to write and try to convey in words, expe-

periences that can only be felt by living them. So, I won't, but I will invite you, with the next opportunity, to join and experience this journey for yourself. And if the reason for this text was the workshop, the reason is none other than LEMONIA! This isn't just a girl I met there and fell in love with, or a therapist, or a fellow traveler, or a local. But she is a doll! Not figuratively, but literally. LEMONIA, presented herself in front of us, bringing treats for everyone, she offered them with a lot of grace and kindness, she invited us and hosted us, for half an hour, in her world. She was a marionette (may Eva, the incarnate, forgive me if I'm wrong in my terminology). A doll adapted to Eva's body, a grandmother in appearance, but a child where time really counts. In the soul. This



woman - the so-called doll - was more alive than many people I meet and interact with, every day... She shared, with confidence, moments of her everyday life, made us smile with her brio and humor, tear with emotion and emotional charge. She condensed and dilated «time». Took us on a journey to our past and future. She reflected our present. Our

desires and burdens, our pains and joys, our dreams and frustrations. My eyes tear up while writing these lines as I recall the memories and relive the moments, even as a memory. I am sorry that I cannot accurately capture all the great things that happened (to me) in those thirty minutes. I am moved by puppets. I identify with them. I am convinced that these creatures have a soul, they are looking for it in every «show» and, when they finally find it, they will break the threads that move them and be reborn. Like people, with their introjections, anxieties and fears that, like threads, rule them. And when they meet with themselves, they will break the bonds and live! And perhaps it seems paradoxical that the Evas (and all of us) who seem to control the puppets, are not their «masters», but themselves who struggle to break the threads and meet their «dolls».

(The text was written to the background music of Dirty Granny Tales)

Drakos Liakopoulos Antonis, 2nd year trainee of GF Athens

perience. For me the most important part was the sharing that happened on many levels. From the very symbolic «joint march» that us, the participants, did on the paths of Sifnos, there was continuous contact, sometimes verbal, sometimes physical, in groups, in pairs, all together, throughout the day. The routes on the trails were not particularly difficult but became an occasion for many of us to walk at the pace of another, giving the opportunity to get closer to both the pace and the difficulty of a fellow hiker, and to manage it. The organizers, Despoina, Nia, Kostas and together with the passepartout Giorgos, they all put a lot of care into the organization of the workshop and that was obvious, and I think the experience had a positive sign for everyone and many lessons for everyone to learn. Sharing feelings was probably the most intense contact, at least for me. Very often we were running out of conversations and the silences took their place, and we could get in touch with what everyone needed most, with ourselves, with what we felt at that moment, with the person next to us, with our body, deep inside in Gestalt principles. I would recommend it as an experience even to people (like me) who do not find it easy to share feelings, because this sharing becomes somewhat easier within the context of the organization and the experience of the organizers. It is no coincidence that many of the participants were people who have taken part in many other Gestalt activities and continue to do so bringing new friends.

Rigas Goulimaris

«Walking the paths of stone, white and blue»

Crossing the paths of stone, through arid narrow passages, next to dry stones, where the toil of life is engraved in the roots of trees and bushes. A life that offers without asking, aromas of thyme, oregano and the shade of the leaves. The stones are smoothed by the steps of people and by the hooves of animals, but they stand. As the mem-



ories of man are tarnished and smoothed. Of the man who erected white fortresses of faith, to find his solitude to dwell, with the blue as a background. The blue that is nothing but the depth of the eye when looking up. Up and in. In the light. In the light that becomes a place of meeting and connection. A place of celebration, a place of silence and a place to lean.

Gavriolidis Ioannis, 06-06-2023, 1st year trainee GF Thessaloniki

The experiential workshop in Sifnos was a very nice and intense ex-



«Philosophy Encounters: Ancient Philosophers on Mental Health & The Blissful Life»

And it was Wednesday – thankfully, again. And the persistence of the Gestalt Foundation and the availability of Mr. Stasinios Stavrianeas allowed the repetition of the philosophy meetings that had been interrupted due to the pandemic. Different structure and subject matter, same curiosity and desire.

And Heraclitus was also there. And we listened to his words describing the cosmological recycling of nature's elements. And he defined the soul as mortal, and said that it improves in the same way the sea turns into fire. And that everything around changes and everything remains the same, because everything is One. After all, the uphill and downhill are the same road. And the soul, the self, that's how it works, it balances the



opposites within us. And most importantly, he investigated himself. And we saw how well the integration of polarizations endure.

And Socrates followed. And spoke of virtue. And he said that as long as a person has knowledge, he will do good, that ignorance only leads to evil. And that rationalization leads to apathy and that all suffering begins with good intentions. Besides, none of them are bad. And he concluded that the wise man cannot but be happy, since he does what his soul wants. And he said: «Know thyself!», and we all fell in love with it. And we saw faith rising in man and action born from awareness.

And Socrates brought Plato. And they had a dialogue. And they still ended up in question marks. And Plato named the immortal soul, the center of existence. And he defined the harmony of the parts as bliss and put the mind in charge. And he said, "You control your temper and your appetites, you must subdue them". And he said that the remembrance of truth is knowledge, we knew this before and had forgotten this. And how now we search for it in beauty. And how happy is the lover of truth, whoever searches with the mind as master, the good and the pure. And we saw the dogs of the master and of the slave fighting.

And then, Aristotle came and he said that the only essence is bliss itself. And he named it the good. And we heard how human goodness is reason and from this, human actions must be performed. And he agreed that virtue, prudence, and wisdom make the perfect man. But, because immortality doesn't exist, not only is prudence needed, but so are wise choices for a good life, with honor and worldliness. And we looked around and saw the context.

