



Gestalt NEWS Foundation

Informative and communicative six-month issue of the Center of Psychotherapy and Training Gestalt Foundation • November 2006 • 5th Issue



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Gestalt Foundation is growing up...

In 1997-1998 first opened its doors Gestalt Foundation, Psychotherapy and Training Center. We tried to design a substantial training program as integrated as possible, that could follow the European training standards, as they are determined by E.A.G.T. (European Association for Gestalt Therapy).

Our goal was the promotion both of Gestalt Therapy and the principles of our Center, which is based on: collaboration and assistance to one another, substantial and honest dialogue,

creative assumption of responsibility, effort for mutual cooperative relationships and active and deliberate service to the communities we live and work.

Gradually, our Gestalt family extended by many Greek and foreign collaborators and by all of you, the trainers and graduates of Gestalt Foundation, who with your participation and your actual support to the realization of our programs.

The history of the Center was presented analytically to the first issue of our newspaper. Through all these years "Gestalt Foundation"

grows up and matures and in this issue we wanted to give you the opportunity your own voice to be heard and to tell us about your experience with us. Your participation was touching, because nothing of all the things we wanted to do wouldn't be possible without you.

Finally, we would like to thank all of those who trusted us since the beginning and continue to support us with excitement and trust to whatever we organize.

G.F.

THEATER OF ART OF LIFE

All the time I am being in Gestalt I hear about Nurith.

Last year I happened to "easy-hear" her while she was introducing herself to a group by saying "they call me the holly monster". Holly monster. "It sounds weird in English", I thought. After this event I met Dionisi in Pelion –we continue to refer to last year-who spoke with great admiration about hear.

- She can make you cry whenever she feels like it!

My reaction was very typical to my state of being of that time.

- But I can do that all by myself!

When I saw her name, I urged to reserve a seat. You will understand the reason I am using this expression, because eventually I realized it too.

This group was planned for Sunday morning, a day after our festivity. During the

4-days I experienced all this interaction with that entire people, with an amazing tense, beauty and physical tiredness. An interaction with the trainers –therapists and foreign

look around me and I see familiar faces, with whom we have worked together many times before. I immediately felt warmth, a beautiful intimacy. An intimacy that I wish for and to



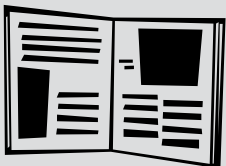
collaborators, all the kids of the training programs, the experiential group and my group, of course. I felt unbelievable around you; each and every one of you is significant and special to me. And that has a therapeutic dimension. There are no thanks enough.

So, I enter Nurith's group, in a room decorated with tree-leaves and sunlight. I

which I find great recognition inside our open, true and safe therapeutic community.

Nurith all dressed in white, seemed so nice and calm and so bright to me! Her smile was like a consolation inside my dizzy head, just like the smiles and good mornings of the others, of course.

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If you wish to participate in the following issues of the newsletter you are all welcome! You may contact the Gestalt Foundation (telephone: 2310 282588, 210 7254010, email: thessaloniki@gestaltfoundation.gr, athina@gestaltfoundation.gr) and express your interest in participating or just tell us your opinion or your ideas.

We are interested!

Publishers' Note



November 2006

During the preparation of this editorial I looked back at previous issues. This column for me has become a kind of personal and team point. By reading the past issues I tasted the two

years that have gone by as thus I came in contact with my "course" and with "our course". As I see it now I think it is a course that began with a few people, it was also lonesome, and then it started being a point of meeting others, many others. Not only is it not a lonesome course, but it is starting to become slowly enthusiastic and hopeful. Something is happening at the Gestalt Foundation!

People come and go with various duties (e.g. volunteers for the 9th European Gestalt therapy Congress, the foundation's trainees, our co operators, people who participate or who wish to participate in our activities). The phones keep ringing and the emails just keep coming!

In the every day routine I can't really realize the size of our activity except for moments like this one, when I take a step behind and I observe. It seems that the choice or our name is not accidental. Since 1998 we have been "founding" our action, our philosophy and our activities. We start experiencing what a few years ago were for us only a dream and a goal: that is to function as a live, flexible and creative community according to the Gestalt theory principles. ...and as a live Organization we are open to the Environment and we interact with the Field around us, with our unique position. This is and has been very important to us: to give to and take from the Community around us.

Our newsletter reflects our reality. This issue has a lot of news and announces, like the reports from events and presentations. Our special issue focuses on our action in the community. Certain programs are briefly presented on a collective and a voluntary basis and we let the people who work therein to express themselves with their own way.

Finally, we present in an alternative way our training programs for which a lot is being asked. For any further information you may always visit our website www.gestaltfoundation.gr as well as website that we set up for the Greek Congress: www.gestaltconferenceathens.gr.

Enjoy the reading!
Antonia Konstantinidou

A few words about Antonia Konstantinidou: Antonia Konstantinidou is a Social and Clinical Psychologist (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), a Gestalt Psychotherapist, Trainer and Supervisor.

She is the co-founder of the Gestalt Foundation and one of the permanent members of the training program. She lives and works in Thessaloniki where she holds her private practice since 1996.



Gestalt Therapy and Bibliography

Gestalt Therapy: Perceptions and Applications Edwin C. Nevis, Ph. D

I announce with enthusiasm that we are about to welcome very soon in Greek this wonderful book, whose editing I have undertaken personally and it will come out from the publishing house "Dioptra".

By studying all the chapters one by one, I have discovered the wealth of this book, the possibility of the Gestalt approach to incorporate other approaches and the incredible range of applications within psychopathology.

The book includes 13 chapters written by different authors many of which are very well known within the Gestalt therapy field. The issues discussed are relative to diagnosis, the development of therapy in time, deontology, the combination of Gestalt therapy with other approaches, dependencies, psychoses, children, couples, group dynamic, neuroses, etc. I believe though that the applications are



A few words about Giana Giamarelou:

Giana Giamarelou has a M.Sc. in Clinical Psychology; she is a co-founder of the Gestalt Foundation, a Gestalt Psychotherapist, Trainer and Supervisor. She is also a member of the E.A.G.T.

truly amazing!

In this book the trainees and the professionals may see very clearly the methodology of the "therapeutic process" that includes clearly the client's process as well as the therapeutic goals.

Having a long history and experienced in the field of therapy, training, and supervision, I strongly recommend this book as a very useful tool that will undoubtedly assist the trainees and the professionals to complete their knowledge, to comprehend better the Gestalt therapy concepts, to ameliorate their therapeutic interventions in a wide range of applications and to feel secure as therapists through the deeper understanding of principles of the Gestalt therapy and its applications. The rest... waits in the book!

