



# Gestalt NEWS Foundation

INFORMATIVE AND COMMUNICATIVE SIX-MONTH ISSUE OF GESTALT FOUNDATION  
PSYCHOTHERAPY & TRAINING CENTER / Spring - Summer 2013 / 18th issue



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*book recommended*

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Workshop

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**15 YEARS OF  
GESTALT**

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The 15th Four-day  
Gestalt Therapy  
Workshop

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



15<sup>th</sup> Four-day  
Gestalt Therapy  
Workshop

“Aggression”  
Its functional  
and non functional  
aspects in  
Gestalt therapy

9-12 May 2013  
Karpenissi

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# Editorial

A full 'academic' year is coming to its end for the Gestalt Foundation community.

We would like to thank our graphic artist, Sofia Mamalinga, for the cartoon gift she offered us for the "Gestalt Foundation News" on the occasion of our anniversary.



It has been a truly active year, which also happens to mark the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the operation of our Centre.

I hope you will enjoy this special issue. May we all have a wonderful summer, till we meet again in the autumn!

With our typical optimism, we decided to prepare a great feast for when we hopefully get to our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The 15<sup>th</sup> year landmark was celebrated at a small ceremony on the mountains of Karpenisi, during our 15<sup>th</sup> four-day workshop.

Best regards,

Antonia Konstantinidou

The main topic of this four-day workshop was 'Aggression', in the special meaning the word has for Gestalt therapy; it gave rise to a lot of discussion, insights and intense experiences.

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We had the opportunity to take a breather, all together, to have a closer or more distant look at our daily lives, to seek new meanings and modes of operation.

Aiming at driving 'aggression' to the point of becoming energetic action, we sought out new balance points, beyond the passivity and destructiveness polarities/poles.

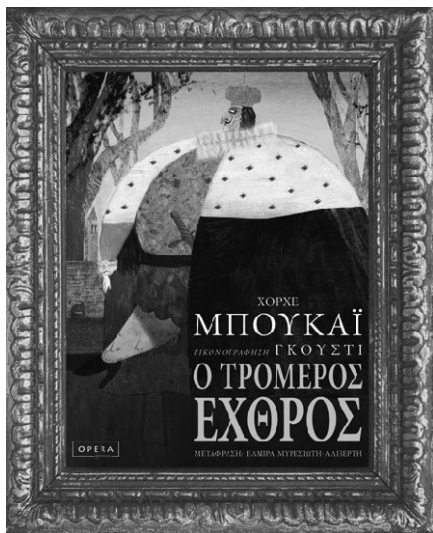
It was an inspiring four-day workshop and participants' contributions have filled the 18<sup>th</sup> issue of «Gestalt Foundation News» to the brim. We have to apologise because some texts could not be included in this issue. Some of those 'left in the dark' will be shared later on in the year, in our autumn issue.

Antonia Konstantinidou, M.Sc. Clinical and Social Psychology A.U.TH. (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki). Gestalt therapy Therapist, Trainer and Supervisor. Co-founder of the Gestalt Foundation Centre for Psychotherapy and Training. Recognised member of the Association of Greek Psychologists (AGP), the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP) and the European Association of Gestalt Therapy (EAGT). Founding member of the Greek Association of Gestalt Psychotherapists. I have been working as a therapist with adults and groups of adults for 16 years. For the last 10 years I have been involved in psychological support for people suffering from chronic illnesses, as well as the training of volunteers.

## JORGE BUCAY

# THE FEARED ENEMY

## book recommended



OPERA PUBLICATIONS SUMMER 2013  
ILLUSTRATIONS: GUSTI  
TRANSLATION: ELMIRA MYRESIOTI-ALIVERTI

Once upon a time there was a king who wanted to be the most powerful man in the world, but the popularity of a wizard who lived in the kingdom and who could foresee the future, made him his subjects' second choice. One day, the envious king arrived at a ploy that would prove the wizard could not foresee the future: he would ask the wizard, before the entire kingdom, the date of his own death. No matter what the wizard answered, the king would take out his sword and kill him, proving that the wizard's reputation was unfounded. There was

something, however, that the great king had not considered: the wizard's response, which would make the king reconsider his entire life and his royal perception...

A story of love and hate,  
of humility and vanity,  
that explains how our feared enemy, can become our best friend...