And then the Stoics came and they spoke of nature and the nature of the world and of humanity. And they knew about the restlessness of the soul in the face of passions and sufferings. They named virtue as bliss, for this is a natural way for a reasonable man to live. And happy, he who accepts the word of the world, with him dispassionately goes along. Besides, it

disturbs men, not things, but doctrines about things. And we looked up high and recognized our position in the field.

And we reached the garden. And we saw Epicurus among friends, discussing logic and science, solving fears, living joys. And the knowledge of the nature of things, fertilizing the soil of bliss. And for convergence and randomness to happen, sometimes with clouds, sometimes rain. And for fear of God not to exist, nor the anguish of death and for the good to lie still and for evil to be endured. And we looked amongst ourselves and asked ourselves about the meaning of life.

And so, like this, through rivers and markets, academies and lyceums and arcades and gardens, we imagined the «there» and «then», the beginning. And with a new momentum, we return here and respectfully hold on to the now. And we walk the roads they walked on, seeing the light from their headlights.

Argyro Vagia, Psychologist – Psychotherapist, M.Sc. Cognitive Science

Philosophy Meetings

«The ancient philosophers on the health of the soul and the happy life», was the title of the philosophy meetings which were organized in the new facilities of the Gestalt Foundation. I believe that this theme fit very well into a new happy life for the extended Gestalt family. What we experienced far exceeded a series of lectures.

It was truly a series of meetings, which made our lives, not only happier, but wiser, more resourceful, more philosophical and more team-oriented! It was, I believe, an excellent knowledge process, but more than that, an exchange and sharing of ideas, thoughts, new perceptions, reflections and even some very interesting experiments!

First of all, we entered the spirit of the times, so that we could perceive, deepen and interpret, not only the philosophy of these great philosophers, but also in their time itself, how they lived, how societies functioned and the world at that time. Many common points emerged between us, but also many different ones, which helped us to clarify several philosophical and not only topics, which were the occasion for very interesting discussions.

The fact that we became a nice, creative team, with a lot of fun of course, is mainly due to our excellent presenter, the assistant professor of philosophy Stasinios Stavrianeas, who, in a very simple yet structured way, presented, explained, stimulated our curiosity and in fact was coordinating the whole process, so that we didn't even realize time was passing! Just as in the ancient Symposia, «to terpon meta tou ofelimou» that is the pleasure along with benefit, became an act, since after our final meeting, we all went to eat together at a neighbourhood tavern. There, a surprise awaited us, making our symposium more Dionysian: A group of very philosophical, from what it seemed, residents of the neighbourhood, with bouzoukia, guitars, and accordion, «philosophized» with a very nice party!

The 'bliss' however, did not end there, because a few days later, our teacher took us to the Plato Academy, where in its natural historical setting, the life of the ancient Athenians and their philosophers came to life once more! It was a profoundly instructive and useful experience for our entire group. And next year, even better!

Giorgos Stamatis, B.A. Law, H.S.D. Marketing, M.Ed. Adult Education, Graduate of Gestalt Foundation (A.L.P.D.). Business and Organizational Development Consultant, Instructor and Gestalt Coach (G.P.O.) in Greece and abroad.

Experiential Workshop «Parents, Children, Teens...»

Gestalt Foundation, Psychotherapy and Education Centre

together with **Poukamisas Educational Tutors**, on Sunday, 07/04, from 10:30-3:30 at the tutoring center (Epirus 37, 17341, Agios Dimitrios) organized the **experiential workshop** with the theme «**Parents, Children, Teens...»**, along with parents who responded to the invitation.

«Parents, Children, Teens...» Relationships..., dynamic relationships, sometimes happy, lively, carefree, sometimes conflicting, apathetic, distanced.

Parents – who from children become parents, children – who from children become parents... the cycle continues, is repeated, is co-created.

In this meeting, through the perspective of the participants as children, teens, parents, anxieties and fears were recalled as well as strengths and love. Similarities and differences were recognized and the seed of dialogue was cultivated and creative contacts were made for healthy relationships with children.

The workshop also included a presentation regarding parent-child relationships, sharing and experiential exercises.

Experiential Workshop: Movement and the Meridians of the Body

«If we believe that the body is self, then, when we touch another person, we are not touching «a body», but the very self of this person

with our own self» (Kepner, 1987: 75). I begin with this quote, because for me it includes the vision of Gestalt therapy in terms of integrating the self into an I-Thou relationship, not necessarily through touch, but rather through the integration of the encounters of two existences. Having special interest in the involvement of the body in the healing process (senses, movement, body image), I moved from Alexandroupoli to Athens, in order to participate in the workshop «Movement and Meridians». My move here, other than being practical, was also symbolic, as a distillation of my personal work with my own body: from a frozen, motionless, uninvolved body towards its incorporation into my experience of myself, which used to be mainly logical, rigid and fearful. My feelings going into this workshop: enthusiasm and anxiety about participating, especially with so many unknown faces! Which information could be more reliable, than that of my body – Do I allow myself to trust, to feel, to act, to come into contact, to distance myself? The connection of movement with Chinese medicine and the meridians, at a theoretical level, was for me another pebble of knowledge in the holistic approach that Gestalt therapy applies. New information that I could take into account in my meetings with clients, where the body – it isn't simply a biological entity – is a piece of the self where various forces, energies, data, interactions contribute to who I am in the here and now. The experiential engagement was for me the highlight of this trip: concentration on my body, the use of colors and soiled clothes (a game!!!), interactions through improvised movements. I write this piece four months later and my body is still stimulated at the memory of this experience. I thank myself and I thank you Angelika and Katia.

Kyriazidou Sotiria, Gestalt Foundation graduate



Continued from page 1

And many more questions, existential anxieties, as some say, the pursuit of happiness, as others say. Our answers are unique, and our understandings are so different.