Giana Giamarelou

THEATER OF ART OF LIFE

continued from page 1

I felt very pleasant. And so we begin.

I wish there had been a camera to record just the picture without any sound, just to record the non-verbal! Simply showing the facial movement and reactions! Simply showing the chorus and the tragedy, which, how can I put this, she planted? Which she directed?

Which she taught, as the ancient tragedians did. This arch-priestess of contact, emotions, therapy. This holly monster.

Exactly like in an ancient tragedy the theatrical companies began slowly to επικλήνω and narrate the story, taken from the mythology of each one of us. And we began to find the point we were interested in.

And little by little each one of us became the leading player, the observer or the chorus depending on what we wanted or felt comfortable with. All the needs were accepted and necessary in

Nurith's play.

There's no script. It is made right here. There is no casting. Anybody who wants to can join, as long as he/she wants to be there as whole. How will each character unfold? He/she doesn't need to be troubled! As long as he/she wants to unfold! Dialogues? Do not be burst! As long as you want to talk! Scenery? Trees are green and flowers bloomed! Music? Birds sing and waters flow! Lights? Sun is shining! Costumes? Bring everyone your own! The story? Simple: some men and women who want to contact.

As often happens to theatrical things, the first scene introduced the unfolding of the play and followed the necessary short break. Second scene, well... what was that! An indescribable unfolding and prominence. A shocking crescendo! Which ended up to moan, vehement, mourning and lament with the leading players, the chorus and the audience to experience, each one with

his/hers own tragicalness, drama, ecstasy, and to come and go from Tartara (Underworld) to Olympus. From Darkness to Sun Light. From dissolution to reconstruction. From trauma, miasma and pain to expiation.

A genuine preceptor (=precept) of the personal tragedy of every one of us, a unique artist of Theater of Art of Life.

Nurith, thank you for telling me what my name means. (I happen to know what other people's names mean but I didn't know what mine did).

When I saw you wearing the mantilla, which you had laid down for me to lie down on, I couldn't stop looking at you! It looked so good on you!

"While you were lying down, your belongings fell down", you told me.

Yes, Nurith. While I was lying down, my belongings fell down...

May you always have Good Journeys and Good Health.

Iakovos Iakovidis

Editorial Team:

Antonia Konstantinidou
Publisher

Marina Vamvaka
Editor
Desk Top Publisher

Cristina Efthimiou
Translation

In this issue worked:

IAKOVOS IAKOVIDIS • GIANNA GIAMARELOU • ANTONIA VRODOU • PANAGIOTIS VASMATZIDIS • KONSTANTINA GIONI • MARINA VAMVAKA • BIANCA ELINGER • DESPINA BALIOU • ELPIDA KALAITZI • ELEFThERIA LAGOUDI • RAMAH SANDMON • GIANA KALOTA • MELINA MAKRIDOU • MARIANTZELA TRIARIKO • KATIA XATZILAKOU • MARIA MAVRIDOU • ZIOGA DIMITRA • SIAMPANI KATERINA • JOANA KATO • MARIOLA KOHANOVITS

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Tel.(0030)2461038417

Gestalt in the Working Field

An interview with SUE CONGRAM

Message from Sue Congram, program coordinator for the GESTALT IN ORGANISATIONS training program

I am very excited coming to Greece to teach at this program.

How would you describe your experience with the group?

I would describe it as needing dough. I love the readiness of the group to try out different ingredients and the way this works. There is trust into it that makes me be a better teacher as well. We all learn enormously from it. We all become more creative. It is perfect.

What would you say to someone who is thinking of coming aboard?

I would say if you are interested in people, in creative ways of working, in exploring, in different way of working with organizational issues, if you want to put some excitement into your work, then Gestalt has a way of looking at life that a lot of people get a lot of value from. So if you are adventurous, if you are looking to discover the big picture, and see things that most people can't see, come along to share with others that also want adventure and share and face the struggle of the journey together.

My experience in the program Gestalt In Organizations

I began the training program because I wanted to do something for myself or my personal growth. In the course I became aware of many things and changes, other smaller and other bigger. A group was created with which we followed a common course discovering continuously new things.

The way that I relate to in my professional and interpersonal life has definitely changed. This fact and my contact with the group confirm that my decision to start the Gestalt in Organizations program was correct. I would like to create more opportunities so as to use or to apply everything that I have learnt so far from my work field. Whether I will move towards the field of consultancy is something that will show in due time.

Antonia Vrodou
25/11/06

Experiential workshop in Organizations will take place under the framework of the 9th four-day workshop of Gestalt Therapy, entitled:

'Decision making'

The workshop is designed for professionals and leading counterparts of Organizations, is experiential and includes basic skill practice.

Coordinator will be Sue Congram (Clayton).

For further information and registrations contact:

- Gestalt Foundation in Athens or Thessaloniki or with
- Magda Pantelidou in 6932532233 and
- George Stamatis in 6942401940.

TRAINING PROGRAM GESTALT IN ORGANIZATIONS PERSONAL REVIEW ON THE FIRST YEAR TRAINING

This training program is especially important to me and the explanation for that is multi-parametrical. Where from should I begin?

Firstly, I will tell you, who take the trouble to take up your time of with this article, that I started my personal therapy being negative towards anything that starts with a "P....." (Psychotherapy, Psychology etc). But I think that it changed my life in the most positive way after all! Since I began therapy...long after, I started the training program with the most negative attitude (again!), almost because I was galvanized by significant persons of my life and for that reason only. (See my therapist and my good friend from the classes at Gestalt).

I started, thus, armed again with all the defense weapons, with which I was equipped for many years, my doubts and my blames? Accusations?

So, I come again to the here and now, in order to avoid being blamed for babbling. I ended the first year and, do have in mind my troubled by doubt past, I say the following:

The program of the first year, full of experiential training, is appropriate only for adults that take their personal and professional growth seriously. It does not have the pattern of an Anglo-Saxon educational system (here I suggest strict), but is based mostly on individual effort for growth and education. That, as far as I received it, means that I do it because I like it, I learn (until now at least) according to my personal rhythms without the stress of a pupil's bench.

For me, the availability for assistance and information of the trainers was unprecedented.

It's the first school, where I was able to cry, where not only I wasn't laughed at by my fellow students but many times they even cried with me. (Of course I gave in return adequate tears, whenever that was allowed by the grandeur of the moment!).

