



Gestalt NEWS Foundation

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1st International Summer Camp Gestalt Foundation

9-12th JULY 2015, TZOUMERKA

Truth or Dare... exploring «my» nature

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Gestalt Foundation



IANOS
ΑΛΥΣΙΔΑ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ

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-Do you want to play?
 -Yes, yes, yes ... but what?
 -Truth or Dare...

"Ah!" and then I thought ... I'm afraid of that game ... I'll choose only "dare"... I'm not that good with "truth"...

"And what if they decide on "dare"... no, no, no, I'll choose always "truth"..."

**Presentations at IANOS
in Athens and Thessaloniki**

**17th 4-days
Gestalt Psychotherapy Workshop
14-17 of May 2015**



The new academic year began with intense changes in the field ... in social, political, economic context as well as geographical. The issue you are now holding was "printed" in our new offices in Thessaloniki. Now we

can be reached on the 2nd floor at 109 Metropoleos str. We will be very happy to welcome you in our new offices for seminars, groups, training programs or for coffee and "sharing".

These past 6 months were filled with action, thoughts and emotions ... literally from one corner of the world to the other.

We wanted to "share" with you few "moments" of these 6 months trying to convey the aura of the circumstance.

Springtime fragrances from the 17th 4day workshop in Agria Volos, summer breeze from our 1st summer camp in Tzoumerka, fall essences from the lectures held for the 5th consecutive year at Ianos in both Thessaloniki and Athens and a

taste of winter with this cold sensation and void left by the untimely passing of our friend Ken Evans.

Intense emotions, magical pictures, unique feelings, genuine meetings.

A great big thank you to all those who contributed and are still contributing, each on their own way, to this unique soul journey we have all started together. We have to especially thank Christina for her work and support in the Thessaloniki office for these past 6 months but also for setting up this issue.

Enjoy your read, till we meet again

Happy holidays and a Happy New Year to us all!



Katia Hatzilakou

MSc Social and Clinical Psychology AUT, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Trainer and Supervisor, Member of NOGT, EAGT, ECP Holder, Founding member of Gestalt Foundation

On the occasion of the "performance- tribute" to the "Shedia" street magazine Friday 15/5/2015. A performance held during the 17th 4day Gestalt Psychotherapy workshop titled "I am the society I live in"... Choreographing my personal and social responsibility.

Primal expression, modern dance, stage "play", tango.

Intriguing movement and an open invitation from the people who represent it. Helen, Konstantinos, Nikolas, Sotiris...

Destination: a performance through our own personal journey.

A very alluring proposal made even more appealing by the presence of Katia ... our beacon in every port.

Birth, motion, evolution, loneliness, meeting, union...

Joy, sorrow, happiness, pain, strength, freedom, LOVE ...

Me ... You ... Us ...

Where do we begin, where do we go, where are we, what do we want, what can we do, what do we accept, what do we reject, what do we expect and what do we select?

I dance, I welcome, I try, I work, I play, I for-give, I bid farewell and I begin ... again from the start ... and every time in a different way, FLOW!!!!

Intense moments, powerful emotions, special people who I have already met; and people who even though I met for the first time seemed familiar.

Fellow travelers on the dancing path of my life. I thank you from the bottom of my heart

for this extraordinary performance that I had the privilege to enjoy. As a member of the audience I felt deeply all these beautiful moments that I used to feel as a member of the team. Your introspective work made me so emotional and the aesthetics were unique.

I would like to congratulate the people of "Shedia" who were sponsored by this performance.

Your work may be considered a vocation and a great comfort to those who have lost so much and with your help they are trying to regain some sense of dignity, courage and determination.

Finally I would be remising if I don't mention the people of Gestalt.

I believe that the activities you organize in any level provide us with the ability to try, to move forward, to evolve and finally and consciously, make the changes that we can afford in our lives.

With my long-lasting Love

Christina Iakovidou.

LOGOTECHNIA

MELETEΣ

BEST SELLERS ΕΞΑΜΗΝΟΥ

 ΔΟΥΜΑΣ ΚΑΝΑΚΗΣ ΑΝΤΩΝΗΣ ΗΓΙΑΜΠΑ... ΜΙΑ ΚΑΝΟΝΙΚΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ	 IRVIN D. YALOM ΠΛΑΣΜΑΤΑ ΜΙΑΣ ΜΕΡΑΣ ΠΑΛΟΜ ΙΡΒΙΝ	 ΜΙΧΑΕΛΣ ΚΟΡΤΕΣ ΕΡΟΣ ΑΝΙΚΑΤΕ ΜΑΖΑΝ	 ΧΑ ΧΟΜΕΝΙΔΗΣ ΝΙΚΗ
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ΙΑΝΟΣ

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HONORARY
TRIBUTE**A letter to KEN**

I think about you every day.
It may seem too much but it is true.

As a moderator, as a human being, as a colleague, as a trainer and as a mentor.

You stood by me when I faced my most difficult moments, you supported my "extreme" choices, and you justified deep existential parts of me.

You generously shared you knowledge with me, you taught me the meaning of integrity by you stance in life and, I dare say, even in death.

Moments, too many moments ... when I admired you, I doubted you, I followed you, I believed you, I judged you, I acknowledged you, and I accepted you.

Moments, too many moments ... we fought, we made up, we laughed, we cried, we sang ...

Moments, too many moments ... and occasions today and everyday that your absence is felt stronger than a presence.

This "letter" might seem too personal and some may judge that it is inappropriate for a newsletter like this.

I would dare say to those who think that ... that they haven't met Ken, Ken Evans.

It is impossible for me to think about Ken in any other not "personal" way ...

And I believe that those of you who knew him you would feel the same.

Ken ... Ken Evans, from Wales, so personal and in the same time so "collective"... in every context ...

So devastatingly present even in his shockingly absence!

I wish you well, wherever you are ... I imagine close to the God you served and the people who show leave before you and so close to each and every one of us who had the good fortune of knowing you, through our memories and your extraordinary legacy, your books.

God speed... and as you always said... till we meet again...!

Katia Hatzilakou

Evans Kenneth, Dr.
Ken Evans is the Founding Director of the European Centre for Psychotherapeutic Studies based in the UK and France. He is Visiting Professor at the University of

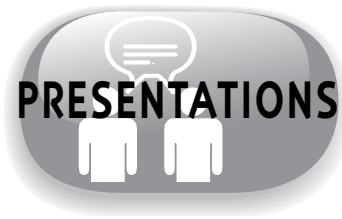
South East Europe, Faculty of Business Studies and Law, Novi Sad, where he co-authored with Vesna Petrovic a new MA in Psychotherapy.

Ken is an Academic Advisor and Academic Consultant with the Doctoral programme at the Metanoia/University of Middlesex, London. He co-leads a psychotherapy training programme in Jersey in the Channel Isles with his wife Joanna and is a visiting trainer to several training institutes across Europe.

He was President of EAGT 2002-2008 and is currently President of the European Association for Integrative Psychotherapy and Vice President of the European Interdisciplinary Association for Therapy with Children and Young People.

