



Gestalt NEWS Foundation

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18th 4day workshop Gestalt Psychotherapy

“Earth, Water, Wind, Fire..., Flesh...: The Experience of Being”

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Gestalt therapy is a Holistic therapy and perceives the “body” as the unique “being” that takes “flesh” and “bones” on a unified field. The “living body”, the body that experiences, is the body that carries its history and it is inseparable from the core of the relationships that affect it.

As Merleau – Ponty (2013) put it “...Generally the body, is a complex of predetermined, already formed capabilities, is the already acquired dialectic field in which a higher formation is included and the soul is the meaning that is then funded”...

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**GF website
renewal**

**12th European Gestalt
Psychotherapy Conference
in Taormina**

**2nd International
Summer
Camp**

EDITORIAL

We are in the aftermath of the 12th European Gestalt Psychotherapy Conference that took place in Taormina, Sicily. The subject of the Conference was, "The Aesthetic of Otherness: meeting at the boundary in a desensitized world". This is a

subject that has recently preoccupied the wider community of Gestalt therapists both in Europe and America.

Personally, as an individual and as a member of multiple relationships, family, friendly, educational, therapeutic, social and especially as a citizen of a political system relevant to my country, Europe and the world in general I found myself creatively motivated by the subject.

The presentation I decided to make involved a lot of study. I dedicated a lot of my time to Gadamer and through his writings I reconnected with the elegance of the Greek Muses, from Heraclitus, to Plato and Aristotle.

In the meantime, my conversations with friends and colleagues helped create in me the conditions to meet and be met in the present with that that has remained eternal: the miracle of the Greek cities and especially of the Greek colonies.

Temples and Theaters are still standing with respect to nature and in perfect alignment with it. The connection between the human endeavor and nature is riveting while acknowledge the interaction between the Greeks and the indigenous people, and the culture and the labor of love that refines humanity. Being there I comprehended deeper the meaning of extroversion and of a culture that values as a prerequisite the creation of Cities (Poli), Municipalities

(Dimos), Institutions and Laws in order to make citizens feel safe and expand the civilization.

Theater, sports and music games, temples, feasts, the development of Schools and Universities and other expressions of civilization are what contributed to the spirit of Europe. No reference to paternity...

On the other side of this attuned extroversion and civilization we find the neighboring Medieval Cities; so closed and fortified... If I wasn't aware of the parallel sense of the openness the Greek colonies provided, I might not notice it. I would have remained in awe of these great walls without realizing that the cities architecture demonstrates this sense of introversion, of keeping away from the others, from the different, from something that has to stay outside or has to be destroyed or not even exists because it might be threatening and should not be included.

The Medieval Cities in Sicily are closed, with walls that hide the light while its temples have only a few openings towards outside.

Even if you don't know the History, the buildings and the way they were used have their own language to tell their story in the present...

To conclude this journey I will borrow the words of Kazantzakis: "...they took the light and tuned it towards the chaos and transformed it into a face..." and they continue to be the inexhaustible spiritual legacy of the world...



Yianna Yiamarelou,

M.A. in Clinical Psychology. Gestalt Psychotherapist, Trainer & Supervisor, member of EAGT. ECP holder (European Certificate of Psychotherapy). Founding member of the Hellenic Association for Gestalt Therapy (HAGT).

The new annual workshop schedule for "Gestalt in Organizations" in Athens

The applications of Gestalt in a workplace environment are especially effective in a series of issues such as leadership, crisis management, change, conflict, workplace stress etc. Gestalt applications can also provide services in organizations in both individual and group level: Consulting, Coaching, Mentoring, Training and Supervision.

The new annual workshop schedule of 100 hours is allocated in 5 3days workshops that they will be conducted by Frans Meulmeester, Giorgos Stamatis, Demi Moraitou and Ioanna Rizou, just as last year.

They include theory, experiential workshops, case study papers, bibliography, feedback by the trainers and the group on issues of

personal and skill development as well as providing participants with training notes and the book "The art of Change – Gestalt, a different approach for business and organizations" authored by F. Meulmeester, I. Rizou and G. Stamatis.