I think that I have been taught the basic principles of Gestalt and I and my fellow travelers in that, with a little of luck and sufficient supervision, attention and self-realization, are armed for standing with dignity to a real frame counseling. Therefore I think that, until now, there has been done plenty and good quality training work.

As far as the whole organizing concerned, I think that the responsible persons outdone their selves. That is something that someone better realizes, considering the fact that all the trainers were foreigners and looking at the cost of the program. At this point I could add more examples but the typographer is complaining, because it is not enough the space he gave me.

Personally, I can't hide the fact that I'm excited and waiting patiently for the second year to begin, hoping for the realization of the 1st year, and I can't wait to spread the words to organizations of the market place, since now I know that it brings results to matters that detain organizations.

I thank all of you, who pushed me and those who allowed me to do something like this.

I recommend it to all of those who are occupied, in any way, with organizations of any kind and are not stacked to the apathy disease or the thoughtless rejection.

Panagiotis Vasmatzidis

SPECIAL ISSUE

GESTALT FOUNDATION IN COMMUNITY

A TRAINING GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS
IN THE CANCER PATIENTS' ASSOCIATION "K.E.F.I." - ATHENS

My name is Demetra Chantziara. In this article I would like to present the co-operation of Gestalt Foundation with the Cancer Patients' Association K.E.F.I., which started with a training group of volunteers.

I would like to mention that apart from me, Aggeliki Kivelou, Ioanna Kato and Stella Sifaki were also participated

therapy itself helped me, by accepting my uniqueness (and each person uniqueness) and knowing, both theoretically and experientially, that I have to take risk, since it is the only way to develop and grow up.

Moreover, the fact that this group was a training one, gave me the opportunity to overview the gestalt therapy theory, and put it in my own

clear up, up to what point the experiential work is useful. What helped me most in this difficulty of mine, was my co-operation with Aggeliki as well as the supervisions. Finally, I think that the more sessions were needed in this program, since the members of this group did not have any former contact with Gestalt therapy. So, there were very many information within each session.

They enjoyed the sharing and the experiments. They were asking more discussion and supervision on their difficulties and dilemmas that they were facing as volunteers in the association. In general terms that was the progress of the group. Moreover, especially in the beginning, the members noted that the Gestalt approach seemed simple (unsophisticated). Especially, the



in this program as leaders of this group, and Yianna Yiamarelou as supervisor. At this point I would like to thank all of you for giving me this opportunity, your co-operation and your help.

This program was conducted within ten sessions. There were two pairs of leaders, Aggeliki with me and Ioanna with Stella, by turns. There were weekly sessions which lasted 1,30 hrs each. The sessions were taken place in the office of the association. The members of the group were members of the association, volunteers as well as patients.

When I started writing this article, I focused on two dimensions: My experience as a leader of this group, and the participants' response to Gestalt therapy.

As a leader of this group, the first term that comes to my mind is "set boundaries". Through my participation in this group, it became clear to me the difference between "put a limit", which sometimes was rigid, compact and strict to me, and "set boundaries". Which means that I have "skin", I am aware of who I am, of my role in the group, of my drive and my values, of the organization that I represent and I am part of it, and thus the environment does not seem threaten, but challenging and interesting. In "setting boundaries", my partners and the group as well as gestalt

words. It helped me to assimilate the theory, and integrate it in experience.

Furthermore, it became clear to me the fact that as a therapist it is important to be direct, present and able to listen to the needs of the group. Sometimes I feel like being direct and staying with are not enough. However, what I noticed



through this experience is that being present and direct, were the two things that helped me most in having contact with the members of the group as well as with my partners.

There are many more things that I could have mentioned regarding my experience in this group, however I think that there were the most important.

Finally, I would like to mention some of the difficulties I have faced in this group. The group was a training and not a therapeutic one. So, I found it hard to

However I think that the group had a good development, and what is more important to me, is the fact that the members of the group were sensitized, and all of us had the opportunity to discover alternative ways of contacting.

At this point I would like to mention the way the members of the group

interacted more, when they were dealing with accepting the difference of the others, and how they take care of themselves. If I can use a phrase as a slogan of this group that would be: "I have to get supported, in order to be able to support" (external and internal support).

responded in Gestalt therapy.

In the beginning, most of the members were cautious and they were talking on behalf of the association, instead of speaking personally. However I think that this is expected in a new group. Moreover they were asking for us to talk and giving them theoretical information and directions. After the group had the chance to interact in a superficial level, and share harmless information and experiences, the members started to get more excited.

Finally, I would like to mention that what I choose as the most important of this experience is the human contact. What I have learned from my training is that as a therapist I can be myself and I am not playing a role. That was the most important factor that helped me enjoy my participation in the training group of volunteers in the cancer patients' association K.E.F.I. By saying group I mean also Aggeliki, Ioanna, Stella and Yianna.

MEMORIES FROM PELION – PART B

A This time I had done my homework. "Pelion is a mountain". I had even opened the map; it is 1548 kilometers in height. I got dizzy..."Yianni, relax", I said to myself. You are going to Portaria, you are not about to step on a mountain crest! Unless you see this matter from a surrealistic point of view! That way of thinking was convenient for me and went there along with it.

I arrived there early and start working. I left my things and began wandering up and down, the central-square, over to the school, to the guesthouse and back again. Several people. Investigating looks. A few women with bags on their backs were making the same walk up, exhausted. "You came here for the conference?", "yes", "the guesthouse...something?" hm...I think that it is over there". I pointed my finger in a certain direction, hoping it was the right one.

One of the things that fascinated me in Portaria are the "creepers" that climb and wrap around the age-long plane-trees, to such point that sometimes you barely see the trunk. Mother Nature obviously offers her water to this place very generously.

Time passed by and I went to register. I exchanged greetings with old acquaintances. All were met with hugs, excitement, and anticipation. I reached the registration table, made my choices and made my signature extremely artful on the registration form. My choices were mostly person-centered and less based on the topics. After a while, the elementary school was humming with the sounds of the adults who were going up the stairs. Packed hall! My primary feeling was that this conference was moving in down tempo, better yet, it was starting to feel "serious". But by the time Saturday night arrived that feeling had been eliminated...

Being for years a nightclub wanderer, I kept wondering the same thing. "Where have all the women gone?" After several conferences in Pelion my question had been answered. Among all the girls I met at the conferences, there were many who declared themselves as therapists. There were others, who were at the final stage

of their educations and eager to become one soon. Well, I don't know that much about Gestalt but I know even less about, say, badminton, for example. I have my vision though and I can see the net, this strange ball with feathers, and if it landed on the opponent's side. At this point in the chat rooms of the internet we say TESPA. That is to say, end of closure.