(Hereby you can read the curriculum vitae that Ken sent us to use it in the Continuing Education Program entitled "Relational Gestalt Psychotherapy", that was held in the academic year 2014-2015 in Athens. Ken Evans was one of the invited trainers on the topic "How inter subjectivity is combined with relational Gestalt Psychotherapy: pushing the boundary of theory and practice").





...at the IANOS Cultural Center

Notes on Exarmania's Papa, Dimitra's Hatzara and Konstantina's Gioni presentation "I love as I learned, as I choose, as I move forward", Athens 15/04/2015



"I love as I learned, as I choose, as I move forward". I was eagerly awaiting this lecture. Not only because it was on the subject of love but also

because it was presented by some of my favorite people. When I arrived at Ianos the lecture had already started. I scanned the packed room searching for familiar faces but I realized that there was none. This wasn't a 4day workshop with Gestalt trainers and trainees. It was a different place and we had different roles. We've grown up, that was what came to mind. Listening to Nia talking about how love is the need and the motivation to explore and learn something new I couldn't help but think back to 2001. Back to the old Gestalt Foundation offices in Lycabetus area where the first and second year trainees were attending a seminar on polarization. It was there when we first met and our common course began. The sentence "... love is active not a passive condition, it is an art, it requires knowledge, skills and practice ..." brought me back to the present. The perspective that love is active happily shattered the passive notion that I had for love from the fairytales I had heard from my grandmother. I kept as a mental note the word art because it left me with the optimistic sense that love is not stagnant but something that evolves as long as we live. "Love is love, what changes is the relationship". That was what Dimitra was saying and with that she opened the chapter on early relationships and how they affect the way we love and we deal with different kind of relationships as we move on in our life: motherly love, brotherly love, friendships, romantic love, love for ourselves and our society. That idea send me back to the 80's when I remember as a child listening for the sound of hills on the pavement because that meant that my mother was coming home. I remembered my brother and I felt grateful that I have him as a brother and I remembered the soft spot that I have for my father in spite of our difficult communication! Then it was time to listen to Konstantinos speaking about friendship and how Aristotle claimed that it is the prerequisite for happiness and my mind again traveled back to kindergarten where

I made my first friend. I made a quick stop at my high school years, my first courtships and then to university and my first "unsuccessful" attempts to the art of love!

I returned to the present thinking I learned the concept of loving myself and society through my relationship with Gestalt, as a patient and a therapist.

Leaving the venue I felt emotional but mostly grateful for the loving relationships that I had, have and continue to search, in my life. For that and for the journey, I thank you!

Helena Antoniou, *Psychologist-Gestalt Psychotherapist, MSc Counseling Studies.*

Notes on Kon. Kosta's lecture "Rush as a Psychological Phenomenon at the Beginning of the 21st century", Athens, 07/05/2015

Konstntinos gave a well rounded view on rush and how it is connected with violence, authoritarianism, identification with and maximization of profit. To me it came as a surprise how an ordinary everyday word, shown under a different light had become



the compass to my everyday experience. What I took away from the lecture was the probable deepest causes for this rush and the consequences of constantly living thinking "how am I going to make it on time?"; losing the present, sacrificing a vital communication with each other. Another noteworthy comment was made on the readjustment of people to a constantly faster pace that gradually negates the pauses and our ability to enjoy and appreciate our lives. It was a subject that touched the audience who afterwards participated with questions. But for me the most important thing was that in the beginning I found myself amongst strangers and ended up, slowly and gently a member of a group of people discussing things that concern all of us.

Helena Kourneta

Notes on B. Katsamaka's and T. Savvaidou lecture "A journey to the land of anger and hostility in children", Thessaloniki 16/10/2015

"A journey to the land of anger and hostility in children" The first Gestalt Foundation lecture for the year was given in Ianos, Thessaloniki on Friday, October 16th. It was a lecture on anger and hostility in children, misunderstood feelings that affect all of us regardless gender, position or age.

Our guides in this journey were two beloved colleagues, Vicky Katsamaka and Terpsihori Savvaidou, we were co-trainees in the Thessaloniki GF program between 2006-2010. Their presence in front of the microphones was enough to let time unfold simultaneously in the present and the past as a parallel process



dragging up memories from the 3rd years 4day workshop when the team was in action ...

I carefully follow the “now” of the lecture: What is anger, hostility, what causes them, what are the factors contributes to their appearance, and how we can deal with them? What is Gestalt psychotherapy stand on these feelings that on the one hand make our life difficult and on the other brings us in touch with the rest of the word and mainly, with ourselves.

I’m processing the well organized information I get from the lecturers as a mother, as an educator and a psychotherapist. But I find myself mostly feeling proud for both Vicky and Terpsihori and the way they support their arguments as speakers and professionals with sweetness, consistency and honesty. They speak and I’m transported back to the years of our training together when we were trying to recognize feelings and behaviors, to give meaning to experiences, to charter our course, to share moments “together”. These “together” moments are the ones that I will never forget. They are a treasure to me even after all those years, even though we don’t see each other as often, even though our views on life may have changed.

These were the moments that you brought back to my mind and for that, girls, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. These moments of your personal evolution was reflected on the way you supported your position in this lecture.

I wish you the best

Katia Soueref, Gestalt Foundation graduate.

Notes on the “Art and Psychotherapy” presentation and the presentation of Elli’s Freggidou poetry collection “Right of Light”, Thessaloniki, 30/10/2015

For Elli...

“I live for your shadow
it’s not easy
-believe me...”

...and you walked out of the shadow and dazzled us all with the depth of your inner world and the poetic tone that resides in you, dear Elli...

It was a warm October evening at 7mm in Ianos in Thessaloniki at an event organized with the collaboration of Gestalt Foundation. My dear friend and colleague Elli Freggidou presented her second collection of poems titled: “Right of Light”, published by Kedros. It wasn’t the presentation of just a collection but the presentation of Elli’s journey through the streets of psychotherapy and art. A merger of awareness and a soul searching journey filled with indelible memories. As her friends and colleagues we were emotionally attending in deep silence the presentation moderated by Katia Soueref, at Elli herself, and the poet’s Alexandra Bakonika opinion and the letter of support from Katia Hatzilakou who wasn’t there with us but it felt like she was ... The evenings moderator Katia warmed our hearts with her deep and heartfelt words for Ellis work. They displayed a deep respect for her work both as a friend and a colleague. The poet Alexandra Bakonika also offered her opinion on Ellis’s work and noted: “...Elli writes with transparency and immediacy, it seems as if she doesn’t hide her emotions from her audience...”

Dear Elli you really brought forward a lot of emotions that night, you moved us and you reminded us of our common journey. We, your friends, as well as the other people present that evening, were there to taste the fruits of your journey through poetry and



the expression of your soul!

It was a unique experience and we thank you for that...

I would like to share with you a few verses from Elli’s poetry collection “Right of Light”

Bow

I breathe out firebricks
warm air and concrete weight.
The walls of a two storey English house
rests on my lungs.
I’m scared of going mad
draining the nothingness of my mind
the terror of definitiveness houses me
and cowardly, very cowardly I ask of me:
“I don’t want any more to bow to anyone”.