We dedicate our lives to discovering our abilities to live fully, productively, and harmoniously. Sometimes however, our abilities are lost, our life disappears into the lethargy of depression or in the narrow confines of coercion or in our vast but empty megalomania and/or our omnipotence.

Our boredom is also another condition where our life has lost its vitality. Which is why, in today's times, we need to do everything we can so that we aren't affected by this terrible poison. We need to do everything in our power to be constantly stimulated. There's a huge economy around the production of stimulation, «stimulation industry» as it's called, and includes the consumption of goods, entertainment, trips, sports, overconsumption of arts, false paradises and anything else that makes us flee boredom in order to find «life». Is continuous stimulation life? Maybe we're confusing vitality, liveliness, with false-vitality? Maybe this false-vitality has more to do with «doing» and instant gratification rather than with true, authentic vitality in our lives? Which life is more alive? In this talk, I'm going to attempt to connect that which we call the meaning of life with its philosophical meaning and connotation, to our relationships and how we make them bearers of an authentic life. I'm going to refer to some philosophers and their perceptions of life, I will continue with the concept of relationships as co-creations and I'll close with the question about the dominant existential goal «which life is most vital (alive)?»

I begin with Socrates who searches the soul (psyche) by posing this remarkable question to the public «and again, what is life? Could we say that it is the function of the soul?» Simple, direct, and perhaps the most profound of all truths – the activity of our soul is life. That is, what our soul/psyche longs for, is life. One could say that people give life to their soul/psyche through adventure, love, art, friendship, children, politics, philosophy, etc., but he doesn't say that... But rather, he asks the question: «Which kind of life is the most alive?» and he even adds that life has no value if a person does not ask this question of him/herself. Life is not simply something that happens but is something we actively pursue. It's not only that each of us has a specific kind of life and that's what makes the difference... and he continues... the kind of life one follows (rules) depends on what kind of soul/psyche one has. And to this question «which kind of soul/psyche is the liveliest? (alive)» Socrates and Plato answer «The most alive soul/psyche is that of the moral person. The one who lives by principles»

For Plato and Socrates, life is equated with activity, with the movements we ourselves produce. And precisely because the activity of

RELATIONSHIPS AUTHENTIC, MEANINGFUL



the soul/psyche is movement, our movement is the essence of our soul/psyche. The human soul/psyche directs, controls, and motivates the human body. Passivity is the denial of the soul/psyche. What, therefore, is the enemy of the soul/psyche, of the function of life? ...passivity therefore death... What is it that hinders but at the same time attracts our soul/psyche? The life of desires. For Plato, desires are individual, blind impulses that willfully seek immediate gratification, without any interest in man as a 'whole'. These desires are unstoppable and originate from the body and from social pressures. When a need, a desire, is satisfied, along comes another, and another, and another... something like the Lernaean Hydra and that is not life, it's slavery... therefore they assign an unprecedented role to love. Love acts as an inner ally to true philosophy. At the Symposium, Plato presents the conversation of six friends (Phaedrus, Pau-

TIPS... FOR AN MEANINGFUL LIFE



sanus, Erizimachus, Agathon, Aristophanes and Socrates) who each undertake to give a eulogy of love. Socrates speaks last and conveys what he has learned from the priestess Diotima. For Socrates, love is a demon, son of Poros, the God of ingenuity and heuristics, and the beggar, Penias. From his parents is derived his contradictory nature: he is poor, ugly and hard «shoeless and homeless» yet at the same time, he is brave, energetic, inventive, charming, resourceful, pursuer of beauty. Love «is found between wisdom and ignorance». Love is inclined, as a pursuer of beauty, towards wisdom, «it's the same philosopher». At the Symposium, Plato outlines a scale of erotic ascent that successively covers the attraction to beautiful bodies, beautiful souls/psyches, beautiful creations and learnings. An attraction towards every tangible form, act or realization which opens an earthly perspective to ideas. What is important isn't a life

of desires but a life of love (erotic life). Desire looks to consume the world, to turn him into something very much mine. But Eros loves the world, has a deep respect for its beauty. It wants to merge with, to connect with the beauty of objects, not to consume it. While love, like desire, starts from something we lack, what it seeks is not simply satisfaction but the fulfillment of the soul/psyche. And Eros starts from the recognition of this lacking, this lack of immortality, this lack of meaning, this lack of what it means to be human. So, we fill this chaos by looking for beauty in knowledge, in meaning, in immortality. The liveliest life therefore is the erotic life which seeks to discover eternity. Part of this eternity is the moral. Morality, for Plato, isn't prohibition but instead is a way to overcome the obstacle of our passivity, and to free the activity of our soul/psyche. Reason has the power to guide us by controlling our desires and emotions. Plato separates the soul/psyche from the body, he even considers it a prison for the soul/psyche. He creates a theoretical, utopian world, a world of ideas in which he seeks bliss. Aristotle transforms the seed of Plato's ideas into a naturalistic framework emphasizing the experience of life that is connected to the process of 'becoming', 'creating'. Life is growth, evolution, realization. We start from an immature stage and we evolve. We have a natural fullness, a potential that desires to reach maturity and this mature stage includes our ability to choose our lives. Aristotle abandons Plato's idealistic perspective, and considers happiness as the highest good and virtue as the only way to achieve happiness. He supports the unity of body and mind, that is, he has a unified perception of man. A bodiless soul/psyche doesn't exist, nor does a soulless body. A person tries to discover happiness in his own nature through his virtues. He separates the virtues into intellectual ones: wisdom, scientific knowledge, art, and moral ones: valor, prudence, justice, pride, truth, friendship, gentleness, generous, etc.