I profited from conference B' –the second one for me- I was able to gain lot of concentrated knowledge. I reconsidered, confirmed, and changed myself; I had some powerful and unique experiences. I became close to people I hardly knew, and some I did not know, all within 4 days. As I try to describe this experience, no matter how hard I try, I cannot do it justice and it loses something from its charm and its uniqueness.

I have enjoyed finding this family like atmosphere. I enjoy the existing warmth and feeling that is sincere and not a result of an unfamiliar professionalism. I also enjoy that I depart carrying lot to think about.

In conclusion, I would like to start by saying something I take as threadbare. "To work on essentially with your self, letting your deepest thoughts and feelings out of the bag and to the bone is definitely a painful, sorrowful and many times, a long lasting process. It needs great deal of determination". Moreover... It is said that time and money do not walk side by side. When you have time you cannot have money and vice versa. I am at the point that I have time. Furthermore, I feel proud that I undertook this journey so enthusiastically, finding a spacious seat on this ship called Gestalt. As far as the other matter is concerned, Gestalt, to whom I am referring at, this "whole" we say, believe me, makes even easy payment terms!

The article redacted Yiannis Katsiyiannis, whose book was recently published by Mikri Militos Publications, entitled, For a Smile. It is (as described by him), "...made of pure homemade ingredients, with no added preservatives or mutants and, it is light!"

The educational process in Gestalt-Foundation

1. The training process within the Gestalt Foundation program (Bianca Elinger)

The experiential and human character of my training was very important to me; that is, the manner that included the experience, the therapy, the theory, the creation, the interpersonal relations, the group dynamic and the all these are interconnected as parts of a process so as to become parts of a background. Psychotherapy was for me from the very beginning a journey. The training process is a similar journey with co travelers and guides in which each of us tries to build a personal map and a tour guide by engrossing and seeking the information and the experiences we need in the theories of others who have also stopped at the same places. A journey though besides its beautiful experiences also has its difficulties and its adventures.... But then again don't they also contribute to the sweet taste left behind...?

Bianca Elinger ,

Gestalt graduate

The Acquisition of Knowledge is an Ever Evolving Process

My experience as a trainee in Gestalt Foundation was different than any other educational experience I have had to this day. In my past educational courses I was very good at learning and remembering the theories and findings of others. Furthermore, I profited by the time given for elaboration with all of those subjects we reached. As a trainee in Gestalt Foundation I learned, expertly, that knowledge is acquired through the aware connection with the object in regard to personal experiences and through the removal from the active involvement of each subject, thus allowing the observation of new dimensions or sides of the subject that emerge.

From every subject I see and learn something new every time I re-approach it (read, re-evaluate it), since each time is different my field: which issue I bargain inside, to which evolutionary phase of the cycle of life I am in, under which external circumstances I recall the specific module, I need to read again or think of it again. For me that mean that the acquisition of knowledge is an evolutionary, year by year process, changing with me as I evolve as a person. This is, for me, the difference between knowledge and information.

Konstantina Gioni

Graduate of Gestalt Foundation Training Program

Λίγα λόγια για την εκπαίδευση στην ψυχοθεραπεία Gestalt

could start by saying that the goal of this training is the teaching of Gestalt theory and psychotherapy.

The trainees are taught the principles along with the terms and methodology of the theory, and through their personal development, build their professional skills, which they will carry over to their professional practice.

Someone could say "and what makes it different from any other training approach in therapy?"

It is true that every training approach/school differs not just in the theoretical context and the methodology, but mainly in the process, the way it transports and communicates its context. (Margherita Spagnuolo Lobb, 1992)

Could this training process of theory and therapy abstain from its basic terms and principles after all? Of course not.

Gestalt Therapy is an experiential approach. On account of this, we talk about an experiential, empirical learning, where knowledge is created through the reversion of experience. (Kolb, 1984, p.41-42)

Thus the trainees are promoted to bring their personal experiences to the group process and through awareness and contact/interaction with the environment they acquire knowledge of the therapeutic process.

Is it enough though for the trainees to come to contact with their own issues and lock-ups? Is that enough for them to observe and express their thoughts, senses, feelings and actions therefore to learn how to act in the therapeutic process with their client? Certainly not; therefore, clearly it is necessary the academic knowledge, the study of science, of psychotherapy in general, but the study of the Gestalt Psychotherapy literature as well.

The theoretical coverage of every term and the method of instruction on every experiential elaboration is an important task of the trainer of the trainer. That is how the description of the experience becomes knowledge for the trainee.

Another important point of the training process is also the relationship between the trainer and the trainee. It is a relationship based on open dialogues, existential and phenomenological meetings.

As described by Gary Yontef (2000), "The attitude and the role of the trainer are very important to this meeting. His/her excitement, sensitiveness, defensiveness, respect to disagreement, etc. put the ground, support the trust of the trainee in his/herself and promote the frame of mind, the excitement, the desire to learn, the motivation and the autonomy of the trainee."

The trainees come already familiar with the existing, traditional training process, the school that supports the, almost non-involved, introjective learning, which is to fill the student with content, information and unproductive knowledge, without any interest and concern for his/hers learning needs. In Gestalt Training the trainees are equipped for a process, which includes the elaboration and the assimilation of the theory's given terms and principles.

This process includes the training relationship that is based on the trainer's sensibility as far as the phenomenological field of the context is concerned.

Trainers and trainees are brought up to meet and live the contact cycle (pre-contact, contact, final contact, post-contact). Starting from the excitement and the anxiety, going to, "what are we doing now?" and ending up at, whom we are. All these stages are being translated into moments, weekends, 4 years of training, aiming at the carryover of this process to the therapeutic process with the client, and the clinical practice.

In their time during this training process doubts, disagreements, obstacles, and competition will all be experienced, but along with those new joys, personal satisfaction, development, and growth will all be experienced as well, for both parties involved (trainers and trainees).

Finally, I will underline what Kurt Lewin maintains, that there is nothing better than a good theory. The assimilation of this theory is important to coexist with its principles and methodology and to provide space to its creative development.

Recommended Literature

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A few words about Despina Mpalliou:

Despina Mpalliou has a M.Sc. in Counseling Psychology; she is a co-founder of the Gestalt Foundation, a Gestalt Psychotherapist, Trainer and Supervisor and a member of the E.A.G.T.

TRAINING IN GESTALT THERAPY: A CATALYTIC EXPERIENCE

My 4-year training in Gestalt Foundation is one of the most significant experiences I have ever lived on a professional or educational level; it is also, significant on a personal level as well.