The workshop is addressed to psychotherapists or psychologists working in organizations, to consultants, coaches and trainers in Organizations and Businesses, to Human Resources development executives and to managers of Organizations and Businesses.

BEST SELLERS ΕΞΑΜΗΝΟΥ

ΛΟΓΟΤΕΧΝΙΑ



ΕΛΕΝΑ ΦΕΡΡΑΝΤΕ
Η ΥΠΕΡΟΧΗ ΦΙΛΗ ΜΟΥ



NINA GEORGE
ΤΟ ΜΙΚΡΟ ΠΑΡΙΖΙΑΝΙΚΟ
ΒΙΒΛΙΟΠΩΛΕΙΟ



ΓΙΑΝΝΗΣ ΚΑΛΠΟΥΖΟΣ
ΣΕΡΡΑ, Η ΨΥΧΗ
ΤΟΥ ΠΟΝΤΟΥ



ΠΙΕΤΡΟΣ ΜΑΡΚΑΡΗΣ
OFFSHORE

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ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ ΑΠΟ ΣΤΟΜΑ
ΣΕ ΣΤΟΜΑ



CARLO M. CIRPOLLA
ΟΙ ΒΑΣΙΚΟΙ ΝΟΜΟΙ ΤΗΣ
ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΗΣ ΗΛΙΘΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ



ΝΙΚΟΣ ΔΗΜΟΥ
ΜΙΚΡΟ ΕΓΧΕΙΡΙΔΙΟ
ΟΡΘΟΛΟΓΙΣΜΟΥ



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ΕΣΚΗΝΑΤ ΤΟΛΛΕ
Η ΔΥΝΑΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΤΩΡΑ



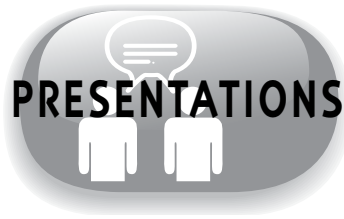
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ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΣ ΓΙΩΣΑΦΑΤ
ΝΑ ΠΑΝΤΡΕΥΤΕΙ ΚΑΝΕΙΣ
Ή ΝΑ ΜΗ ΠΑΝΤΡΕΥΤΕΙ



ROBIN S. SHARMA
Ο ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ ΠΟΥ
ΠΟΥΛΗΣΕ ΤΗ FERRARI ΤΟΥ



...at IANOS

**Comment on Petros Theodorou's lecture:
«From the sea of love to the dunes of**

passion and addiction» Thessaloniki, 22/4/2016

"The things I need in a loving relationship may also belong to the shadiest part of me, that part that I don't see and I don't have access to".

I wanted to attend this lecture on love and our shadowy parts for a long time. That part of ourselves that we are not in contact with.

What happens with that mystery? The mystery of attraction, desire, connection and relationship? If, of course, we can say that we can "unravel" it. Anyway it is a very interesting conversation and this one even more so. The information provided were numerous and important and invited you to further exploration.



The venue was packed and Petros vividly opened and unfolded the subject. What I keep is the general mood for exploration-

and what I heard-was that the hidden parts of ourselves are the ones pushing us towards adventure in love. The way we pursue to resolve and relieve them. And often that happens when we create a certain condition, the same one, again and again. Could what hides in the shadows be fear? What happens when that fear undermines the contact? Does it need banishing? Does it need protection? Does it need to repeat itself again and again? And finally do I meet the other?

Do I "see" me in him? Do I meet the other in the shadows? My wants and don't wants, the maybes and the might, do I hear them? Sometimes it seems that in love we search to cover our anxieties and our side that we keep hidden away from our awareness. Questions, questions, questions. To be honest I find those questions fascinating.

Because with these questions, the journey of life and love moves on with adventure. Therefore I'm glad that there is the space and the condition for them to arise and "push" the boat forward.

Aspa Zigaki, 3rd year trainee in Thessaloniki

Comment on Demi Moraitou, Ioanna Rizou and Giorgos Stamatis' lecture on: "Workplace stress. Friend or Enemy", Athens, 26/5/2016

My involvement in this presentation proved to be a constructive and enjoyable experience. The presentation was theoretically complete with a lot of informative examples. It started with Demi giving an overview of the concept of stress, it moved with the psychotherapy approach presented by Ioanna and ended with the coaching viewpoint given by Giorgos. The subsequent proposals were well balanced both in subject and time and complemented each other.