Bucay's second children's book, after the *Elephant in Chains*.

What enemy scares the all powerful king?  
Why does everyone in the palace say there is a power he will never obtain?  
And who has such power?

### BEST SELLERS ΕΞΑΜΗΝΟΥ

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EL JAMES  
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ΑΠΟΧΡΩΣΕΙΣ  
ΤΟΥ ΨΑΛΙ

ΟΜΗΡΟΣ  
ΕΠΙΛΗΝΙΑ  
25

ΑΕΝΑ ΜΑΝΤΑ  
ΜΕ ΑΝΗΝΙΑΤΑ

VICTORIA HISLOP  
Ο ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΣ  
ΧΩΡΟΣ

ΜΕΛΕΤΕΣ

CARLO M. CIPOLLA  
Ο ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΑΝΟΙΧΤΟ  
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# 15<sup>th</sup> Four-day Gestalt Therapy Workshop

9-12 May 2013  
Karpenissi

The Gestalt Foundation organized, for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the annual four-day Gestalt Psychotherapy Workshop, the main theme of which was: **“Aggression: Its functional and non functional aspects in Gestalt therapy”**.

Drawing from Philip Lichtenberg’s definition of aggression as the energy of activity (-or action-), a rich programme was materialized consisting of educational, experiential and professional (advanced) seminars, during which, through theory and practice, the definition and differentiation of the concept of aggression in the theory of Gestalt therapy, its double meaning and the way in which it can become a useful “tool” at a personal, interpersonal, professional (as Gestalt psychotherapists) and social level were explored. At the same time, the traditional presentations by Center graduates were made.

More specifically, **the actual topics of the seminars** were the following (*in alphabetical order by the speaker’s name*):

**Yianna Yiamarelou:** “Aggression, the energy of the self in motion”

**Yianna Yiamarelou:** “Passivity Aggression in Gestalt therapy”

**Yianna Yiamarelou Despina Balliou:** “Anger... Fear... Pain... Anger...”

**Yiorgos Diplas:** “DNA, Social Structures and Aggression”

**Yiorgos Diplas:** “What is the opposite pole of aggression?”

**Antonia Konstantinidou:** “When aggression is... introjected... projected... reversed... reflected...”

**Antonia Konstantinidou:** “Exploring activeness and inertness in our body”

**Antonia Konstantinidou Katia Hatzilakou:** “Think like a person of action, act like a person of thought”

**Lompa Dick:** “What is the influence of aggression on the contact making

process?”

**Lompa Dick:** “What do I experience when I am the receiver of aggression?”

**Lompa Dick:** “How is aggression related to creativity?”

**Despina Balliou:** “Identifying with the attacker/aggressor”

**Despina Balliou:** “Seize the day”

**Maria Farmaki Yiota Myroforidou:** “I’m in a rush I am being forced I respect, a deep choice in our life course”

**Katia Hatzilakou:** “Love is...”

**Katia Hatzilakou:** “Silence... Scream”

**Barbarelo Favo:** “Fire in the belly: exploring how we process aggression from a body gestalt point of view”

The **Central Topics** of the **Parallel Graduate Presentations** were the following (*in alphabetical order according to the name of the speaker*):

**Elena Antoniou Konstantina Gioni Nia Pappa Hanjiara Dimitra:** “Aggression and revolution: From Prometheus to Mary Panayiotara”

**Petros Theodorou:** “The bullfighter, the bull and the mystery of the red muleta”

**Vasia Karamanoli:** “Does sorrow meet with Gingerbread Man? Does fantasy meet with reality? Does knowledge meet with experience?”

**Maria Skordou:** “Aggression in the Spectrum of Autism”



## Karpenisi, May 10-12, 2013

**Experiential Group Subject: to be in a rush to be forced to be respectful\***

With polite smiles, slightly tense, in a mildly exploratory mood, in our “Sunday best”, sitting on chairs, we began. Some of us comfortable, some of us cautious, some of us suspicious and some of us... experienced!

By the first break we had already become a group. Without realizing it we found ourselves in our comfy clothes, on the floor, giving and supportive, open and thirsty. Maria and Yiota. Yiota and Maria. The soul and the body, the body and the soul. The soul inside the body, the body through the soul.