As I understand it today, the structure and the training philosophy of such programs, is built on the proof of the actions of Gestalt theory. It is an absolute reflection of what this approach declares. Experiential learning.

Primarily, what someone needs to bring with is their true self, to be truly there (presence), and their willingness to open up and learn (excitement). Then begins the relationship with the others (self-others): the group members - trainees and trainers. This relationship was one of the most catalytic experiences for me. The concern, sharing, trust, and contact, all of these are allowed to blossom within this group. It was there that I had some of my most significant meetings: I-thou contacts.

Through this relationship with others, develops an even more substantial relationship with the self (self - awareness). As those two parts were growing stronger (the relationship with self and others), they were becoming the foundations

for the Gestalt theory to be built upon. Even though it was there all along, it made sense (Gestalt!) only when it was based on to what I was turning, in my interaction with others and relationships into what I was reading about (interaction organism – environment).

All of that, paired together with the surroundings and the support of the trainers, who did not, of course, just offer their knowledge, but a new way of being as well.

When I completed the years of the basic training, I felt insufficient to be a Gestalt therapist, that I still was not knowledgeable enough of the theory and that I did not know how to simulate the things I know. Nowadays, I believe that I AM a Gestalt therapist and that happened when I allowed myself to trust the way I had learned to be, and to interact within my training/experiential group.

In conclusion, the training approach of Gestalt consists of what Gestalt Therapy IS and even more (the whole is more than the sum of its parts).

Elpida Kalaitzi

Graduate of Gestalt Training Program

My experience in the training process...

The search of Freedom through the knowledge could be the title of this brief article with regard to my experience in the Training Process of the Gestalt approach. The season of my integration in the Training Program of the Gestalt Foundation, with its structure, its content, its operation, as I have experienced it, could paralleled with the entry phase of a child in the school community, where it learns that besides the ideas and perceptions of its close family environment other ones may also exist.

My life teaching at this phase of my life is the discovery of the different and the unknown by leaving behind

the certainty and the easiness of the things a take for granted: by "growing up" personally and professionally I experience the limitless freedom of adulthood and at the same time I discover the meaning of freedom of choice. I need to recognize and to convey to my clients they way that I appreciate anyone's personal freedom and also to bring within the therapeutic session my personal truth: that is, the real freedom lies within the soul and is not dependent on exterior occasions.

Eleftheria (Freedom) Lagoudi,

psychologist, Gestalt Foundation graduate

GESTALT FOUNDATION IN THE COMMUNITY

2006-2007 Gestalt Foundation
AND TH Y.M.C.A.

Since 2000 the Gestalt Foundation, collaborates with Y.M.C.A. with seminars, lectures and scientific meetings. Katja Hatzilakou has had a leading role and continues to support this effort until today. The Foundation has the scientific and clinical responsibility for the short-term program of individual psychological support and reference of women that address the social service of the Y.M.C.A.. The following fragment is a register of Ramah Sandmon's experience who has participated in this cooperation for the last 3 years and supervises the Gestalt psychologists-psychotherapists that participate in the program.

It is like a fairy tale with a beginning and an ending where everyone lives happily ever after... And it is like these fairy tales that you want to here again and again, and just one fairy tale gives birth to another and another yet until finally these fairy tales are magical, independent, and unique. Well, the fairy tale is also reality and that makes it even more magical!

Once upon a time (in 2000) we met with Y.M.C.A. at the right moment. A moment when the ground was cultivated so that it allowed the conception of a cooperation, that won the trust and the mutual respect, that needed a lot of work, effort and persistence from both sides. Two different systems that despite their different communication codes, values, visions, met through their differences and recognized their commonalities; two systems that are complementary to each other and that share the ultimate goal to provide psychological support to women who are in need.

When I think of this program and what it possibly offers to those who approach it, I come up with the following words: "an opportunity", "trust", "a safe place to start", "development", "care", "interest". At the

same time I think that these same words also depict what we as therapists found in the same place. So, we found "an opportunity", "trust", "a safe place to start", "development", "care", "interest". It is a circle of give and take having as a driving force the personal care.

Images come to my mind from the initial meetings; the meeting (10-11/02/2001), at the Gestalt Foundation premises; the first volunteers training at the Y.M.C.A. at the centre of Thessaloniki and then the 2day training at the Harilaou Y.M.C.A. Energy, interest, contact, trouble, confusion, hope, fear and confidence. Persons come to my mind. People whose initial attendance was essential for the layout of the program... Magda, Georgia, people who left the program and whose touch remains until this day. A lot of people have stopped by as it is natural in a voluntary frame. From discussions we have had and comments I have heard, I see now that this experience continues to nourish the participants, years afterwards.

The difficulties proved a great challenge. We had to find a way to balance the dream with reality, our enthusiasm with the possibilities provided, and the hope of accomplishment even when we disagreed, when there were no incidents and even when we had our internal conflicts.

Our main concern was how to create a frame providing immediate support, flexibility to the others' needs and also covering deontological issues.

The fact that we have paved the road until today stone by stone, that many difficulties are in the past and that we still talk of this cooperation with enthusiasm are indications that the ground is ripe and ready for fertilization. The child that is being born from this process hopes to grow up slowly and well.

Ramah Sandmon, M.Sc.
Social and Clinical Psychologist
Gestalt Psychotherapist

Macedonia-Thrace Association of
Cancer patients 2002-2007

In 2002 Katja and Antonia announced us the cooperation of Gestalt Foundation with the Macedonia-Thrace Association of Cancerpatients. We were so enthusiastic that we accepted this cooperation without really knowing what we were getting ourselves into! Two support groups opened initially for the old members of the Association and also a group for the members that were in chemotherapy (this group would last the whole year).

It was a very rich experience. The title of last year's residential workshop seems quite fitting: "Exploring Human Conflicts". There were conflicts among the coordinators ("how many people are there in your group?" "Well, there are more participants in our group!"); Conflicts with the Association because the space was not appropriate for group meetings; Conflicts regarding the day and time of the group sessions, conflicts because we didn't have systematic supervision, conflicts, conflicts, conflicts...!

We still don't know how we managed....

The next year, 2003-2004, we decided to continue the groups. The interest was increasing day by day, more people would declare interest to participate both in the groups and in the traineeship.

This year we managed to have systematic supervision which took off our shoulders a huge burden. Reception groups for new members were formed and the groups for the older members acquired a seminar character in two circles..