What I took away from the audience, was that they felt very comfortable since the lecturers made it a point to constantly connect and interact with us.

One of the most positive aspects of this meeting was its humor: the jokes, the anecdotes and the stories lightened a subject that lays heavy for a lot of people.

Especially interesting was the idea that stress, besides being a burden, can also become a positive factor, capable to contribute to the development and change for the individual and the workplace environment.

Finally, something that really has an effect on me, was a phrase that came from Ioanna, like a verse, which I think encapsulates a basic principle of Gestalt psychotherapy: "To meet my anxieties/with compassion".

Konstantinos Kostas, Gestalt psychotherapist, psychologist & social worker

Comment on Katerina Manolakis' lecture on «Panic Attacks», Thessaloniki, 27/5/2016

"There is no autonomy without the sense of "belonging" and freedom without relating with others". Yet this relates to panic attacks.

This was the last lecture for the academic year 2015-16 in the series of the Gestalt Foundation collaboration in Thessaloniki with the Ianos Culture Chain.

I was very interested in the lecture but I also was surprised by what I heard and took from it. I wasn't aware of Katerina Manolaki and I was pleasantly surprised by her presence and the way she addressed us.



Panic attacks... a difficult subject... terrifying! It was an opportunity for me and the audience to hear a clear, complete and deep view on the experience of panic. How the attack creeps into the gap created between "I'm somewhere else" and "reality is somewhere else".

The individual experiences an abyss, he feels as vulnerable as a newborn. He doesn't trust his body.

The passage from "oikos" to "polis" is not a smooth one; the passage from paternal relations to wider social relations. The instability and insecurity from the then and the after. In the present there is loneliness and a regression to try to find an embrace.

The "belonging".

My dependent and independent part. The attacks that independent people experience, people who rely on themselves, in a neurotic automated world... where there is no room for how I am, what I am... "I'm somewhere else" and "reality is somewhere else".

As I look to what I'm writing it seems like random thoughts. The connection between them is not clear. It's the same with panic attacks. They seem to be incoherent but in fact they're not. They seem to be disconnected but they're not. And the whole structure collapses.

I'm not the same every day; I cannot endure always the same.

As hard as I try. "What I am" and "What I want to be".

And then the therapy comes as support. To see the loneliness, the fear of losing myself, of not existing. How do I relate when I don't know how to connect?

And on the other hand, how can I stand by you in the "unintelligible", the "indefinable" of an attack?

To stand by you in the struggle to understand what's coming.

To cry, both you and I, for what we haven't cried. To come to my body, to come here. To connect the episodes of my life, to take them out of their boxes. To let the river flow, because the river knows...

Aspa Zigaki, 3ο έτος Θεσσαλονίκης

Comment on Exarmenia Papa & Dimitra Hantziara's lecture on: "Everything around changes and everything remains the same?" Athens, 28/6/2016

28/6/16 – That hot June afternoon came after a series of very hot afternoons. We gathered in Ianos to listen about the very interesting subject of change and repetition from the perspective of Gestalt psychotherapists. At the end of the lecture it was pouring rain, hail and the wind was blowing. The repetition of the "same" hot days was broken.

Exarmenia opened the lecture. Her voice was strong; she spoke close to the microphone and she did it in a relatively fast pace, she glanced at her notes, and seemed focused, she smiled. Dimitra comes next, her voice soft, she speaks away from the microphone, her pace relatively slow, she seems to improvise, she touches her hair. Exarmenia speaks again and then Dimitra and then Exarmenia and Dimitra again...

Exarmenia's pace seems to slow down while Dimitra's intensity comes up. Each maintain their differences but as the lecture moves on their pace and intensity gets closer. Exarmenia speaks again and Dimitra speaks again.

When the lecture comes to the issue of the repetitiousness of the circle of life I feel a tightness in my throat. Each meeting with the perpetual end or the perpetual beginning of being is difficult and the same time comforting.

As the lecture continues the repetition takes form inside me, then the awareness of repetition and then the awareness of the awareness of repetition...