Twelve adults at different phases of their lives, prepared determined ready (more or less) to take our souls into our hands, to care for them, heal them, sweeten them. Maria’s directness and respect, Yiota’s transparent calmness were a balm and a starting point.

Through the stories of others, sprung the stories of each one of us, or, to be more precise, in the experiences and traumas of others, we each recognized our own and

we each took a journey, next to each other, in parallel - feeling compassion, identifying, feeling genuine interest. With pursed lips and tears in our eyes, we accepted and were surprised, we thought and wondered: dare we? Breathing with our eyes turned inward, to our being, directed us to the deepest parts of our existence. And from there we drew faith in ourselves and in our process. We drew the strength to fight, because we know we deserve better.

We did not all leave light and happy after these three days. But I think that the sentence of my dear friend Evgenia says it all: “I move ahead having in my luggage all the new realizations of the last few days. I do not have much to say, as I am still in a process of gestation. I am just listening to the new beats of my heart and the quickening within me. I wish us all an ‘easy delivery’”

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart!!!

Nelli

\*A pun in Greek: *via-zomai* (to be in a rush), *vi-a-zomai* (to be forced/violated), *se-vomai* (to respect)



### 1998 - 2013 ... 15 years...

15 years... a reality... a life journey with "contact rhythm", "dialogue", "organismic self-regulation process" and "creative adjustment", with "incorporation",

"inclusion", the "paradoxical theory of change" in a field within which "forms" keep standing out!

The list of subjects we have dealt with all these years at seminars, lectures, and groups covers a truly wide range.

From one end of Greece to the other, on sea or land there are places we have travelled to, in order to meet "ourselves", to interact, to laugh, to cry, to dream, to relate ...

Friends, partners and colleagues from Greece and abroad have supported us and still do, teaching us in their own way, with their smile, with their presence.

Along our journey, that started with knowledge and contact, with development as a destination... with many stops in-between for supplies, rest, feedback, replenishment, we had and still have co-travellers in all of you who have honoured us with your trust .

15 years... a life course... adolescence... a maturing process... Reaction, vision and a lust for creation and, at the same time, "a farewell" to childish innocence, a life that opens up ahead and, at the same time, awareness of decisions that need to be made to continue along the course: taking responsibility, a sense of duty and, at the same time, a lust for the quest and being interested, encountering new experiences.

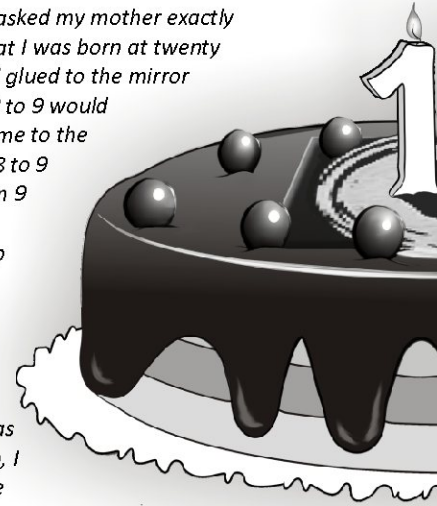
These, in my opinion, characterize the profile of Gestalt Foundation at the here and now ... A living organism, us, you, and... something more. At this point I would like to share with you an excerpt from the book "I

grew up playing" by Inés Barredo (Jorje Bucay "The Road to Self-Dependence", Opera 2009):

*When I turned 9, I was occupied very much with learning what kind of change would occur in my body between 8 and 9. So, I got up very early on the day of my birthday and I ran to the mirror to see how much I had changed. I was surprised, however, because I had not changed at all. My disappointment was so great, that I went and asked my mother exactly what time I was born, and she informed me that I was born at twenty passed four. So, from four until five, I remained glued to the mirror watching myself, until the great change from 8 to 9 would occur. The change, however, did not occur. I came to the conclusion that there may be no change from 8 to 9 years, but instead the change would occur from 9 to 10 years. So I anxiously waited for a whole year. On the eve of my 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, I stayed up all night. I did not sleep one minute, I stood in front of the mirror to see what I would look like in the morning. I saw nothing. I started to think that people do not grow, it is all lies, but then again... I had seen pictures of my mother when she was young, which meant that she was once like me and then she grew up. Then again, I could not explain when this change was to take place. Until one day the author says on the second page of the book I realized what the secret was. When I became nine, I did not cease being eight. When I became ten, I did not cease being nine. When we turn fifteen, we are fourteen, and twelve, and eleven, and ten, and nine, and eight, and five, and... at seventy, we are sixty, and fifty, and forty, and twelve, and five, and three, and one."*

With faith and hope, love and wisdom, keeping inside us... the children, the teenagers, the young people we once were... I wish us with all my heart the best of luck for the rest of our journey!