Those who love you and hear you we cannot but bow to your talent...

Katsikidou Marina, Gestalt Foundation graduate

FREE EXPRESSION

The “relational” in the field

In the 17th 4day Gestalt psychotherapy workshop, held in Agria in Volos at the Valis Resort Spa & Conference Center between

14-17th of May 2015, we shifted our focus on the fundamental function of interaction within the Field. The interaction that implies codependence constitutes the base, the prerequisite and the creative cause of all the relationships between the elements involved in the Field.

How these relationships evolve in the continuum of experience is what determines the opening of a new perspective in life...

A “field” of magic

Each year the 4day workshop doesn't fail to impress me. Images, faces, random meetings, alternating emotions- so many that I don't believe they could fit in a day. I can't forget what was for me, the highlight of the 4day, when I found myself alone in my room feeling so absolutely happy for what I had experienced. I would like to say a huge thank you to all those who participated in the workshop because the all helped to create the field. I still recall the psychotherapeutic “work” we did, the random look with a stranger in the dining room, the physical exercises, and the verbal connection under the influence of alcohol at the Gala. A random collage of elements in the field that helped to make my 4day experience a magical one.

Ultimately what is the field? Certainly it was something that could not be repeated. What we experienced in these 4 days is unique to us who where there. It was our own field, with its good and difficult moments and those who where there experienced something singular compared to those who weren't there. That off course doesn't mean that those who weren't there weren't a part of the field. “Field the Self of the Cosmos”, that was the title of the seminar. I'll come back to that later but what I would say is that the workshop functioned as a reflection of the world. The 4day workshop for us the trainees is the point that marks the end of the year. A cocktail of “easy” and “difficult” emotions that spectacularly merge in the “relational” at the Gala. As I approach the end of my training I feel sad that I have to attend only one more 4day workshop. This was the year that I felt closer than any other to my fellow trainees as well as the people who where there. Invisible strings seemed to move our relationship as we moved back and forth in a verbal and non verbal communication. This 4day workshop was a joyful review of the things we all experienced the previus years. So join me and help me create our next field, either for the next training year or the next 4day workshop. And remember that whatever happens we will all be together.

Athasiadis Giorgos, 3rd year trainee, Athens.

Walking the line between relationship and loneliness. The 4day workshop experience in broad strokes

The 4day workshop comes back to mind through faces, glances, smells, hugs, bodies I've touched, hands that I've held. Intense, full days. With a little less trepidation and anxiety compared to last year. What I liked this time around for myself was that allowed me to let go ... in the there and then ... to what gave birth to the experience! For a while the possibilities stopped to exist. I felt that it didn't matter with who I was with, where I'm going to sit, what I'm going to say, whether I'll be noticed or not. A little more relaxed, prepared and secure facing what the moment would bring. And for me that is a change because I was and still I'm scared of crowds. I felt that I could lose myself in the crowd; somehow as if I didn't “exist”. Like merging my components and blending my raw materials. Each and every one of the people, who looked at me, looked at me differently. Each and every one had a different point of view of my form. Sometimes I find that upsetting. I feel that each pair of eyes looking at me represents a mirror. Sometimes this mirror is a small one and

I can only see some pieces of myself in it. The eyes, the nose, the hair ..., but never the whole. Sometimes the mirror is a huge one and with just a glance I recognize myself. I can see me whole. Untutored. Effortlessly. Because in the end what I see in me through the eyes of the others hasn't got to do only with who I am but also on whether the mirror in front of me is spacious one or not. I like spacious mirrors! I find them relaxing and comforting!

When the motion seminar finished (Body: the ontological space of being) I felt like an empty bucket. If you turned me upside down nothing would come out. I found myself in a state of almost, absolute harmony. I felt that my inside world was in balance with the outside world. During the whole seminar I let my body go. From the let go I let it guide me. I trusted the movements it bore without judgment or too much analysis. Whatever happened that day was one of the most gratifying experiences of my life. Working with my body and its motion provided the absolute counter weight to my always focused on the mind existence. That is where the center of my existence resides. I want to leave it and reconnect with my body. It feels more complete this way. I know that. I need that. I felt that. I feel it every time I do something that involves movement. Sometimes I put on some music in my room ... different kinds of music that somehow connect to me, and I start dancing ... not exactly dancing ... at least not in the usual way. I let the music wash through me, flow in me and I let her guide me wherever she wants ...Weird moves, primitive, socially “awkward” and incoherent moves. It is so relaxing. Therapeutic! Healthy! I think that if I hadn't let my mind absorb me I would have become a dancer. I envy dancers. The perfection in their movements, their levitation, their flexibility, their rhythm, their “embodied emotion”. But as Konstantinos pointed out during the seminar ... all humans are dancers!!!

Overall the sense from the 4day workshop was a sweet one. What I'm going to remember, and I'll remember it physically, as a record, is how beautiful it is to relinquish yourself to the field, to what is happening, without assumptions and prerequisites. That doesn't mean that the experience will always be a pleasant one. But the field is fluid. It changes! I change! Constantly! My body knows this ... Maybe even better than my brain ... it is very nice to be able to listen and trust it.

Thomas Psallidas, 2nd year, Thessaloniki.

My extended family

There are times when things seem a little darker and a little more difficult ... That is the time you need your significant others or your family ...



At a moment like that I decided to attend once again a Gestalt 4day workshop ...

The last time I participated was back in 2011 when I finished my training. Since then I hadn't attended a Gestalt seminar ... maybe because I had an overdose of seminars during my training years ... maybe because I focused on trauma therapy ... I had left it behind ...

This was a difficult a year for me and when the time came I decided it ... unconsciously, maybe because I wanted to feel the embrace of my extended family ...

I had cast them in their roles since my first year in Gestalt ... Antonia was the mother ... the ever carrying eyes; even though she doesn't speak you know she is there ... Katia is the dad, she is there but has a different role, she tells you what you are doing wrong and teaches you to move on; you know that

she is busy and not always there but not intentionally ... and then there are the aunts and uncles ... first of all Giorgos who if I hadn't cast Katia as the father he would have earned the role ... he is someone who even though I don't know so well I feel comfortable enough to tell him even my wildest thoughts ... Gianna is the aunt who tries to come across as a strict one but she is so sweet and kind hearted that you can't help but laugh when she tries to play the tough one ... and then is Despina ... another aunt who helped me learn and start working with traumas, first with my own and then with others ... like the aunt who is working on something that you know it is cool and you would like to try it for yourself ... and of course my brothers and sisters ... starting with Christina at the secretariat, to the people I met and loved all those years involved with Gestalt ... It was to those that I wanted to come close to once again and to feel safe to make a change that was both difficult and painful.

What can I say other than that I feel deeply grateful and fortunate that I'm part of this extended family ...

Askaridou Victoria, Psychotherapist Gestalt Foundation graduate, Trauma therapist (EMDR,BRS, CRM), Sandplay Therapist, Therapeutic Hypnosis.