What happens when something insists on coming back? Why this repetition does occur? Maybe to convey something that we heard so many times but never was understood? To teach us something? To give us a sense of control and safety? To relief a trauma? I gather knowledge and food for thought.

What emerges next is responsibility. Repetition involves conscious or unconscious choice. "Something doesn't come back". I repeat a behavior, an emotion, a process. When random incidences become repeating patterns then maybe they are not that "random".

I breathe, breathe, I always breathe. Every breath is the same, every breath is the same; Repetition can make our life sometimes tolerable, sometimes intolerable. As I listen to all these information for the first



time I feel the need to pay more attention to what comes back. To give it space, to observe if it provides me with relief or if it opens old wounds. I wonder, does repetition serves the need that born it the first time? Or during my life I acquired knowledge and skills that allow me to cover that need in another more functional way?

I make some small beautiful personal realizations, listening to the Gestalt viewpoint, the lecturers and the other participants who shared their thoughts. Repetition and change exist without sign, provided I don't insist in repeating and I don't insist in changing. That was what I was thinking when I was congratulating our lecturers for their beautiful and enriching presentation.

Konstantina Stavrou, 1st year Athens

Comment on Christos Karapiperis' lecture on: "Psychotherapy- the Right to Freedom", Athens 27/9/2016

We were very happy to welcome at Ianos, Christos Karapiperis from Patra on the 27th of September 2016, for a presentation entitled "Psychotherapy- the Right to Freedom". When we were asked to comment on this presentation we were at a loss, we got anxious. Then we wrote two essays, two different experiences and that is why we put forward some unedited pieces from these two essays that finally became one!

The way Christos makes his presentations and the subject of freedom and our right to it, were enough to make us reach Stadiou str., in a day of demonstration in the center of the city.

Artemis: I enjoy Christos' narrations. He takes me somewhere carefree!

But I'm afraid that it is fall now and the carefree refuge poses the risk of melancholy. Should or shouldn't I go?

I would go because melancholy has the inalienable right to happen.

A lot of people have gathered on the first floor for the lecture and the initially nervous Christos begins his presentation on time.



Behind the desk he looks at his laptop and begins to speak about what is freedom. The more he explained the more we comprehended our ignorance on the subject of this

coveted concept. Soon we found ourselves captivated by Christos' words.

Elina: What is freedom? The ability someone has to act at will. But whose will? That is the issue. How many of my choices and how much of my way of life is truly mine? What it means not be free? How do you know?

The example of Bucay's chained elephant was clear. I'm kept a prisoner not only by external chains but by internal as well. All the musts and don'ts that are said or implied by a look; all the rules, the traditions, the myths, the stereotypes with which we grow up in our family, our schools, our society. All these introjections that undoubtedly contributed to our survival and others torture us mentally and entrap us.

Christos spoke about normalcy and normal and we think that if he was writing on a board he would have used a lot of quotation marks. Goldstein's definition sounds liberating: the definition of normal should not be governed by adjustment, but on the contrary, by the ability to invent new norms. Therefore we need norms and rules and myths in our life, somehow to know, to examine. Yes, but then, what is freedom?

Artemis: Listening to Christos descriptions my mind traveled back to a training seminar where we talked about freedom with the group. We were saying that it comes from the ancient greek phrase "παρά τό ελεύθειν όπου ερά τίς" which means "for someone to go where he loves/ desires"; Christos explained and enhanced the etymology through poems, stories, tales from travels and human contact.

Norms, as Christos explained, are not indelible prints, they change, they transform. On the contrary putting labels are something that we find in the Western way of thinking. Gestalt approaches life away from distortions, genuinely. Our organism, with his natural tendency to self regulate, comes in contrast with the western "propeness".

Signification against fragmentation.

Elina : Listening to Christos talk about the self according to Gestalt and keeping in mind the self in psychoanalysis, it had a liberating impact on me, not feeling rigid and immovable but flowing, with constants but open to experience, open to differentiation, to choice and responsibility. A creative self even if he suffers from his symptoms. Those symptoms that we all want to get rid of instantly as if they are not ours, while patients would stop therapy after they were alleviated.