The subjects of the groups were:

«I learn to enjoy life»

«I support my rights, I take care of myself»

«I learn to express my feelings»

We also made an effort to organize a group with the subject: "My life after cancer". Our effort failed. What cancer? Our effort taught us not to use the word "cancer"; it is a forbidden word!

All of us who cooperated with the Association, believed in this work. We worked hard and our efforts were rewarded.

In 2004-2005 the following groups were formed:

1. Reception and Information Group for new members
2. Communication and Expression of feelings Group for new members
3. The Important Others in my Life Group
4. Individual interviews for old and new members of the Association
5. Two self-support groups for the old members

In 2005-2006 along with the groups of psychological support, reception and information and the individual interviews of old and new members, there were also 1) a support group for cancer patients' caretakers (throughout the year) 2) training and support program for volunteers who help in hospitals (8 circles) and 3) five open lectures.

We worked organized and under continuous supervision. Once again we did it!!! But the struggle continues!!!!!!

We thank all those who dedicated time from their life in this traineeship. In conclusion we wish to thank Antonia who despite the difficulties she has been the light that guides our steps.

For the year 2006-2007 the Gestalt Foundation continues its volunteer cooperation and has planned the following program for psychological support and training: 1. Information Group, 2. Psychological Support group, 3. Support Group for family and caretakers, 4. Program for training and support for volunteers and 5. tree open lectures.

Gianna Kalota, MSc Counselling Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist
Melina Makridoy MSc Health Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist
Marjantzela Triariko, A.U.Th. Psychologist, Gestalt Psychotherapist

On Saturday 3rd June, the third conference of the Greek Psychotherapy Association was held with the subject:

"Supervision Methods in Psychotherapy: Theory and Practice"

The Gestalt Foundation was represented by **Despina Balliou** with the theoretical presentation: "Gestalt supervision: a development process". The presentation focused on the manner that the principles of the field theory, of phenomenology, of the change theory, of dialogue and of the parallel process coact the supervision process and also how through these principles the supervision process seeks an authentic meeting for creative learning and development.

GESTALT FOUNDATION IN THE COMMUNITY

10th Greek Congress of Psychosocial Oncology:

Supporting the quality of life after cancer: a model program of psychosocial intervention from the Gestalt psychotherapists' volunteer team

In 2004, at the European Congress of Gestalt Psychotherapy in Prague I participated in the Gestalt Foundation team of psychologists that presented the voluntary intervention for the psychological support of the cancer patients at the Macedonia-Thrace Association of Cancer patients with the title "Facing the facts of life". I never imagined that that enthusiastic reception from the European psychotherapeutic world would be the forerunner of yet another warm reception 2 years later by the Greek scientific community that works against cancer.



by **Maria Mavridou**
Psychologist,
Gestalt Therapist

I would also like to add that none of the psychologists that began in 2000 the voluntary work did not imagine - even if we wished is to happen! - that 4 years later, after a lot of labour, insistence and patience, this work would develop into a completed program of psychosocial intervention. This is the reason why we believed that it deserved to be presented in a congress of psychosocial oncology.

The 10th Greek Congress of Psychosocial Oncology that was held in Athens on 3-5 November (Hotel Holiday Inn) vindicated its title both concerning its issues and concerning the composition of the participants: emphasis was given not only to the biological but also to the psychological dimension of cancer; apart from doctors of relevant specializations, a lot of professionals of mental health were assembled; psychologists, psychotherapists and social workers. Besides, the congress was realised with the attendance of many scientific institutions as hospitals, services of mental health, academic faculties as well as voluntary organisations.

On 3 November 2006 the scientific team with head the trainer and supervisor of the Gestalt Foundation, Antonia Konstantinidou and the psychologists - psychotherapists Melina Makidou, Gianna Kalota, Maria Mavridou (Marjantzela Triariko) made a announcement at the congress regarding the voluntary intervention that this year celebrates 5 years of life.

In a short historical retrospection, we referred to the course of the program that began in 2002, after an invitation of the chairman of the association Mrs Persephone Mittra with open support groups. Our intervention continued in 2003 with seminars in thematic units and with the reception group for new members, and it was enriched in the next years with open lectures and parallel action; in example, the relatives' support group and the education of volunteers and its action was extended in collaboration with associations of other regions like the associations in Katerini, Giannitsa, Ptolemaida, Kozani and Athens.

Actually, it was not just a simple congress announcement but an..... intervention in the spirit of teamwork and volunteerism that characterized this congress - and that is why it was talked about...

The way of presentation made great impression since the announcement was presented by the entire whole group in turn. We thus remained loyal to the phenomenology that shows our way of work, which is indeed common. It became explicit that the intervention in the cancer patients association is not an affair of an individual but of a team of collaborators that interacts and develops dynamically.

The reactions and the comments of the public oscillated from surprise to enthusiasm for the duration, the multilevel of activity and mainly for its voluntary-not proliferare character. I would say that the comment of the board president Mr. Gerasimos Rigato - oncologist- summarised exceptionally the climate that followed the presentation. He characteristically stressed: "What impressed me particularly was the way but also the content of this common presentation. It is obvious that there is a lot of work behind this presentation I wish that you continue your work".

The aim of the presentation was to show that in volunteerism it is requirds constant presence, consequence and commitment. Also, that it is realised by professionals - and no amateurs! - of mental health that are committed to receiving permanent education and supervision in order to cope with the requirements of their role, the cancellations and the professional burn-out that is involved.

Speaking of the difficulties of the psychotherapist's role, I should say that it has been very important to us the presence at the congress of our Gestalt Foundation trainers Katja Hatzilakoy and Gianna Giamareloy and of colleagues who are also volunteers at the association of cancer patients in Athens (Kato Ioanna, Kyveloy Angeliki, Sifaki Stella and Hantziara Dimitra) that encouraged us by reminding us that the Gestalt community is everywhere present!....

The presence of the association of cancer patients of Macedonia-Thrace was equally important in the proceedings of the congress that via its representative Glykeria Djaskaloy greeted the event and stressed the role of psychological support that our voluntary team offers to the members of the association.

We wish to keep in our minds the comment of many voluntary organizations for the need of the state's support.

In a recess of the congress, within a conversation with Antonia Konstantinidou I shared with her the positive sensation by our participation and I received her - always perceptive - estimate: indeed it was a purgation of this long-lasting work for the last 4 continuous years. It was a moving moment when the whole medical community who recognizes the value of psychological intervention welcomed the Gestalt psychotherapy in the fight against cancer.

Greeting back, we say "au revoir"!