Passage from the 3rd year trainees presentation on the subject: "... each lose is nothing more than a change and change is the delight of nature" Marcus Aurelius

"The loss of youth and the fear of death"

And suddenly my eyes glance at the hands on the clock, something that I never used to do. What is happening? When did they stop their clockwise movement? Why do they move backwards? What are they counting down? Do they count down my life?

But yes ... it's been a while since I show these wrinkles and these grey hairs on my head, that I'm trying so desperately to hide. And then there is this weight that I can't seem to be able to shed so easily. And nowadays I often feel weak and tired, as if something has changed drastically in my body. Some small health issues made their appearance in my front door. I'm getting older or could it be that I'm aging?

The kids don't seem to need me anymore. They spread their wings. At work after all those years I feel tired. I'm thinking of retirement. Really I want to so much ... but it frightens me so much!!

Lately all too often I hear of the passing of friends and acquaintances, people my own age. I say: "what a pity" and "too soon, too soon". And I feel sad and scared.

And my parents seem to live on borrowed time. That's what I jokingly say, but deep down I'm sorry for their helplessness and the end that I see coming.

Lately I seem to have lost my sense of fun, my charm, as my husband use to call it. He hasn't said that in quite a while ... doesn't he see it anymore? Yes it's been a while since he last said it ... doesn't he pay attention to me anymore? Now that I thinking about it I don't pay attention to me anymore. When did that happened? I really didn't notice.

My eyes are stuck on the watches hands. Yes I'm certain they move anti-clockwise. My God what are they counting down? It is not fair. There are a lot of things that I haven't lived, that I had postponed. There are a lot of things that I hadn't crushed, that I had given second chances, and that I left for later ... I didn't had the time to take care of myself, others came first. It's not fair!! Now I remember I have dreams left in my closet waiting for me.

These hands on the watch are broken!! Where do they take me? To my decline? To my end? But I still have a life to live ... a life that is now crying. I have soul left to give ... how can I leave it like that? And to go where? To somewhere that seems pathetic and atrocious? That was always the way I looked on old age and death and now you are telling me that is something that comes closer everyday ... it's not fair!!! And you ... you were always relentless counting down my time without care, without a reminder or a warning for the coming end. And I always had the sense that I had a lot of time and I wasted it and gave it away and waited and postponed and I didn't

dare. I couldn't see the today, I left it for tomorrow. "It is not fair ... not fair" I shout and I take it in my hand and I threaten it ... "I'm going to crush you, stop ... where are you taking me? Somewhere I don't know anything about? Somewhere where there is darkness? Where everything ends, rots and is forgotten?"

Anxiously I start searching for old fairytales that speak of life after death. Some say that there is hope; there is a God, vindication, continuation. Others are promising more lives, more chances. Some others speak of the ultimate end, mental and physical; a sweet end, like a long peaceful sleep for someone tired, brave, with no regrets and no memories. You peak and chose. Which do you find more comforting? They all sound good ... but I'm hurting.



I know that pain ... I've lost a lot ... I've traded a lot. But I always had tomorrow, the chance to live even though I wasn't living. But I'm scared to walk bravely to where I'm supposed to go. How can I surrender to fate when I haven't lived? A life without a medal of honor, without heroics, without turmoil, without journeys and battles. Always a follower, a helper, a keeper, always allowing. Alas!!!

If only I had time; maybe I wouldn't feel so frightened. If I felt proud and fulfilled maybe I wouldn't mind giving in vain my body. But now I hurt and I'm scared. How can this be considered maturity, this aging and how can this long sleep, this death, be considered peaceful since I never fought for anything and I never fulfilled my potential.

I keep staring at the watch with hate and anger as if the watch is to blame for everything, even for what I leave behind. I ponder on the meaning of my life, on what my life can teach and become an example for others, my children; my friends. What was useful about me that others can emulate? Yes I was an obedient child that never really had her revolution. I accepted my father's will, my teacher's, later on my husband's, my employer's. At my most creative age I gave up or postponed my studies for the sake of family and orderly and consistently I served my role as a housewife, a mother, a daughter in law, a daughter, an employee. An employee that never asked for a sick day, never talked back, never asked for a raise, never dared to quit, even when her dignity was trampled. I had to support my family. I always had to ... always something had to ... An always the fear of confrontation, imposition, vindication. Labor, only labor ... Labor for survival. But yes ... that's it!!! That is what I achieved!!! I managed to comply, to survive, to float, to sustain myself. But that doesn't seem like a life. There is no risk in that, there is no thrill, there are no victories, and there are no trophies. Only compromises ... Alas!! My heart always craved for that. I'm not going to give it up ... I'm scared!!!

If only I could break that watch. Eliminate time, start again, justify my life; go out on the street as a vagrant. To utterly spent myself to the core and then relinquish my body. Tired, wounded, fulfilled and empty of soul. I wonder ... could I make it?

Zoi Papadoniadou, 3rd year Thessaloniki

9-12th JULY 2015 TZOUMERKA

Moderators:

Antonia Konstadinidou

Maria Farmaki

Katia Hatzilkou

A simple childhood game that has an impact. For some people it opened daring paths, for others brought them in touch with difficult and unspeakable truths. It still remains a way to explore developmental issues and existential concerns.

For this seminar we employed courage, honesty, team spirit and a relational process to touch on and explore the nature surrounding us as well as the nature inside us. To “share” knowledge and experience using mountain climbing, canoeing, kayak, rafting, meditation, yoga. Modern and primitive dance, percussions, hiking, bird watching, team night games...

“My courage and my truth”

It read: 1st international Gestalt Foundation summer camp.

Title: “Truth or Dare...exploring “my” nature”

The location: Tzoumerka. What do you mean Tzoumerka. They have taken us at Zaharias Papantoniou “Great Mountains”.

The road was long, easy at the start but gradually became more and more difficult. Too many turns, uphill, downhill, a little bit like life. The view was magnificent! Lush green landscapes, embraced by rocks and rivers, bridges and trees.

When we finally reached our destination the warm smile on Konstantinas and Aggelos faces at the “Anavasi” Mountain Resort was our first reward. The hotel was neatly kept and in complete harmony to the surroundings.

Immediately we went through the necessary “tour” of the grounds. This is going to be held here, that other thing over there...

Then it was time to meet the people from “Katafygio”. More hills, more turns, more rocks, big and small and then the revelation: a place where God meets man. Strogoula was looking at us from above and the green landscape reached as far as your eyes can see. We were welcomed by Pola and Babis, two smiling and kind



Truth or Dare... exploring «

people who offered us delicious homemade lemonade.

Next day (Thursday), new and old friends began to make their way and eventually our “teams” or if you will our “fellowships” were created.

The weather was unpredictable. Rain followed by sunshine, heat by cold (really the night was too breezy!!!)

Arts workshop, titled: “Journey to the center of my nature”,

Poetry workshop, titled: “Poetic dialogs: the beginning of the eternal all”, motion workshop: “Contact”

Our “beehive” was constantly buzzing.

Friday started with rain that ruined our plans but “creative adjustment” is our motto.