All of the moral virtues fit between what he calls 'median' measures, between lacking and excess. Young people need to get addicted to these habits, which will define and significantly determine their choices, they will create commitments and shape their behaviors. All virtues are acquired by the individual from within society, the city. These principles are the cornerstones of Western civilization, the living individual is one who is active and self-defined through his/her actions.

Towards the end of the 18th century, there is a sharp shift as to what the goal of life is. Thoreau, Nietzsche, Whitehead, all argue that it is indeed movement and activity that are the function of the soul/psyche, but it is not reason and control that are the way to happiness. The way is to let the dark, the wild, the spontaneous, the creativity, the adventure, the will, to emerge. So, the goal of life is to live as intensely, as fully as possible, even if that includes destruction and pain. Nothing can be a higher good than life itself. Nietzsche (Dionysian chaos) who is one of the most important expressors of

this philosophical path maintains that the only true movement of the soul/psyche is the will itself. Who is the worst enemy, then, of life's function? And to this he replies, «society» because it suppresses individual expression and demands conformity. As we can understand, we are very far from the classical perceptions. For Plato, chaos is the worst enemy of the soul/psyche. In this situation, chaos is the foundation of life. As for the virtues of Aristotle, which for him are expected responses to common human situations, here they are seen as denying the creative and spontaneous.



M. Heidegger, existentialist philosopher, founder of existential thought in the 20th century, is probably the most well-known philosopher who decided to ground his philosophy in ontology, the study of being, rather than epistemology, the study of knowledge. He wasn't simply interested in why we exist but how and for what purpose. He argues that a person can never be seen separately from the world and from others. He talks about the person as «being», as existence. Human existence is primarily in-the-world, that is, it is inextricably linked to the world. We «throw ourselves» into a pre-made world and within it define and recover the uniqueness of our existence. In other words, we inhabit a common public space from which all perceptions, all sensations, all experiences spring. We co-exist with others. Mind, body, and world are interrelated. The human mind extends beyond the physical limits of the individual and can converse with its very being, others, the world, time, traditional and new values, etc., always having options that provide relative flexibility and possibilities to exceed some data. It is enough to know that we have to fight a constant battle with the «herd» mentality, social expectations and above all, the only true certainty of life, that of death, of our end date. This constant battle is about living authentically. Authenticity, the authentic way of existing refers to the recognition of what our biological structure and our culture give us, the possibilities, the limitations, the acceptance of our limitations, and the responsibility of our choices thus seeking the fulfillment of our potential, living each day knowing that we are heading towards an inevitable end. When I do something because «I have to» perform a duty, my actions might be right but they are not authentic

if I am simply following rules, it is authentic because it is my free choice and I identify with it. It's not a mask I'm wearing or a role but a pure expression of who I am at this particular stage of my life. We are born into a world that already exists, we don't live in a vacuum, we belong to the world, we are inextricably linked. According to Martin Buber «I» don't exist without «you», our very being is a «together-being and this together-being» of each individual constantly oscillates between being separate and being together, between autonomy and union. Being relational is an inherent part of our existence. So, every experience we have, including the one here and now between us, is co-created from what I bring and what you bring, including the context of what we are doing right now. Our relationships are co-created and we are co-responsible for that relationship right now. I am responsible for you (how you feel, what you understand, etc.) and you are responsible for you (how I feel, how I will continue, etc.) As Gendlin (1962) puts it «My feelings for you, the listener, affects my experience as I speak to you... your response determines my experience a moment later. What happens to me and how I live it as we speak and interact is vitally affected by your every expression, movement, and attitude... I change as I think and I feel through your response to every moment of my experience with you.» We may be more alike than we are different: common biology, common language, common history... and while these commonalities make our connection possible, it is our uniqueness that makes this connection, this meeting of ours interesting, original, and gives us the opportunity to learn something new and opens horizons for



our experiences. Man is his relationships (Karl Marx)... man is a social being... a rational being.

So which life is the most alive? Which soul/psyche is the most alive?

- **The most alive soul/psyche is the moral soul/psyche** I believe that Plato is right when he says that the psyche belongs to the eternal, to the universe. Without losing our vitality, our being, we unite with the other, with the world... How? Living with love. In Ancient Greek mythology, Love is the first god, the one who set the universe in motion and made the birth of the rest of the gods possible (Isiodos) «First of all things, chaos was born and then the Earth... and

Love who stands out amongst all immortals». Love is the personification of the force or the cause of the movement of beings in the universe. Today it is more often associated with sexual desire. But, if we see love more generally and symbolically, we will discover life,



the world, objects, the one that gives wings, inspiration, which holds onto existing forms and creates new ones. It is characterized by an attractive and cohesive energy towards any form (concept, object, animal, human) and is mobilized. For Plato, love seeks to unite with beauty and bring harmony. It pushes us to know the «whole» of our being in the world. But I again remind you that love does not want to consume the other, to abolish him, to make him disappear but to connect with him, in order to evolve, to develop. How? you'll tell me... through the experiences of our interactions. Need limits the world of experience... when we move through the world only through our needs, we don't see the other, we just use them only to serve ourselves. We try to make others fit into the suit that suits us. We don't see his uniqueness, and our meeting ends in boredom. Encountering each other with love and respect for diversity, beauty, potential, and even limitations and vulnerability, the quality of the contact changes and our horizons open... «Don't walk in front of me because I may not follow. Don't walk behind me because I may not lead you. Walk beside me and be my companion.» (Albert Camus) Like Aristotle there are other contemporary philosophers (C. Taylor, E. Levinas et al.) who strongly argue that we, human beings, are placed inescapably in relation to each other. In the face of the other, our moral responsibility is primary. Regardless of whether we act responsibly, we are infinitely responsible to others. Ethics characterizes man, it is the foundation and not a construction, in other words, it pre-exists established principles and rules. The first and foremost question, how can we think of the Other without reducing him to the same, without annihilating his otherness? Difficult. Our freedom, under this concept, is called into question. How can freedom, caring, justice, and other virtues coexist in our relationships? They are not opposite concepts... these concepts themselves contain each other.