9th EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF GESTALT THERAPY

Invitation for a creative dialogue

I am writing this article as Katja, as a human being, as a professional, as a Gestalt therapist, as Greek, as a woman. I am signing this article as a co-founder of the Center of Psychotherapy and Training Gestalt Foundation and as Chair of the Extended Board of E.A.G.T (European Association of Gestalt Therapy).

Often do I wonder if there is a conflict between these parts of mine, these roles of mine? I wonder whether I am the role or whether I play the role. Would I react or speak differently or am I reacting and speaking differently as Katja and differently when I represent an organization, a position, and many other people? Even these thoughts of mine are in conflict. A part of me is in a hurry to say "of course not, you are a responsible person who is unaffected by events and situations, you are always objective and politically correct "; And then another part of me comes to contradict "of course you are different, you have superstitions, you take sides and you need to try to be objective and unbiased.

When I am honest with myself I tend to agree the second voice or to recognize the first adjective I set next to my name in the beginning of this article. I am only Human. And as Human I too have hatreds, passions, friendships, opinions, prejudices. As a human being though, I have the possibility to enter in dialogue both with the conflicting parts of me and with the others around me so as to evolve and to move on.

The Greek word for human is "anthropos" and in a spiritual way it means to "look up", I look towards God and I look inwards so as to solve conflicts, to find creative ways of adjustment within realities which initially I would characterize as difficult.

I invite you all from all my multiple roles, in an open dialogue with our difference on September 6-9 2007 in Athens at the European Gestalt Psychotherapy Congress with the subject: "Exploring Human Conflict", where we might explore together the Human Conflicts on multiple levels, individual, social, political, psycho-sentimental and within different disciplines clinical practice, organizations, business, research, education, society and politics in every day life on the main axis of respect towards human rights, which is a concept often tightly related with the basic Gestalt therapy principles. At this point I wish to stress that I have the honour to share with you that in recognition of this relation the Greek National Committee for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), after our petition has decided to put the congress under its auspices. This honours us greatly and it opens new horizons of recognition and cooperation of Gestalt psychotherapy with a wider range of social applications. The Congress is part of our every day life since 2004 when we were appointed to organize it and we assumed the responsibility to do so.

We wish to thank all the people who have stood by our side and have helped us in its organization and promotion. We believe that this Congress is a co-creation and gestures like the one by N.V.A.G.T. (Nederlands Vlaamse Associate voor Gestalttherapie en Gestalttheorie) that sponsored 2400_ to cover participation fees for colleagues from Eastern European countries has been extremely touching.

We also wish to thank the representatives of the Extended Board της E.A.G.T. countries-members who have distributed in the best possible way the Congress brochures and have been informing Gestalt therapists, colleagues and trainees, in their countries.

We also wish to thank cordially all the Gestalt Foundation volunteers trainees and graduates who have devoted their soul and their vision into this effort.

In the spirit of exploring and entering a creative dialogue regarding conflict resolution issues and human rights, we invite you all to participate in your own unique way to plan a congress, a community, a respectful and society.



Katia Hatzilakou
has a M.Sc. in Social and
Clinical Psychology, she is a
co-founder of the Gestalt
Foundation, a Gestalt
Psychotherapist, Trainer and
Supervisor and Chair of the
Extended Board of the E.A.G.T.

PRESENTATION OF BRAIN GYM METHODS IN PORTARIA

In-between this year's 4day workshop activities, we presented an auxiliary method – Brain Gym-. We would like to present this method in our newsletter, for those interested and who were not able to attend the group in Pelion.

Brain Gym is a therapeutic method which assists coping with concentration problems,

one –usually the left- and the gestalt one –usually the right- as a result. Body and brain always function together. The stimulation of the brain is possible to be successful by using simple studied moves, something like "brain gymnastic".

The neurocells are not the only factors responsible for the brain activities but the possible interconnections between

reason we speak about acoustic, visual or kinetic type of learning.

The effectiveness of learning increases, when we use all of our senses. By performing Brain Gym exercises we improve the function of the senses.

Brain does never stop functioning. It transmits electrical signs in different sequences, which we call brain waves, 24 hour per day. The quality of the brain function depends on the type of the waves. The most effective ones are the alpha waves. When the brain transmits those waves, it works like a sponge. The Brain Gym exercises help to relax and to enter the phase of alpha waves. In this case the possibilities of learning are bigger.

Brain Gym helps to acquire a completed way of learning, relaxation and creativity.

Brain Gym helps to improve all those processes, where such blockings exist in order for us to function more freely and creatively.

Brain Gym method is used in schools, therapeutic and training centers and in working places.

Joana Kato

MsC, psychologist, logotherapist, Gestalt therapist

Mariola Kohanovits

MsC, psychologist, Gestalt therapist

Does the Brain Age?

In the 21st century age is not defined anymore by one and only dimension, the chronological dimension. Evolutionary psychologists and especially the gerontologists have found out now that four dimensions define age: chronological, (which is an objective figure) biological, psychological and medical.

Psychological age is defined by the calculations of mental functions, the attitude that the elder had adopted towards matters of current seasonableness, as well as of the influence of events, such as widowhood, retirement, which mark the elder's psychological condition.

When is an adult considered to be an elder?

According to the researcher of Gerontology Timothy Salthouse (1982), the person's development is defined by three different ways:

1. Persons develop in different rhythms.
2. Different sides of a person develop in different rhythms; i.e., mental skills are possible not to coexist with the social ones.
3. The meaning of the chronological age itself changes during life time: sometimes the rhythm speeds up and other time slows down.

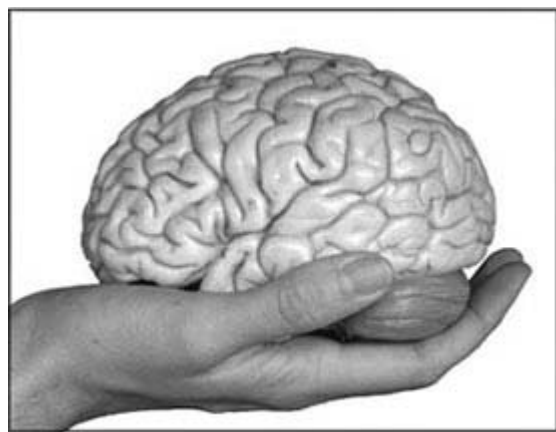
The majority tends to develop in its own personal rhythm, which depends on the genetic mentality of each person and on environmental influences. That is the basic reason why we observe aging in some persons in their 60s, unlike some others, who do not show any signs of biological reduction until their 80th year of their life.