Meditation, yoga, poetry workshop: “Poetic dialogs: the beginning of the eternal all”, a percussions workshop and a visit to the “Kipina” monastery (built in 1212 and literally hanging from the mountain), hiking to the “watermills” and an introduction to the “Kalarritikos” river. Meanwhile at the Katafygio the doll encouragement workshop titled: “With my doll: her courage and my truth” was on. A full day’s program that left you with a sense of sweet tiredness.

On Saturday for those who stayed at “Anavasi” there was the Art workshop: “Journey to the center of my nature”. For the rest of us the day’s menu was rafting the Araxthos River.

What an experience! We went there by car and we reached Plaka Bridge (the largest one arch stone built bridge in the Balkans; it is 40 meters wide and 20 meter height. Unfortunately last winter it collapsed because of the flash floods caused by heavy rainfall and a large tree trunk that fell on the flagstones).

Anxious and looking like “seals” out of water we took the small van and after a difficult route we reached our destination where we were supposed to push our rafts in the water.

Our guides explained what we were supposed to do if we encounter an OBSTACLE, how we paddle back or forth. RIGHT IN FRONT, LEFT BACK, ALL TOGETHER IN FRONT! Steady voices, simple commands that we had to follow IMMEDIATELY and they were serious because otherwise we would fall from the raft.

5 rafts each carrying 6 people with an experienced “mindful” guide and we are on our way. “Finally we achieved uniformity”. We all looked like seals wearing red lifejackets, helmets on our heads and rows in our hand we started paddling religiously following the instructions we were given (as if we had a choice). Noises and laughter. “Others with our raft?” “A boat alone in the blue sea” and other songs like that.

The scenery fantastic, passages that required our full corporation to cross, waterfalls, creaks and rocks, trees, gorges, monoliths, the face of river Araxthos reflected on the rocks, the Plaka Bridge; were a few of the things we encountered.

r Dear...

my» nature



You could see the smile on everybody's face reflecting the joy of finding the courage to attempt such an endeavor and the satisfaction provided by the outcome.

Return to "Anavasis" for the articulacy workshop titled: "Today-Now), the doll encouragement workshop titled: "With my doll: her courage and my truth", the percussions workshop and the "Jam" motion workshop.

The night's entertainment was provided by the percussions section and it was really unique and beautiful.

Sunday began with a hiking route to Katarraktis. Bird watching, meditation in the forest and the Thai Massage workshop rounded up the schedule.

A schedule full of courage, truth, camp fire moments, sharing and co-humanity, with no rest between the workshops but full of breathing space!(how can that be achieved is for you to join us and find out for yourselves).

I would like to thank you so much for helping me to find the "courage" to discover my "truth" in the midst of nature.

Christina Hatzilakou

Camping with my doll: her courage my truth

Since the summer of 2014, the Gestalt management team was working on something. All of us, trainees, therapists and patients, were waiting to see this different seminar that promised to upset the predictability of the previous ones. It's no secret that everybody wagered on where it would be held, what it would include...etc, etc. And then at the Gala on the last day of the 17th 4day Gestalt Psychotherapy workshop came the announcement of the 1st Gestalt Foundation Summer Camp. And so it had arrived, a Gestalt summer camp and an international none the less. When I heard the news I was fascinated by the idea of participating. That night without having more information and swept away by our enthusiasm me and Marialena exchanged glances from three tables away and immediately decided "yes ... yes ...

YES!!". It was as if we signed an informal contract which said: "we are definitely going"! But as an old wise proverb says: "when men make plans God laughs". The Greek government announced a referendum for July 2015 and the possibility of our participation seemed improbable. But still we made it ... because where there is a will there is a way!!! And in this way, without knowing, we managed to fulfill the first challenge of the seminar ... titled: Truth or Dare ... exploring "my" nature".

I thought that as was the case with every other seminar; the process would start from the moment I reached the location, but this time I have to admit I was mistaken.

Since I left Larissa, Truth and Dare was playing in my mind. I started from Larissa with 2 colleagues from the 3rd year of Thessaloniki program, Lefteris and Vasso. You might wonder why, it's understandable, but you must know I have this bad habit ... every time I go on a trip I never check exactly the location, how far it is and thinks like that ... I prefer to be surprised by the route (of course not when I'm the driver)! When Lefteris (our designated driver) came to pick us up on Thursday he informed us that we had a choice between two routes to reach Pramanta, one was easy the other not so much. Randomly, of course, we choose the hardest. Our trip lasted close to 4 hours (if memory serves ...) and it was a beautiful road through an amazing landscape. We climbed and climbed a great big mountain, we breathed the fresh air, we saw rivers, we stopped at natural springs, we marveled at the majesty of nature, we took photos and we freaked out by the multitude of steep turns (that's when I came face to face with my courage), we got lost in the small villages ... and finally we reached the hotel.

It looked like an oasis!

Christina welcomed us with a huge smile. When I show her I calmed down and believed that that was the end of our adventure, but once again I was mistaken, the adventure had only just begun.

We had a quick coffee with our fellow travelers to rest and adjust to our new surroundings. But we were pressed by time and we had to move on because the teams were ready to begin. So we decided to have a small tour of the place. "Anavasis" the hotel, our host was magnificent; very well furnished and decorated and the owners were really polite. I helped the others with their baggage and when we went to their room I was shocked! It was perfect! Wood carvings, two storeys, a great view and a bathroom with a Jacuzzi! I forgot to mention that we had the choice of 3 different accommodations. The hotel, the Mountaineering Shelter in Pramanta and the camping around the shelter area.

In my application form for the seminar I wrote that I would prefer to stay in the camping. Seeing the rooms I began to doubt my decision. I found myself negotiating to stay with the guys just in the small corner underneath the stairs.

"It would be so nice if I could bring my mattress and my sleeping bag and sleep over here ... what do you think? ..." I gave them a huge smile. They were so supportive and welcoming to the idea. "Nice, I said to myself, I have an alternative if I find that the camping is not the best idea". This is impossible since I love camping. I run out to find Christina to get more information about Marialena's whereabouts because I had to leave my things. I found her and enthusiastically asked:

- Where am I staying? Where is Marialena?
- Well you don't stay here, your accommodations are a few kilometers further up ... you'll need a car to get there.
- (I gave her a puzzled look) you mean we are not staying here somewhere around this nice green lawn area?



- No (she answers smiling). It's very beautiful were you are staying. You'll see.

I froze! But then she must know something.

When I reached the shelter I was humbled by the magnificence of the landscape. I wish I could describe it but not even a photograph can do it justice, you have to see it for yourselves. So at the shelter I meet Pola another sweet and kind person and reluctantly I ask her:

- Do you know where I can find Marialena's tent because I don't see her here?
- A! It's over there! She replied full of excitement while pointing somewhere to the left of the shelter.
- But that's not an enclosed area.
- Yes, of course, she replies, again smiling.
- But! Over there is the forest! And I gave her a look of desperation.
- Here everywhere is the forest, dear. She again answered calmly. Don't be afraid, there is no danger. We had a lot of campers visiting and we never had a problem.

But of course while I was listening in my mind I was picturing wild boars chasing me, wolf flirting with my tent and bears stealing the sugarplums I brought with me from Larissa. I walked to the tent searching for Marialena hoping that she will calm me down; because I've learned that she spent the previous night in the tent alone, proving her courage to everyone.