Authenticity. Life is not something that just happens to us but

something that we actively pursue. Facing our mortality decisively is a motivation for life, a motivation for developing authentic ways of coexisting. I remind you again that man is not just an existence, he is a co-existence, that is he has the ability to exist, to be in ecstasy, to exceed his limits. His overcoming these limits gives him the possibility to approach, communicate and understand the other beings around him. Through this effort to overcome, we discover our authentic self. Our authenticity is our largest gamble. (inauthenticity=non-existence) So what does it mean then to be authentic in my relationships with others?

- People in relationships are searching, asking, worrying, not simply accepting, not blindly following the rules. People with a responsible will, an optimistic will (regardless of whether they think pessimistically) and a realistic approach to life. This replaces sinking into a «herd» mentality, in other words, projecting supposed «barriers» following «data» that is more convenient, pleasant, socially acceptable, resorting to evasions and wasting time on compulsions of the same old things.
- Individuals recognize that they are authentic in relationships when their capabilities, limitations, circumstances, and their culture through self-awareness and awareness are authentically expressed (true vs ideal self).
- Individuals recognize that they are authentic through their choices and their identification with them. They wholeheartedly commit to these choices, reserving the right to review and change them. In conclusion, authenticity is the belief in a life attitude that nurtures relationships, offers harmony, is not based on roles and masks, means responsibility and honesty (not harsh and raw) and transparency in relationships. It means being open and present in relationships and all its harsh and beautiful expressions.

«There are three principles in human coexistence: thought, speech, action. Every conflict between me and my fellow human comes from me not saying what I mean and not doing what I say» (Martin Buber). Authenticity is a difficult and complex goal, yet it is attainable if we strive throughout our lives to approach it. Life is not just something that happens to us, we don't live in a vacuum. Life means existing with others, we are inextricably connected and in constant interaction and influence. So eros, contact with the new, the beautiful, the different, love, respect, ethics and moral virtues, responsibility, freedom, care, justice, autonomy, being-together, authenticity in relationships can make a life alive, a life that worth actively pursuing?... The answer is yours...

Despina Balliou, lecture at cultural center «Ianos», in Athens, based on *«The life of the soul»*, an essay in *Ecological Thinking*, by John Riker

CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

«Couples»

«To tell someone «I love you» means «you are forbidden to die»».
(Gabriel Marcel, 2017)

Last year, at the beginning of the year, I participated in a Couples therapy workshop through the perspective and methods of our Gestalt approach. It was a series of three-day workshops over a period of four months from which I left full of meaning...



... why meaningful? Because what we dealt with therapeutically, psychotherapeutically, and experientially was in scope and depth about relationships. At the start, Despina spoke about our relationship at the beginning of the cycle. Everything starts from a relationship and the relationship always carries within it, all of those opposites that Whitehead (2013) says are always incurably there. After all, the «I» exists because it stands opposite «You». «The Other is the one who allows me to repeat myself into eternity» writes Baudrillard (2019). The main stake for us Gestalt psychotherapists, as devotees of existential dialogue, is to work with the meta psychological element between the people who come into our therapy rooms for Couples therapy, that is with the third entity that takes form at the point where the two meet, because that is what essentially reflects the organic whole of the couple. As our theoretical forefathers also tell us, the whole, in other words, the entirety, is always greater than the sum of its parts. Loving relationships are figure - ground, love as a force of life and death involves components of creation and destruction. As we know very well, there is no creation without destruction, so in loving relationships, we are all called to experience that point where we feel immortal and at the same time woefully mortal. «Eros, you the joy and the executioner of men» notes Euripides in Medea (2014). The love bond does not cease to be a bond; therefore, it raises issues of survival and always scratches the anxiety of death, or in the words of Unamuno (1921), the terror of nothingness and the insatiable thirst for immortality. The love act, as Bataille (2021) writes, has a common denominator with the act of sacrifice: in both, the flesh opens. Love, as a psychic catalyst for the retreat of our primary narcissism, brings to light that it may be latent and dormant within us. Love, like life, is created and destroyed simultaneously. Referring to Euripides' Hecuba, I remember Yianna telling

us that unsolicited help becomes a burden. I also remember her showing us how we abuse ourselves, through what we say and what we do. After all, isn't the Self a product of our encounters and our relationships with our environment, both inside us and outside us? Won't a relationship be inevitably affected by how each of us treats ourselves within the relationship? O Shakespeare (2002), through the mouth of Mark Antony's hero in his work «Julius Caesar», reminds us that «the evil that men do lives after them; The good is often interred with their bones». In the same way, in couples too, people carry within their background, that is, their history, all kinds of traumas which, when crossed with the traumas of the other member of the couple, will form their own folie à deux; within the third entity of the couple there will be the complicity of that evil which is nothing but the trap of determinism that Freud (2023) called repetition compulsion, in the words of Perls (1947), that organismic self-regulation that moves towards the wrong direction and keeps the individual alive in a grim circularity, but on an intersubjective level. My beloved Isabelle Adjani as Anna in Zulawski's «Possession» (1981) says in a shot full of despair (in Greek apo-gnosis από-γνωση, which means away from knowledge) and anguish: «I can't exist by myself because I'm afraid of myself, because I'm the maker of my own evil».