Katia Hatzilakou



### GESTALT FOUNDATION.

A 15 year journey from its foundation, which, today, arouses great emotion within me.

Along this long journey of important changes and growth, we have experienced success and bad luck, joys and sorrows, as well as deep sadness at the absence of Harm Siemens, our teacher and partner, who is still a source of inspiration and creativity in our educational work.

Upon making a quick review, I saw with satisfaction that all four of us have been true to our vision and achieving the goals we had set from the very beginning.

We cooperated with noteworthy trainers from Greece and abroad who enriched our educational work through a ceaseless quest for modern methods in educational teaching and new partnerships.

To this day we are still the only training centre in Gestalt psychotherapy in Greece that offers a complete, reliable, high level training course; we are also the first centre with EAGT and EAR accreditation.

Through our courses we have increased interest in the approach and philosophy of Gestalt therapy, something that was further strengthened with the presence of academics and renowned partners at our scientific meetings. Similarly, our presence at such activities gave us the opportunity to exchange views and obtain a wealth of scientific knowledge and experience.

Our presentations, translations of authors who have written about Gestalt, articles, the joint authorship of the "Introduction to Gestalt Psychotherapy" handbook, as well as the large number of noteworthy projects our trainees have completed, now comprise a relevant literature wealth for any interested party.

Furthermore, through a broad field of scientific work for the community, which has been developed and instituted, our trainees, in the framework of their practical training, have the opportunity to obtain experience within very different work contexts, to develop their interest and sensitivity and grow through their interaction with different people and work environments.

One of our basic concerns was, also, to safeguard the scientific and professional standing of Gestalt psychotherapists, more specifically our graduates, a community the foundations of which were set 15 years ago and which has grown fast year in, year out to the great satisfaction of us all. Thus, with the first graduates we founded the Hellenic Association for Gestalt Therapy, which is celebrating its 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

At this point I would like to point out and mention the importance of the work and contribution of our companions and partners, with whom we believed, created and continue to create this life's work. I thank them wholeheartedly.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you, who have trusted us and have chosen the Gestalt Foundation for your training, and all of you, who, as graduates, are our hope for the creation of a more ethical and humanitarian way of coexisting at a individual, interpersonal, social and universal level.

Thank you for being part of my life!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Yianna Yiamarelou

# of GESTALT

## 15 YEARS OF THE GESTALT FOUNDATION ...

1998-2013: 15 years of the Gestalt Foundation... When I first joined it I was not fully aware of what it was about, there was no consciousness. I felt the enthusiasm of participating in the creation of a course with a purpose and substance and the desire to create. I was also in love with Gestalt therapy. Thus, it was with enthusiasm and feeling in love that I began...



We 4 co-founders, started with the vision of creating a complete educational course, to promote Gestalt therapy in our cities and to function as a model body for Gestalt therapy application. With professionalism as our guideline and paying special attention to human contact, we tried and continue to try to creatively adapt, so as to include as many dimensions as possible.

I think that the momentum of my enthusiasm and being in love faded at around the ten year mark... At some point, in my continuous toiling, I realized the scale of it all, and that is when my relationship started to change with this living organism that is constantly changing and creating... I started to mull it over, to process the fresh data.

My enthusiasm turned into satisfaction, my desire into gratitude, and my infatuation-love into trust: in contact, in the process, in the momentum of each person and of the group, in human contact...

After several journeys, successes and failures, trials and errors, I continue my relationship with the Gestalt Foundation, more as a... comrade... There are a lot of us now...

The more I think about the journey of the Gestalt Foundation, and, more specifically, my journey within the Gestalt Foundation, the more I find it has a lot in common with the journey of the trainees and the people who accompany our center as a whole.