Yes I spent the first night in the tent, in a forest about 20 meters away from the shelter. I was alone, close to the pine trees, harboring a slight suspicion that a bear or a wild boar is larking around and hoping that Zara's barking would chase them away. So you can imagine my relief and satisfaction when the next morning I woke up to sheep's bleating. And I thought that if the sheep was good enough for the Little Prince it would be even better for me. I didn't need anything else. I remembered my mother's lullaby: "come sheep and take her ... let her sleep with the sheep ... wake up with the goats..." When Liana arrived to share the tent she produced from her bag a zebra print bed sheet. Bliax! Yes

our tastes couldn't be farther from one another. And she likes to tease me about it. She was looking for that expression on my face and the usual comment "By the Gipsy!"

Saint Gipsy is the patron saint of puppeteers. I imagine that it sounds strange, but he is the one I believe in, the one I light candles to, the one that I ask favors of. As long as dolls have souls then there is a Saint Gipsy. If you ask people out there they will tell you: "dolls don't have souls ... it's the people who give them motion and give them voices". I don't know what these people are talking about. What I know is that in our camping the dolls had souls. And that soul was as much a part of us as it was theirs. But let's start from the beginning. Why Liana and I decided to create doll encouragement seminar. I think that it was about time to bring together the two things that connected us. Puppetry and Gestalt. We were really confused at the beginning but eventually we shorted out! We made it!

We started with the simple and basic. We remembered when we first met 6 years ago in a small puppet theater stage. I was playing Mama Bear and she was the baby bear called Arkadas. Sounds funny doesn't it. Yeah it makes me smile too.

This time we created even simpler dolls. We got the bare minimal and ask the members of our team to create a small glove puppet. Basically a head that started from their index finger. It is unbelievable to see how a simple instruction can mean so many different things to different people. The result was 35 completely different dolls.

Then we took our time and space. We constructed the dolls character. Really the dolls did that. It is said that the relationship between the doll and the puppeteer resembles the one between Creator and man. Maybe the Creator- man can bring it to life but from a certain point on she takes the reins and follows her own path. And somehow like that she spoke to us and we spoke to her, we asked her things, we heard her voice, we watched her walk, smile, cry, and dance and get scared. And finally we played Truth or Dare with her.

And she was there for us. After all that is what she was trained to do, since she was first created. She walks to the stage and introduces herself and generously offers her life with all its joy and pain. With her almightiness and authenticity. She sacrifices herself for her audience. And that is something brave and true that makes me respect her as much as the person who brought his truth and courage to play with her.

And let's say it once more. We are not talking necessarily about a Barbie, a Ken a Bibi-Bo. We are talking about a doll, made from



simple materials. A little piece of paper taken from a newspaper and some masking tape is enough to put her together. Her encouragement is strong and powerful. You only need to believe in her; to surrender to her magic. And we don't use this as a meta-physical term. We know how she is made, the materials, but she has a human voice and a movement generated by our bodies. But the thought of the above doesn't seem to justify the results. Besides "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". And there is where you find the magic. Let go. Let go and allow yourself to get swept away, to roll with her, to learn her secret. And trust it. Is it something small? Simple? Powerful? Scary? Don't be afraid. Trust it! It is something that is as much yours as hers. And all these were happening while the mountains around us called us to look up and become one with them. The clear starlit sky, the mountain top unfolding in front of our stage, the sight of the trees on our left, the sound of the forest but mainly the presence of a good friend, kept us company and made us feel safe. The people we met throughout the whole process of the seminars, the yoga, the meditation, the dancing, the rafting, the hiking in the mountain, the tsipouro that accompanied the last cigarette of the day and that small talk before you fall asleep, created a beautiful collage that showered us with experiences, filled us with tranquility, magic, energy and companionship. These are images that I will never forget. These were moments that made us feel "reach", proud and fortunate.

As for me, as Liana, this trip taught me that my truth, the one that I found there, was that I'm brave.

As for me, as Marialena, this trip in Tzoumerka taught me that I needed too much courage to see my truth...and that no matter of how much of this truth I know, I really like it. And whatever I'm admitting here, I think it is brave.

We would like to thank all of you who were there, those who trusted us and those who we trusted. We thank you for all the things we shared and we would invite those who weren't there to try this experience. We will take with us our dolls: "to guide us in our dreams and when we are awake: the show comes to an end and the people still need to be looked after". (Stathis Markopoulos)

Liana Daktila, Gestalt Foundation graduate

Marialena Tsiamoura, 2nd year trainee, Athens

Pramanta July 2015 Katerina Siampani

"Journey to the center of my nature". That was the title of the project that spontaneously came to mind when Katia told me that if I wanted I had the opportunity to run a workshop for the 1st Gestalt summer camp in Tzoumerka. Eventually we had 2 workshops one on Friday morning and the other one on Saturday. Both days the people who participated let their creativity unfold. In pairs or in teams of three, through painting and poetry, they created and "shared" their experience in the here and now. What I keep from these workshops? The emotions, the connection, the creativity, the commitment, the relational, the openness, the presence, the joy, the sadness, the colors, the oxygen,

the honesty, the gratitude and a poem that three members of our small team co-wrote and gave me the permission to post in this newsletter together with their names.

Everything is here

Everything is so beautiful ... But alone and closed off. Connection is difficult.

Do I want it? Can I? Closed off, scared, small.

Everything is here in the same time.

The blue clouds and the black ones, the rainy, the difficult.

Maybe if a puss harder they could fit in the sunrays.

I can be everything. I have been.



Sometimes small, sometimes large. Closed off. Open.

I'm all contradictions. I'm all choices.

Everything is here. So beautiful. Me? Am I here?

What if I puss-what? So that I could fit?

In- out. Forward- backward. Like the sea wave that I love.

I want, I don't want. They want me? They don't want me?

I'm all here. At last!!!

I see it in nature. Insurmountable mountains, thunderous lightning.

Sea, sun. Magic.

And I'm a part of it.

I'm here.

Everything is here. I'm as much as I can be.

Magic? Magic.

Aggeliki Dounou, Evgenia Makridou, Mariangela Triariko.

Poem "untitled"

In the core of an enormous explosion, as one friend says
the power emerges unpredictable, uncontrollable
radiant as a blessing- it falls like rain

I cannot concentrate

I easily lose myself in the red

emotions spin around me

maybe little chaos is needed



to reach the colors of the seabed
 if I could only find the courage to dive
 to warm my heart to make it
 could I bring back the corral that I heard in my grandmas fairy-
 tales?
 Could I swim freely till there?
 And what if I forget how I used to swim?
 I'll close my eyes and I'll let go...
 To the colors, to the journey, to the freedom
 to the beauty of the security of that unknown universe.
 All the forces of nature
 lead me there deep calm
 to the core of the encounter
 to the core of our relationship...

Maria

Efrosini

Truth or Dare...exploring "my" nature: 1st Gestalt summer camp

"Ain't no mountain high enough, Ain't no valley low enough, Ain't no river wide enough", that was the song constantly playing in my mind on the road to Pramanta (which when I arrived I learned that is referred to as a female).