Nevertheless, it is important to underline that in cases with persons with no neurological disease, the mental function tends to remain integral, at least until the age of 80. It is noticed though, that the mental functions at this ages demand more time for their completion, due to deceleration of the central processor of data. Lingual functions and skills are preserved to a satisfying degree, approximately until the age of 70, and after that age in some healthy persons, appears a progressive shrinkage of their vocabulary and the increased tendency to make semantic errors in the use of the language. It often appears a slight memory loss, which must not be confused with dementia though, as it does not influence the recall of important information or the functionality of the elder.

Our work experience with elder people has shown that life changes (biological, social, such as retirement, etc.) have created needs. Especially when the elder faces dementia problems, the need for securing a "normal" rhythm for him/herself and his/her family is major. Quality of life can be preserved, and to that can contribute not just to the person himself, by putting personal goals for the preservation and improvement of his physical and mental health, the social environment can be improved as well.

A person's life changes are constant and many of them unpredictable as well. How do we meet mental, biological and psychological age changes? How do we process the positive signs of time, like the wisdom of the Elderly? And finally, how does the development of our relationship with other people change when we run the old age or when we take care of elder people?

Zioga, D., Psychologist (Aristotle University), Psychotherapist
Siampani, K., MSc Counseling Psychology, Psychotherapist



visual- kinetic co-ordination, memory problems and also coping with stress. It is addressed to children, adults and elders.

Instigator of this method is Paul Dennison (University of South California & Director of Valley Remedial Group Learning Centre). The method includes certain elements taken from classic kinesiology, optometry, education therapy, developmental psychology & NLP.

Basic concept of "Brain Gym" is the activation and stimulation of specific brain parts, achieving a good collaboration between the two hemispheres, the logical

the NEYPQNEΣ as well.

Brain is consisted of two hemispheres, the logical and the gestalt hemisphere. The harmonic collaboration between the two of them is the basis of learning and success. Today's training is based only on the logical hemisphere with overuse of it as a result. Brain Gym's exercises help the improvement of the collaboration between the two hemispheres.

Brain obtains all the information through the 5 senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste). In our days, in contact with the environment dominate 2 or 3 of them. During learning we tend to use only 1 of them and for that

The Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Greek National Committee of UNESCO and the Gestalt Foundation organized in Athens on 25th-26th November a conference for primary education educators with the subject: "Experiential Workshop for the Sensitization in Issues of Conflict Resolution in school according to Human Rights". This initiative was based on the International Declaration of Human Rights as it was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948 and it was combined with the theoretical methodology of Gestalt therapy.

The conference was received with enthusiasm by the participants and the organizers and its results will be presented at the 9th Gestalt European Conference. A second conference for educators also followed in Thessaloniki. The human rights seem like an old story but unfortunately they are trespassed in many and different ways. Let us all begin our children's education and the most appropriate place is the school. We wish you all good luck.

The Gestalt Foundation of Thessaloniki and its collaborators attended the 10th Greek Congress of Psychosocial Oncology (3-5 November 2006, Athens at the hotel Holiday Inn). Te

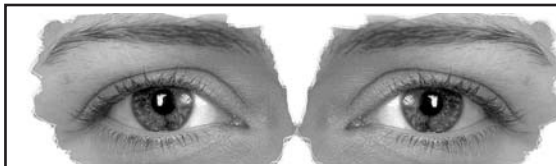


history of the collaboration of Gestalt Foundation and the Macedonia-Thrace Association of Cancer patients that began in 2002 on a voluntary base and it evolved into a Model Program of Psychosocial Intervention in its today form.

The structure of the program, its methods and the conclusions drawn from this four year old cooperation were presented by the scientific team of psychologists who apply this intervention for the amelioration of the Quality of Life for cancer patients and their families.

After the triumphant presentation the Thessaloniki and Athens group of volunteers met for coffee. They exchanged views and experiences. They also deserve a coffee, don't they?

Well done girls! The cause now begins to be justified! We wish strength for all the volunteers!



CAREFUL! SOMEONE IS WATCHING...!

If you need the Gestalt Foundation program for the groups, seminars and other activities, you may get the brochures or visit the website or call for more information. There is anything anyone might desire!

The Greek Association of Gestalt therapy has unsuccessfully organized its general assembly on Saturday, 18/11/2006. Hmmm, now that I come to think of it, Saturday was a poor choice! Haven't you heard about the Saturday night fever??? The meeting was finally successfully held on Sunday 19/11/2006 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and various issues were discussed and decisions for many new and creative steps were made.

We would like to hear from you. We care!

Harm Siemens from Holland who is very well known to us here in Greece, except for his nomination as 'Sir' by the Queen of Holland for his social offer as a Gestalt therapist, has recently published

moving energy! Well, that's what I call a holistic approach. There wasn't only theory but also experience that wasn't limited only in the school premises but it was in nature. The workshop was different from previous years and it earned the best impressions.



The trainees' presentations both in Thessaloniki and in Athens were exceptional. The juniors' trainees' in Thessaloniki won the impressions and the enthusiasm of the audience with the theatrical play.

The presentation of the Athens seniors was also very interesting as they chose to present the "function" of a group with the typical types that are usually found in a psychotherapy group.

The 4th year of Thessaloniki has won

Nurith's sudden indisposition worried us all but fortunately it wasn't anything serious and we all tried to show her our care and our love as if she were a member of our family. After all we consider Gestalt and its people as our family. I will not publish any photos because there are only some from the Gala. I can't stand any more to publish photos where we eat and drink because I'm afraid that someone might get the wrong idea...! So, let's take some photos while we work and not only when we have fun!

For the first time this year at the schoolyard in Pilion a handmade jewelry Bazaar was hosted. The money that was raised (240 euros) was sent to THE CENTER OF LIFE, NON PROLIFERATE SOCIETY Diocharous str. 9, 11528 Athens; an offer of love from all the Pilion workshop participants. This was just the beginning; I hope next year's offer is even better!

Another profile took place in Portaria Pilion. It was a great experience for everyone: seniors and trainees. At the friendly environment of the Athanasakis manor, the fourth year of Thessaloniki and



once again the audience with a DVD presentation with film fragments that addressed the issue of couples' relationships. After the presentation's completion followed silence which was even noisier than the comments of the audience.

So, "bravo" to all! Every year the organization of the workshop is even better!

Athens training program completed their training with laughter and tears. We wish you all have a career with vast horizons and good luck in whatever you decide to do!

*Yours truly
Souvlitsa*

VISIT
OUR SITE

www.gestaltfoundation.gr