## 15 years later...!!

We met and were "officially established" in a "snap"!!  
At a time of crisis... Something else suddenly ended and we found ourselves deciding to start something new: The Gestalt Foundation.  
Our teacher and mentor Harm Siemens encouraged us and supported us in this decision of ours.  
So, we went straight into action.  
What we shared was our passion for Gestalt, challenge, creation, commitment...  
On our journey we encountered difficulties, disagreements, struggles, fears... but the decision the decision and the vision the vision!!  
I would not like to say much about our history. What I would really like to do is talk about and thank the people of the Gestalt Foundation, all of us, for creating this history.  
So let's start with the four of us...  
So, the four of us built a home. Our home is in Thessaloniki and in Athens. By ourselves, of course, we could not upkeep such a demanding 'household'. We have had and still have precious help... Our supporters. And again, there were still not enough of us... and so partners joined our forces.  
This is how the children of Gestalt were born, the Gestalt therapists...  
Recently in education, research and therapy groups...  
Gestalt therapists, a long list.  
Athens, Thessaloniki, Larisa, Trikala, Patras, Herakleion, Chania, Cyprus, and more...  
And of course you, the trainees, because without you, this home, this



This is what I see: it all starts with enthusiasm, desire and being in love. Then, the toil starts. Depending on that, satisfaction, gratitude, and trust will arrive. And then, we are able to go on, somewhat more like "comrades". Along parallel journeys and meeting points.  
And here the similarities end. Because what we do at the Gestalt Foundation, which I enjoy, is that we have been doing it for 15 years consistently and with continuous commitment.

The Gestalt Foundation Centre for Training & Psychotherapy is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a steady, continuous course. It keeps all the experience of Gestalt Therapy development of these 15 years, and remains fresh, timely and modern. And we are all part of this "Form" called the Gestalt Foundation. It started with a small constellation and it is growing into a beautiful galaxy.

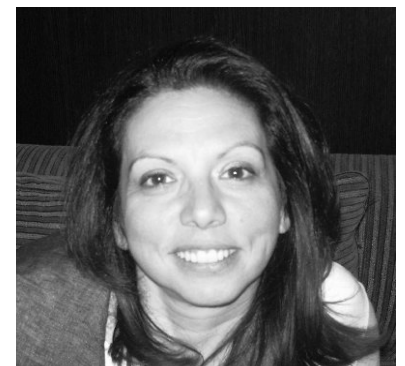
At the Centre's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in Thessaloniki, we were honoured by the presence of our mentor, Harm Siemens, when we were doing what we are doing today. I would like to share with you the end of his speech (which you can find in the 10<sup>th</sup> issue of our newsletter). "A Flemish colleague once said: *"As a teacher you can see the stars of your successors shine brighter and brighter in the sky and your own star slowly fade. The trainers and teachers of Gestalt should be grateful for ishe process of development"*. I hope that the torch will be passed on several times to new generations of colleagues who will be aware of the value of their contribution to a continuous process of commitment."

And as a part of that course, I would like to invite you all to celebrate today. To celebrate the fact that we have all found something to inspire us and that we have all toiled for something that gives meaning to our lives.

Finally, I would like to wish for us all to get to the point of satisfaction, gratitude and trust!

Antonia Konstantinidou

household, would not be alive.  
You belong here, we belong here.  
We are not perfect. We are, however, doing the best we can...!!!  
We do not know everything about Gestalt.  
However, we are here together, to continue learning.  
Our goal is to grow, create and develop into a healthy and discernible "We".



**We....**  
**We** are together in our joy,  
**We** take turns being the colour and the brush  
**We** are together in our pain  
**We** balance ourselves with our group effort  
**We** the rest of us, complete each one of us\*

**We are a COMMUNITY**

**Despina Balliou**

\* In Greek the first letters of each of the five lines make up the word 'we' [emeis]



Continued from page 3

*...commenting on the experience in Karpenisi***The border**

*A pen holder of the heart, I am.  
I do not beat it, it beats.  
It floods me with blood and I write.  
Words of blood.  
I write and am written  
I am a fine spot in the vastness  
And I am vast  
This land is full  
Of vast fine spots  
Again and again  
An future dust, thinking  
I am a border between  
You whom I call I  
And me whom you call you  
What I know I am  
And what I do not know I am  
Makes me know  
what I am: a border.  
I am a secret border in the desert  
And I imagine the expanse of vastness.  
A spark that does not conceive the fire, I am  
And more than a spark,  
I feel like a log that the fire consumes.  
I am a transient wave  
Sliding on the surf of time,  
I disperse and condense  
And mercilessly  
The sea gives birth to me time and again.*