In the car the number of passengers grow over time (1 then 2 then 3 eventually 4 – how many people do you think fit in a Polo!?) so did the opinions.

The rowdy beauty of the forest and the vertical cliffs competed with the steep turns and the potholes in the road and the puzzling signs to Pramanta; fighting for the title of which is going to cause us more dizziness.

We have already comprehended the first element of this 4day seminar: Courage!



When we arrived we found ourselves surrounded by familiar faces even those who we met for the first time.

The days that followed, sometimes helped, sometimes hindered by the unpredictable weather, were full of activities and emotions. This time we didn't require just courage to cross the stream, climb that hill, listen to that inner voice, and look at the center of our light. We needed to take out and unfold from our luggage the Truth!

And when these two; Truth and Dare make their appearance they

will flood you and you will struggle to find a way to reconcile them.

Because we need courage in our truth and we need truth in our courage.

Does anyone believe that this mean "I'm only moving forward". Sometimes they declare "I soar and observe" and sometimes "I retreat". And like that, for better or worse, you find room to spare.

The 4 elements of (our) nature, water, earth, air and fire (you should have seen the lightening), were called upon to wake the courage, in every one in order to face the truth.

And that became evident by a "silent camaraderie" in painting, in creating a "cooperative" poem, an "interactive" doll, a "cymbal", a personal silent moment during the difficult ascension on the mountain.

Indeed it is very difficult to change our patterns. But isn't it beneficial when a single coil from our torturous spring gets eliminated. And here is where a new adventure for the Gestalt followers begins; are these coils necessary in all the springs?

Till next time, on the road to a new camp experience, the GPS mechanical voice will keep us at ease in our straight line course.

I plant the trees inside me

A seed that grows gigantic in my innards.

I'm scared of my nature

that runs the rivers dry

shrunk under my skin

even here I shout at you

there where trails

don't exist.

And the sound is muted

and leave our pauses

clear as day to expand.

(Pramanta, 12/07/2015)

Elli Freggidou

Marianthi Emmanouilidou

Tzoumerka, July 2015

The name of that region sounds very beautiful to me, Epirus. It was the first time I visited this mountainous world. Lush, verdant. A magical place. Stone built villages hanging on the cliffs and the Kipina monastery built literally inside the rocks were really impressive. The water running by the side of the road and a river full of brisk amphibian life while spruce trees grow ever so densely.

Days after we left Tzoumerka I was still remembering these images.



It was very beautiful up there. Ten days later I was still dreaming about the mountains. Dreams filled with pictures, adventures and experiences; trails to hike, streams to cross, rafts to puddle, cold water to dive in.

I was very excited to go; sure of the good times I always have in these excursions. From the time we set out from the plains and started slowly climbing up toward the mountains and that lush landscape I felt something changing. Something really extraordinary happens whenever I leave the city. It's like a breath of fresh air. The experience up in the mountains was an escape. In hind side it really felt like an escape. There the time had length, it was real and safe. I had the sense that this is something that happens constantly. It can happen in continuum. Now it seems to me like an escape. An excursion that provided me with a whole world to live in and I did. The mountain, the beauty, the people. I left the city and while I was leaving I felt something steering in me. I felt lighter. I was increasingly feeling better for where I was.

I was traveling with friends to find other friends; to be with them. I had the sense that the same was true also for the others. I would have liked whatever was supposed to happen there. The beautiful parts and the difficult ones. And whatever happened I really liked it. And, yes there where difficult parts.

Truth or Dare? Do I dare see my life beyond that? Do I have the courage to see the truth behind my everyday "reality"? What are the realities I live in and how do I choose them? Camping in the mountains with all these people, with my dear friends in a magical place didn't require courage on my part. It was easy besides the difficulties. The courage is required here; where I live outside of that warmth; to trust that I can relive the experience again and again. To be able to stand mid air at the point before trust (to let trust happen) and stand firmly with trust.

Climbing up the mountains, the air that I breathed and the beauty I show filled me with energy. So much beauty. So much exuberance. Climbing up I felt safety and trust. I was standing on a steady step. Nature grounded it. My meeting with these people embellished it. It gave it charm. The glances, the smiles, the touches, the conversations filled the field and let me open up. Human behaviors. Human habits. Natural. Filled with love. The magic power between bodies. And this is my truth. I needed that life, that beauty; that warmth. And it happened. I felt it. I needed to find myself; to be with all these creatures of the world. And up there on the mountains I had an abundance of meetings. It was like a small brunch caught fire and that fire spread! No I'm not exaggerating. It's just that this encounters surprise me.

So much to remember... the energy while rafting up the river. The sound of the percussions the one next to the other. The dancing. The birds. The shelter. The teams. The anxiety. The difficulty; both mine and everybody else's. These and so many more.

It is very sweet to sit down to eat with loved ones in a place where it's cold during the summer, the trees are towering over you and the "beasts" are hiding scared ready to scare you. We were a family; partly transient; partly a family.

There, together with the others; for me; for them. I think that the most important thing was the people who were with me. And when I was with them in the midst of all this life, the trees, the creatures of nature, the rocks, the water ... everything around me so vibrant ... well, I think that was magic! And I know that it will come a time

when we will meet again without fear and that will again; be magic!

Aspa Zigaki, 2nd year trainee, Thessaloniki

Camping



"I didn't know what to expect. That is the best part. When you don't know what to expect, when you have no expectations then you get more excited and it's easier to have more fun. So I wasn't expecting anything. And that empty space that nothing, filled to the brim, with experiences, with laughter, with joy. 3days filled with energy, filled with life. Away from the everyday routine and the grey coated city life. Out there in nature you get invigorated. And you charge your batteries, you prepare yourself and you continue with what you do but this time with a smile."

Alexandros Zafranias

From afar

We had all the conditions to explore nature in all its majesty; my nature, the human nature, its expression and its creativity.



Everything that was there before me, in the here and now; made its appearance safely. It unfolded and revealed itself organically in front of me.

It became mine and I its.

-Truth or Dare?

- Now that I feel whole, alive and in love with life ... both!

It was the product of the "human encounter and connection" in the 1st Gestalt Foundation summer camp.

Dimitra Prekatsounaki, 3rd year training program, Gestalt Institute Multidimens Netherlands



Walking Together ... the Gestalt therapy viewpoint on dementia

This book is a testimonial to Katerinas Siambanis' love for her work with elderly people living with dementia. For those who are ailing and their relatives who are taking care of them. In the same time she expresses her appreciation for the methods and techniques of Gestalt as the psychological guidance which provided her with the tools and the support to work with energy and inspiration in a place where energy and inspiration

seem to disappear and where cancellation reigns.



Indeed reading this book a therapist will feel like he is holding in his hands a comprehensive guide of Gestalt psychotherapy and practice by an author who managed to work with the silence and the hidden self of people who; up to the last

minute; refuse to relinquish the hope of communicating and opening their souls provided they find an environment of trust that would not inflict more pain in their lives.