Katia and Maria told us that the relationship is not a choreography, but an improvisation. Today I understand it much more deeply than last year, because if the relationship was a choreography, it would only obey the direction of a black fatalism that would leave no space for anything new. And so that it can be improvisation there needs to be the possibility to give some space for the different, because only otherness can get us out of the self-seduction of our narcissism. Indeed, similarities and mirror games can bring us together, but in themselves they are ab Ovo a blank letter, because in the end we will be lost like Echo in the myth, in the void of the absence of the imaginary and forged Other.

In closing, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all five trainers, as well as to all fellow trainees and certainly to the couples who came to the seminar and exposed themselves with courage and the intention for meeting. Finally, I will quote a poem that I wrote after the second trimester that we did with Antigone who always inspires me with her ingenuity and the sharpness of her gaze. The poem is called: Do I Love You?

I hear you,
I am not alone.
I embrace you and I am coming close to you.
I hold you tight in my arms so that you don't leave.
I absorb you,
I have you, and you have me,
I am telling you:
«You are captured,
since you have taken my heart».
It's impossible for you to leave.
Every kiss a sweet destruction,
I silently smother you with sweetness,
this union is unbreakable.

Viliotis Philippos, Gestalt Foundation graduate

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«Working with Couples in Gestalt Therapy.»

A year ago, as part of my continuing education as a mental health counselor in Gestalt psychotherapy, I attended the continuing education pro-



gram on «Working with couples in Gestalt therapy». The workshop for me had an experiential and inclusive character. It was well done in its structure and organization. It aimed at informing and training therapists in couple therapy, as it offered substantial triggers for dialogue and food for thought. Once again, the ancient Greek language comes to illuminate the concept of «pair» which results from the verb «zeugnyo» (Ζευγνύω) and «zevgnimi» (Ζεύγνυμι), meaning to put together, to join two ends, to bridge, to connect. Nowadays, human relations are going through a huge crisis because «no one listens to anyone». In the Babel of modern society, even though we can communicate more easily and quickly, most of us are locked in our own microcosm. It is easy to conclude that the modern way of life, social demands, information overload result in most people suffering from social alienation and isolation. The intensity of everyday life does not leave us space and time for dialogue and human contact. The crisis of human relations adds up to the already existing crises that

our society is experiencing. A relationship is an important life investment as people seek love, emotional and mental connection, but frustration has taken over and no hope is anywhere in sight. Separation seems like the only solution for the couple. The above reasons, the emergence of the need for companionship, communication and contact during the therapeutic process with the patients, as well as my personal need to be in the Gestalt Foundation space, with colleagues and trainers, were my personal motivation to delve into Couples Therapy. As I found myself in the position of learner and observer it came to my awareness that it was the right time to examine and process my personal history in the context of my relationship. The group was quite large as it consisted of both older and newer graduates, as well as new members of different approaches, who contributed creatively and respectfully to the process. Despite the group's range, its composition was harmonious and flowing. I had the opportunity to meet new people and easily share my personal process. Throughout the workshop I noticed the Faith that Gestalt therapy instills in life and the dynamic of the relationship. The basic concepts of Gestalt therapy are a valuable tool in Couples Therapy as they enable people to gain an authentic relationship with themselves and an intentional inclusion in their encounter with the environment. The relationship, as a third entity, the couple's common ground (the middle ground), the qualities of the disagreement, the appreciation of the couple's differences in the therapeutic process can be seen as an enrichment of their experiences, the focus on the «what» and the «how», the understanding and compassion for their personal stories as well as of the way they relate today are offered to the therapist as materials in their therapeutic quiver. The phenomenological observation, the clarification of concepts such as intimacy, communication, inclusion, differentiation, normalization as well as the concept of the Living Dialogue between I-Thou, I-It, support the therapist's position in therapy in order to avoid advocating for one or for the other member. Then, as I observed the contact cycles of each member, and the couple as an entity, I was impressed with the infinite complexity of the relationships. I started feeling like I was studying geometry with fractal shapes. «Yes! This is it!», I said to myself. The couple's relationship could be like a fractal, like an open-ended experiment just like life, and remains where its details do not immediately become visible, except by zooming in on some scale. On a personal level, I recognized my relationship as an embodied entity and this enabled me to appreciate it, to stand on the common ground of the relationship which is based on shared moral values creating a feeling of security and trust. Looking at the here and now of my personal history and how it is involved in my relationship, I recognize the prospects for change and development in the relationship. It looks like an experimental laboratory, where each one of us deposits his evolution. A sense of faith, relief, and optimism settled inside of me from this particular workshop. I had the opportunity to see couples in crises from a different perspective. A sense of hope came from my personal process, and relief as I realized that dysfunctional patterns in interaction, difficulties in contact, conflicts in relationship, can be the way out from Co-existence. In closing, I would like to thank from my heart and express my deep gratitude for the systematic effort of the Gestalt Foundation trainers to pass on knowledge and promote values to the trainees!

Konstantina Koutroufina, Mental Health Counselor, Gestalt Foundation graduate

«Working with Couples in Gestalt Therapy»

Speaking about my experience, I will first say that I was trained to see the couple as one entity. More specifically, a third entity, a two-head-



ed organism that, like every organism, has its own history, a place from which it comes and a space that is created, an age, an everyday life, weak and strong points, as well as a complexity in the way it has learned to

function and maintain its homeostasis. So, I learned how to move away from focusing on each person individually, and start listening to the relationship as it unfolded in front of me through three couples whom I had the opportunity to meet. Three unique couples, three real and living organisms, who decided to open their «borders», and allowed us to witness their relationship. A unique and different experience that enabled me to move from theory to experience and from experience to theory. The live participation of these couples in my training not only gave shape to concepts and theories, but also left a vivid imprint on my body and mind of what it is like to encounter such a complex organism. I understood experientially how important it is not to invade the relationship, but to meet it slowly, with respect and honor towards all those elements, dreams and needs that brought the two people together and formed the ground for the two stories to create a new one. Surely in a relationship there are so many unexplored and dark places in which, we, humans, are not present and, which they need time and space to emerge. But I understood the importance of trust, as a ground to stand on and allow to see what we cannot see. We are different, and that is normal. We are here to understand and support this diversity, and with it, to help the couple experiment with new ways they need to learn to connect, communicate and function as an organism.