Pavlos

**Karpenisi 9-12 May 2013. Four days full of experiences**

This was my first ever four-day workshop organized by the Gestalt Foundation. Thankfully, those who had participated before us had made sure to let us, newbies, know that it would not be a holiday, but something above and beyond that. So, I had no expectations of rest. In any case, we would all be close to nature and that alone would be resting and therapeutic. I had decided to allow myself to be carried off by the process and the experience. My mind, however, had not realised what that meant. From the very first day my feelings were very intense, since the subject matter of the four days was intense, too: Aggression. One word, a thousand forms. Before the four-day workshop I had never thought of aggression as creative; it had only been intertwined inside me with violence. When I started encountering my truths, I discovered everything but violence... There was nostalgia, pain, grief - it was the first time that so much leeway was available for all these feelings. The security and care I received helped me tear down walls and build bridges, meet the child within me, listen to it, understand it, reassure it and tell it how proud I am of what I am today.

"The whole is greater than the sum of its parts". And what was greater was present and I could feel it. A driving force, a universal self-adjustment that happened effortlessly and I had the joy of being part of it.

Upon returning to the here and now, I have to say that I left with a group of people who knew a lot about me in the context of our training and I returned with a family that I care for and that cares for me. We laughed together, cried together, played together, danced and sang together, and experienced the intensity and emotion of presenting our first group project together. I stood witness to processes that required a lot of courage and I felt waves of emotion and pride. I saw my change take place through sharing and contact, I received and gave courage and daring in order to continue. I was especially pleased in meeting the 1<sup>st</sup> year students of Thessaloniki course, each and every one separately and I felt new strong friendships being born, showing respect to difference and feelings.

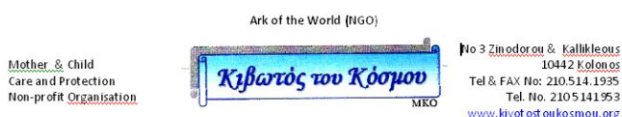
It is important for me to mention the night of the *Helping Hands* ceremony that coincided with Gestalt Foundation's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I wholeheartedly wish all the best to L. F. who will be hosting the little silver hands for a year. I would also like to wish to the founders, Antonia, Yianna, Despina, and Katia to be strong so that they may continue, and I would like to say a great 'thank you' to them for believing in their dream, so that the rest of the Gestalt family and I can now have two "homes" open to house our own dreams. Furthermore, I would like to thank our own mentor, G; by our side with his support and confidence, as well as his noble presence, tenderness and gentleness. The name of Harm Siemens could not be left out; he was a mentor to all the people of the Gestalt Foundation, whom, although I did not have the joy and honour of meeting personally, I would like to thank as his presence was felt through everything he bequeathed us. Furthermore, I would like to thank Dick Lompa for his directness, humanity and humour. Lastly, I would like to thank my group for the indelible memories we created all together, as well as with each member separately, and the older groups, which allowed us to steal a glance at the future of our own group.

I feel endless gratitude for this first experience of mine of a four-day workshop and I must confess that the reality surpassed anything I had imagined. I wish us all a happy continuation on this life journey, with contact and faith that the reality of the moment, when we allow space so that we may experience it, can indeed surpass all expectations!

Yolanda Koraki, 1<sup>st</sup> year - Athens course (2012-2013)

Dear trainees, graduates, associates and friends,

For this Christmas season, we once again chose to send our wishes for the new year by e-mail so as to support the 'ARK OF THE WORLD', an NGO caring for Mothers and Children, which has created a community of human love, a nest of affection and tender care for children. Let us wish that 2013 will bring more hope to all of us.