Reading this book people who are scared of dementia, either for themselves or their loved ones would feel that there is normality in growing old, as long as they don't withdraw and even now decide to try to comprehend and give meaning to their life. Even then they can deal with the facts of their existence and decide how they would best manage facing this new situation. They would regain the hope of expanding the stages of their illness experiencing their life in touch with their environment.

This book also includes the experience of therapists all over the world who toil and struggle everyday with the most popular and frightening theory that identity and conscience are completely lost together with memory and speech in the world of dementia.

Katerina Siabani is exceptionally generous. She gives us so many examples, ideas, personal experiences, ways of management. I'm sure that writing this book helped her give shape and form to her work in order for her to move on and expand. I'm also sure that she is ready to take the next step in uncovering not only the "now" of this illness but also the depth, sadness and despair of the person who is lost in the unknown wilderness of his existence. I'm following closely the authors work for a long time now and I can testify to her passion, love, dedication and inspiration

for her work. I knew that she had a lot to offer us and this book proves to be a gift to us all.

I recommend you to read this book which by giving us so many personal stories touches our soul and calms down our fear with the truth and the confrontation of each situation.

You will see the practice of the principles and methods of Gestalt together with the personal journey of the therapist who understood that our life is built step by step, from a very young age; by our decisions and the way we choose to be present or not in our lives, regardless of the situations we are facing. It is really significant that responsible for the scientific editing is Mrs Tsolaki who with her authority gave the needed space not only for the scientific but also for the psychological research. It was important to people who everyday are working hard and selflessly to support and study the whole spectrum of this illness. It is a social illness that knows how to hide and elude the exact identification and diagnosis. For Katerina Siambani this, together with her work, is an accolade of international status; a confirmation and a promise that the research won't be restricted only to the pure neurological probe.

The personal stories and the trauma that this individuals are suffering demand the attention and a specialized approach to each patient. As much as we can put in context diagnostically the course of the illness we must acknowledge that each case is unique and the work of support groups is necessary to ensure an environment of trust. And Mrs Tsolakis support doesn't stop there. She understands and promotes the support and encouragement of the hidden victims, the patient's relatives; the people who give their own battle and are in danger of



exhaustion if their struggle, pain and helplessness are not acknowledged.

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CORRESPONDENCE

“I give me the permission to live my life with joy without guilt”

According to the Civil Law quilt is defined as the relationship in which one person has the obligation to provide for another.

According to Freud guilt is the result of intrapsychic conflict; an internal battle between what we want and believe in and what the others want from and believe for us.

We are governed by moral rules and codes since our infancy. Family, friends, society, religion consciously or unconsciously train us to feel bad for certain thoughts and behaviors. They control and shape our character and actions using quilt as a weapon. How many times have heard our teachers and our parents say that we had let them down? The purpose of that quilt was to make us change our behavior making us feel bad for what we did. When we feel enough quilt then we do what our parents and what our teachers asked of us to escape the quilt and win back their approval.

So quilt is a powerful means/ tool of manipulating our behavior and is linked to our need for acceptance, approval and love. Is a manipulation that we accept in order to receive the gratification of these emotions and avoid feeling guilty. But how thin is the line and when does that manipulation has to stop before it reaches the point of becoming hurtful?

A phrase I show in a text about quilt peaked my interest, it read: Quilt encourages us to change our behavior triggering another human tendency: the desire to avoid pain and experience pleasure. When we comply with others we can avoid the pain that quilt causes us. So either we would let others manipulate us or we will do it ourselves!

If we, according to the above, take a child that is constantly filled with quilt for his behavior and has never the approval there is a trap that he may modify his external behavior to gain that approval. Sometimes this might seem as one-way street. And it supposedly happens to alleviate, for awhile, the pain. But that isn't something permanent because the quilt still remains. So we end up with a scared child, a confused and unhappy teenager and finally an angry and miserable adult. What makes this psychological disaster even greater is the fact that this person remains torn and unfulfilled. Always confronted with two different truths, one his own and one imposed by others. With two thoughts and two behaviors; an internal and an external. Two parallel roads so far from each other with no possibility of coming together.

Another correlation that we learn to make from early on is the one between quilt and concern. Meaning that when we feel guilty for something then we are concerned and when we don't give a damn; and therefore we are “a bad person”. According to this thinking, in order to become “a good person” we should show our concern by feeling guilty and by complying with the wants and needs of your environment.

So we also burden this child with the guilt of concern and we continue manipulate him with phrases like: “you don't care about anything”, “you don't give a damn” leading him to more despair and

guilt.

“Guilt” is the intense psychological state that someone feels when he realizes he is to blame for something and accuses himself. He realizes his blame! It almost sounds funny, because it's not his. Is a product of manipulation, an awful emotion that we burden ourselves with under the pretext of becoming “a better person”. Better or simply the same? Because what could be bad in a child? I suppose his dissimilarity. And is that so bad? Certainly is easier to dismiss and try to change what we don't know and what we have no intention to try to understand. And it is even easier to manipulate using guilt and remorse as a weapon. A Hungarian proverb says: It's easier to suffer poverty than a guilty conscience, and that can describe the magnitude of the pain they inflict.

To give me the permission to live my life with joy without guilt, I the frightened child of our example, will hug me and I would give me what I was deprived of. I would give me acceptance because I accept me as I am! I would give me the approval because there is nothing wrong with diversity! I would say I love you to myself because is something that I have felt and there isn't a sweetest emotion!

To give me the permission to live my life with joy and without guilt I, the confused and unhappy teenager of our example, will hug me and hold me till the anger goes away. I will hug me and tell me that

I can be happy because I have a right to happiness and joy.

To give me the permission to live my life with joy without guilt I have to overcome it. To hold on to the child and the teenager inside me and continue my course as an adult. Without pain, without guilt.

In the closing of that same text I read on guilt was a passage titled: “How

can we overcome guilt”

Let's not assume a responsibility that we are not sure it belongs to us. For example if we take on the responsibility of all the suffering, regardless if we have a say on their going through we will experience terrifying guilt.

Guilt is a means of control. Some people will try to take advantage of us making us believe that we are to blame for their suffering and in this way they will be able to control us. Self-awareness will help us in the first place to feel better and then to protect ourselves from those trying to exploit us.

It would be a good idea for each and every one of us to detect his personal moral code on what is good and right and live his life accordingly regardless of what the others believe. We should try to support our opinions, our desires, and our needs. This way the people who approach us will be able to choose us for what we really are and we will be able to be truly ourselves.

Overcoming guilt means: I understand it as an emotion but I don't allow it to have that much power and that much significance that infringes on all my other emotions. I acknowledge that it is an instrument of control and I don't allow it to enter my soul and fill me with remorse. I don't allow it to control me and make me doubt my every move. I exclude it from my every thought and feeling. From every sentence.

I give me the permission to live my life with joy because I don't owe anything to anyone!

I give me the permission to live my life with joy because I Love myself!

I give me the permission to live my life with joy because It belongs to me!

Smaro G.



1st International Summer Camp of Gestalt Foundation

“Courage” was one of the most sought after accessory that our campers had to employ. Especially when it came to rafting they had to put it on! To wear it! But they made it their “crown” and an “extension of their hand”!!!



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