Kanellea Lydia, Gestalt Foundation graduate

GESTALT IN ORGANIZATIONS

My taste of Gestalt Coaching in Business and Organizations training

My motivation for participating in the training did not have a clear goal, as it was more a curiosity to explore the application of Gestalt in the business field, and a thought for my personal development and possible movement in this field. How can two such - seemingly - opposite worlds meet? The humanistic/existential Gestalt approach – as I know it in psychotherapy – with coaching, efficiency, leadership...? Words and concepts so unfamiliar to me. Where - and how - can the intersection be where the benefit of a business meets the personal development of a subordinate? Could Gestalt approach be equally holistic? And of course, the question that accompanied me in all 5 meetings: What am I doing here? A psychotherapist in the business world? From the first introduction, I felt that I was on familiar ground and that yes, this is Gestalt! The content of the team, however, offered me the greatest flavor. People from different areas (businesses/organizations), with or without experience in business coaching or counseling, who were looking for better management of the team, of human resources, aiming at the person, dreaming that «there must be another way» to make employees more efficient, and to improve relationships, but, first of all, to improve ourselves, the way we listen, our process.

The concept of leadership has changed from «power» to a set of skills that one can use to inspire, motivate and become a better listener.

Organizations, therefore, need to be diagnosed, too, and to listen to their

process, through their people, the relationships between them and their values - explicit and implicit. I close with deep gratitude to my instructors and wonderful team members. Until we meet again!

Sotiria Kyriazidou, Psychologist, MSc Neuropsychologist, Exp. Gestalt psychotherapist, Min. Doctor of Medicine, Democritus University of Thrace

Gestalt Coaching in Business and Organizations

The experience from the Gestalt Coaching in Business and Organizations workshop cycle and especially the Burnout workshop was very useful, not only professionally but also personally. I went having already suffered burnout many years ago, an experience that had been accompanied by a breakdown at work, and my main expectation was to find out if there are mechanisms to recognize such an impending danger. My workshop met that expectation but also offered much more. For me, giving meaning to «bore out» was also particularly important, a phenomenon somewhat more insidious than burn out, because it is related to the risks of relative inactivity or of engaging in work that may not suit someone, either in terms of qualifications or in terms of other conditions, something very common nowadays. The coordinators, George and Evangelia, did an excellent job in structuring and presenting the workshop. By bringing Gestalt approach to everyday work, they make the participants think, «live» and manage, through actions-representations, situations that carry risks

related to burn out. Here are related tips that I found very helpful. The workshop is extremely useful for people who already feel pressure, physical or psychological, at work. But I believe that it will be useful to everyone, even if they do not think that they themselves are at risk of burn out or bore out, because with the knowledge it offers, someone can recognize «symptoms» of impending danger of such phenomena in people around them and maybe help to prevent difficult situations in family, friends and in the work environment.

Rigas Goulimaris

A night at the theater..

One Saturday night I went, with a group of friends, to the theater. The art of Theater is important to me. Watching a show stirs my emotions and sometimes moves me and brings me in touch with myself. The emergence of emotions is the redemption, the means and way to experience life, connect with people, relate and co-exist. Behind me sits a group of middle-aged people, who, from the beginning, are commenting, whispering, laughing. I get annoyed, I resent it, I get angry, but I keep quiet. I try to find a solution, either by leaning forward, or by trying to isolate the noises from behind and focus on the sounds from the stage, or by cursing under my breath, or by making up scenarios where I can somehow claim watching the performance undistracted. Time is passing. At some point, the group, behind me, stops. I continue, with relief, to watch the show, finally without distractions! Thoughts and scenarios recede, anger gives way to the opening of emotions from the stimuli that originate on stage. I think I did the right thing by not talking to them, because I avoid the conflict, I didn't expose myself, become possibly unpleasant, cause discomfort to the rest of the audience, trying to stop the source of my own discomfort.

As time passes, the show is clearly building to a climax, perhaps the end. And then, the group behind me starts laughing, commenting, making and choking sounds again! Everything is coming back! The upset, the scenarios, the anger, the confusion... While I'm thinking «what if...», while I'm leaning forward again, while I'm getting disoriented, confused, and chastised, almost unconsciously, I lean back slightly, tap the middle finger with the thumb of my left hand, in the two seconds that pass, the harassment I was experiencing continues, I turn around and make a loud «sssssssh». When I turn back and look at the scene, I'm (sort of) lost. I can't recall the feelings