Athens: 4/1/2013

To THE GESTALT FOUNDATION – I. GIAMMARELOU – A. KONSTANTINIDOU &amp; Co GP

Dear All,

It was with great pleasure that we accepted your money offer, a €200 donation to support our work. This amount will be used to feed our children.  
The children of the "Ark of the World", as you know, come from very poor and unfortunate families and are dependent on us for everything: their food, their clothing, their shoes, their school supplies, their doctor and their medicine - everything comes from us, they have nothing apart from the Ark and your love.  
We constantly strive to improve the children's living conditions and you have positively contributed towards this end in your way.  
Please, accept a great, warm **THANK YOU** from all of us here at the "Ark of the World" for your noble sentiments and your human feelings towards these defenseless children.  
As the "Ark of the World" is in constant search of funds, we hope to have your continued support.  
May God keep you and yours well.

With appreciation  
(signed)  
Stamatia Georganti, *Presbytera*  
Chairwoman  
Ark of the World

All the best – Happy New Year for 2013  
Please, support our cause by calling 901 11 170 170 (€3.67/call, within OTE network) or from a land or mobile phone on 14849 (€2.46/call) or by sending an SMS to 54232 ((€2.46/SMS)

Care, Love & Education for children and mothers in need  
\*The title of a priest's wife

# 15<sup>th</sup> Four day Gestalt Therapy Workshop "Aggression" Its functional and non functional aspects in Gestalt therapy



## Attack of Love (or Lowering the Shield)

I carry it like a third hand. You recycle it like your oxygen. Together, we raise our voices as one and proudly declare: "Love is War!". This is what our shields once taught us, and this is how we charge into battle. I am an entire homeland. You are another entire homeland. How can I see you with this heavy steel blurring my vision? How can you hear me, when my words become an echo between our weapons?

As I charge ahead, I invade your territory. It may be with a caress, an insult, a word; or with a glass of water that was the turning point. Without asking you. But instead of you I encounter your shield. Your denial, your avoidance; you freeze. Maybe someone, at some point in time, hurt you with a glass of water. But you never even had a chance to try some of mine.

Then you pick up speed. There is no time for a truce, you think, my homeland is in flames, the customs and traditions I have been observing faithfully all these years are at risk. The very next second, you have overrun me completely, my first lines of defense are decimated and I stand alone, with no other alternative than to raise my white flag. My own shield. I surrender and agree with you; I agree even though half myself has been killed; even though we have been globalized. My traditional dance is losing its steps, your national dish is blended into a mush. And together we become a colorless cola. To hell with it, though - at least we have a truce.

"Love is War". This monotonous mantras has been sounding within me since I was young - it has tired me out. I do not want any more war in order to be able to love. But I do not want peace, either. Settling our differences seems like a torturously boring utopia.

I want truth. An attack of truth, with exciting journeys in the lands of each one of us. Not as tourists, but as travellers. I want to show you my dances, without expecting you to follow my every step. I want to try your dishes, without you expecting me to like all of them. I want to visit your unique cities and enjoy them, without shrinking in their vastness. I want you to wander around my mountains and seas, without binoculars and a camera, to see them for what they really are. For me to rest in your piazzas, for you to cool your feet in my waters and touch my soil.

An attack of love means daring a journey in your land, daring to learn and listen to its beat, without abandoning that of my own country.

An attack of love means that you will trust me to do so.

An attack of love means looking at my map, but also putting it aside now and then, to carve your own path within me.

An attack of love means my trusting you to do so.

An attack of love means daring to throw aside our shields, armour and masks. To the extent we can at any given time.

An attack of love means picking up a paintbrush, dipping it into our inner wealth and painting a rainbow between us- it takes both the sun and the rain to bring out its beauty.

Thaleia Logotheti, 4<sup>th</sup> Athens.

## AT-TACKING\* BODY, A VEHICLE FOR SELF KNOWLEDGE AND COMMUNICATION

"Fire in the belly: exploring how we process aggression from a body gestalt point of view".

This was the subject we were called on to approach for 3 days at the May seminar, under Favo Barbello's valuable guidance. Thirteen participants from various parts of Greece, with a range of "burdens" on our souls and a common ground in our being involved/working professionally with other people, not necessarily as psychotherapists, since some of us work in the broader health sector (not mental), communication or marketing.

Our three day journey surprised and impressed us; it moved us and motivated us to allow our body to reveal its secrets and what it openly displays. Through seemingly simple exercises and processes, such as drawing what aggression looks like for each of us, playing blind man's buff or even meditating, we managed to reach revelatory and, perhaps, even shocking realizations.