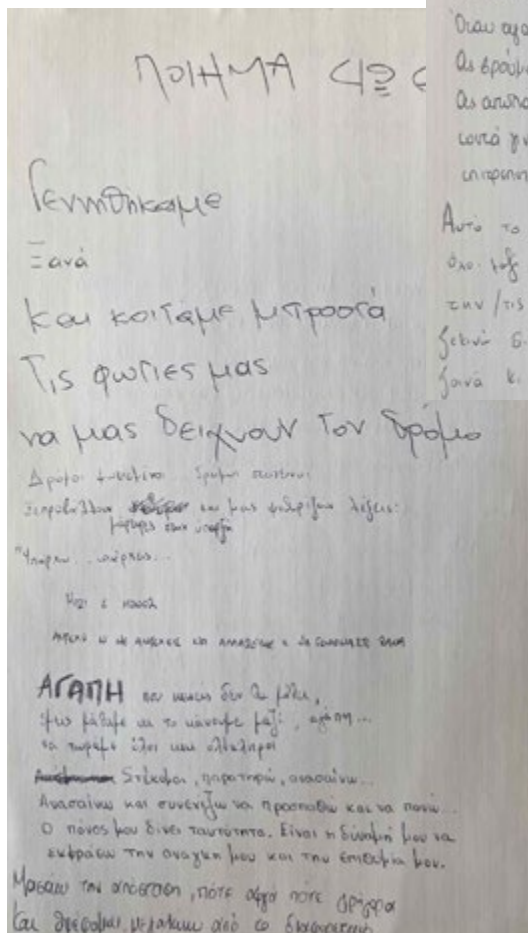
from the previous part of the show I watched, I don't understand what the actors are saying, I hear them but their words don't gel, it's like they're speaking a foreign language. I turn to myself and I try to connect with the «here and now» and I replay the previous episode, trying to evaluate it, to judge me, to assume what others think about me... The work ends. I am outraged. I feel shame, bewilderment, wonder, fear. But anger keeps me upright and provides a structure that allows me not to be fragmented by shame and fear. This story unfolded after the first day of the «Violence, Abuse, Trauma» seminar and made me realize that I live with my trauma. Everyday, I wake up, dress, introduce myself, chat, behave, hide and appear, meet and part, embracing my trauma. I remember that these thoughts, these behaviors, these feelings are familiar old and current. I experienced all that from a random event, that so many times could have happened to anyone, created fear, shame, disorientation, destabilization, anger, rage. A destabilization and an inexplicable and riveting «loss». Before the awareness that I am injured, everything remained confused, I looked for the answer only from outside (from the environment) and judged me «because» I did not do things «somehow differently». I remained introverted, fearful, introspective, detached, poisoned by repressed emotions. And now? What happened differently? Again, I got angry, again, I went inwardly to resolve the conflict, again I was lost, ashamed and afraid. The difference was that, afterwards, I told my friends about what happened to me. I didn't beat myself up about what I could have done «else» and «why» I didn't. I recognized my need and my difficulty in claiming it in a way that was more functional for me. I sympathized and empathized with me, instead of arguing and condemning me. I didn't leave myself

feeling lonely. I felt richer, from this new experience and the awareness that followed. Maybe it will be a stepping stone, to get to my own way, to experience life. My trauma is terrifying, it is painful, it is overwhelming and unbearable. My trauma is me. But I'm not just that. And I'm not alone in this. Many times, I am in awe, as a trainee therapist, of the person who comes, with his trauma, seeking - consciously or unconsciously - help. And experiences like this soften me, calm me

down, give me strength and courage, both for my personal and professional journey. The process of awareness and the presence of the other, in this painful but also liberating journey, is all I need. No «magic solutions», no «saving interventions», no haste, no resignation.

Drakos Liakopoulos Antonis, 3rd year trainee of GF Athens



Ναι, να είμαι τον εαυτό, είπες
 Πως είπες είπες
 Χωρίς να είσαι εκεί;
 Τα εμπόδια μας ζήσανε να τα κλέψω
 Όταν κινήθηκε το σώμα σου
 Όταν υπήρχε κάτι πιο, όταν υπήρχε κάτι περισσότερο
 Όταν αγάπη είπες, έβλεπε να αγάπη είπες
 Οι έρωτες σου κείνη στο χώρο που δεν έχει βουκόμο
 Οι ανθρωπότητα τη φωνάρα που μας φέρει στον
 κόσμο γινεα, οι ανθρωπότητα που φέρει το φως στον
 κόσμο να είναι που αγγίζει τον κόσμο σου
 Αυτό το ταξίδι σου, το ταξίδι σου, και κι εσύ
 στο ταξίδι σου να γαργαλάει και να πορεύεται
 την / τις ελπίδες σου, κι εγώ τώρα ήμουν σου και
 ζούνα δίπλα σου ταξιδιού. Είπες να σε ακολουθώ
 γανά κι εγώ να νική αληθινά στο ταξίδι.

Poem of the 4th year trainees of GF Athens, 2022-23

We are born again,
 and we look ahead to the fires
 that show us the way
 Streets lit, streets dark, emerge as
 witnesses to existence and whisper words to us: I exist...
 you exist... together and alone... I bear that you bear me
 to change and be born together again. LOVE that no
 one will learn, we learned to do it together, love... to fit
 together as a whole...
 I stand, I observe, I breathe... I breathe and I keep trying
 and hurting. Pain gives me an identity. It is my power
 to express my need and my desire. I chew the distance,
 sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, and I am nour-
 ished, I grow by the different.
 I feel the body, the self, me
 How do I define me, without seeing you?
 Our bodies know what to do

when we bear the approach
 When we exist together, I live, when we exist together there is substance
 When I love I am alive, as long as I love myself.
 Let us find happiness in the dimensionless space
 Let's enjoy the fluidity that brings us as close as possible. Let us enjoy the ideal, which allows
 us to have a whole self. This journey is over, and we are all here together to celebrate and
 share our experiences, and I am now staying here and start my own journeys. I hope to meet
 you again and I hope we go even further.

4th year of Athens 2022-2023: Alexandri Alexandra, Anagnostopoulou Eleni, Argyri Paraskevi, Karavela Theofano Angeliki, Khourdaki Eleftheria, Koutropoulou Sofia, Lampropoulou Dimitra, Maniou Eleni Danina, Masoura Georgia, Pachatouridi Iliana, Tzanou Angeliki, Vantarakis Sotirios.

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