It was impressive to experience the transformation of the group from its initial state at which thirteen separate bodies each expressed their aggression towards everyone else separately, with, in fact, tension at times (mainly internal or within limits, expressed verbally), to a condition of coordination, where even a different viewpoint or any conflict was transformed into a field for fertile contact and dialogue. I will not forget how an imperceptible clenching of the fist, a knotting of the legs, pulling back from the group circle or outstretched arms and neck thrown back, gave Favo the opportunity to "at-tack" any of us and to provoke our own "at-tack", an attack of realization, reconciliation and communication of the internal with the external.

And it is characteristic that on the board that was set up during the first day of the group, under the word/concept of aggression, words such as anger, rage, explosion had been written, while on the last day words such as communication, creation and proximity were added. And each of us looking at the drawing of aggression that we had made on the first day felt the need to change that drawing, to enrich it or to throw it away at the end! A charming and fertile process the impact of which, I suspect, will accompany our lives for a long time.

Kyriakos Ikonomidis

*\*in Greek: go against, be placed on top*



## Aggression: from the individual to the community - from love to violence.

*'my senses all, a raging tempest  
beating against the forest of my nerves  
Flesh baying with its flaming tongues!'*\*

Pablo Neruda

Upon hearing the word *aggression* its negative connotation is the first sensation experienced. But what happens after this initial perception?

Greece is experiencing pluralism in its social and political life and this has been identified with the word "aggression" through images, the news, different views and "snapshots". A split that is both political and social not that it did not exist before that has found a framework within which to be expressed. Up to what point is violence allowed, up to what point does the saying "the end justifies the means" separates a violent act from its reprehensible content? And what is the reason, in the end, that makes us tolerate instances of violence at the altar of repressed anger, indignation and reactivism?

Being born is violent. People enter this world through a violent change, and this is the only way: through pain and physical pressure. And then the conditions of one's life may impose a higher or lower level of aggression, if one accepts the view that aggression opens up into a broad spectrum. At one end of this spectrum we will place the obvious: raw and deliberate acts of violence. At the other, as contradictory as it may seem on the surface, we will place love; a love that requires an outward force in order for it to be expressed, an at-tack in the sense that I place myself into a situation. And thus, it is easy for us as a society of free individuals to denounce violence, as we all agree on the lack of respect, the injustice and, perhaps, the immorality of such an action. However, the borderlines become less discernible from the moment one touches me when I do not wish them to do so, clearly driven by their

intent for intimacy. Indeed, at that moment, from my position, I am receiving an aggressive act. How comprehensible is that? And how explicitly can this discomfort be expressed?

When it comes to aggression the limits are formed by the cause, the effect and the means at the same time. The limits of my psychological space as an individual existence, as a couple, as a group, as a society. When limits are defined and respected, then aggressive behaviours cannot but have a functional status. When, as a person, I respect the person opposite me, even the very tender act of embracing that person will be provided in a way that is not a violation (or it will not be provided, if deemed unnecessary) and this will result in healthy contact fearless and unimpeded. As a social group, we will engage in violent aggressive tactics (even the symbolic occupation of a street is aggressive in the flow of community life) and will thus achieve change, growth, revolution words are selected on the basis of the ideological background of each group. Let us not forget that in order to renegotiate or conquer new rights, a struggle (not necessarily physical or class struggle) is necessary. Assertion, in whatever way it is realized, belongs to the spectrum of aggression, perhaps somewhere in its middle part.

At a time when fascist, racist references of all shades abound and succeed in what they truly aim at, terrorizing people, it is inevitable that the recipient at the other end feels the need to resort to defensive stances and behaviours, i.e. the flip side of the same coin. An over-expressed aggression on one side and a suppressed aggression on the other - the rope stretching dangerously.

The 4-day workshop of the Gestalt Foundation was a very good reason for me to reflect upon the tug of war of aggression, to understand it instead of rejecting it, to accept it instead of justifying it, to see its darkest side, which, here, in contradiction, contains caring, passion and love. And yet again, respect of what is different is put forward, not so that I may incorporate extreme and heinous violence into what is "normal" and "allowable", but in order for me to reduce its frequency at the other end of the spectrum, to make my love more real, without obstacles and cracks.

Katerina Papanikolaou

Trainee, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Thessaloniki

\* translated into English from the Greek translation by G. Kentrotis  
Pablo Neruda



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