On the one hand there is the hurry and the haste and on the other hand the paradoxical theory of change (Beisser), that suggests "change comes when someone becomes who he is and not when he tries to become someone he is not". In other words, the more I try to change the more I stay the same and that is the paradox. But as long as I stay to my own self, as he is, in any given moment, I change; without violence, without hastiness but with respect and love for who I am. In two hours Christos described the principles and basic concepts of Gestalt therapy in his own unique way. The interaction with the audience was instant. We left the venue preoccupied and a stroll around the city center's winding roads was necessary to give us time to discuss what we've heard.

Elina: I'm left with a verse in the end:

To begin again

You can, even with your last breath

Artemis: As I was driving home that night, I remembered that when I was young my teachers were admonishing me for the school parades because "so many people spilled their blood for you to live free", even though it wasn't something I wanted. To feel lucky to be free while they were forcing me to parade!!! And so many other things that others lose so that I can enjoy and carry the weight of the responsibility of their sacrifice. I sadly smiled and remembered that Christos at the end of his lecture gave another definition of freedom this one by Albert Camus: "Free is the man who can live without lying" and then my heart filled with hope and truth.

Freedom for all!

Artemis Varsou, Elina Pelekanou

A farewell from the Gestalt community

For Agapi...

When I was asked to write this article the positive answer came to me effortlessly!

And how could not be so; for many years we have been closed friends and we've been through a lot of things both within the group and outside!

But in the same time I felt like an electrical current went through me and I realized that you are no longer here with us, that 40 days have already passed since we don't reside in the same world and this time I will speak for you and not with you...



And yet the words seem to come to me as emotions and the pictures from the past overwhelm me and I start to speak to you... as if you are here!

I remember you in school running from class to class and searching for study group to be part of. You had just transferred and you didn't know anyone. You are so different and not because you are older, you are already a mother, it is because of the way you carry yourself, it is that you know what you are searching for, it is the fact that, for you, studying psychology wasn't a simple high school choice but your lifelong dream. And you made it, despite the obstacles. Your bright smile, your anxious look and inherent thirst to learn more, lead you to a constant search. And of course you find it! And it has a strange name, it is called Gestalt!



You've learned that two post graduate students, Katia and Antonia, are creating a new training program on that psychotherapeutic approach, bringing trainers from Athens and you are excited! Three months later I understand why. I find myself sitting next to you, in a circle, in a yellow room in an apartment in Morkentaou str., surrounded by familiar strangers! It is a training, but most important, a therapeutic group taking its first steps. It is our group! And the journey begins... The search begins, the exploration, the meeting, the contact. The transformation begins... life under a different light begins. And you are there, standing, revealing with simplicity, the most difficult things, with disarming honesty. You soften the edges with your humor and continue to work like a tireless soldier with integrity and stability. That group binds us with strings of sharing, trust, support, belongingness. All of us, rings to a circle that became stronger, wider and expanded... We didn't have any idea what was all that. We just showed up...

A few years later, in the garden of that house, we found ourselves in Megalovriso for conducting our profile and we signed the charter of

our association. The "Hellenic Association for Gestalt Therapy" was a fact. You were very happy and emotional, as we all were. The dreams started to become true. A circle has closed and each ring of that chain started to create its own core.

You returned to your hometown, Axioupoli and started to work there and in the wider Kilkis region slowly, steadily, with a vision. You dared to do difficult and innovative things, for that region. The schools for parents you started was a breakthrough for the time! I remember parents coming to ask for their children and in the end those leaving so looked after themselves that these groups were established almost instantly. In the following years, what you felt that was really important was the work with the community. You collaborated with a lot of schools, schoolchildren, parents, teachers. You wanted awaken people, to shake up the stagnant waters, to speak always with care and despite the resistance and despite the obstacles, you made it. You embodied and taught what it means to be a psychologist in your own unique way; not distant and detached, protected behind a desk but open and receptive, accessible and defined, interacting with everybody. You didn't

only manage to change yourself but you managed to change the field in which you lived. You managed to help people get over their taboos. You were a soft light that illuminated their path and warmed their hearts!

When the new

about your health weren't good, you decided to let things take their course, you let yourself to the flow and accepted the harsh reality with courage and serenity. You never got scared. You never stopped smiling, even at the worse; but wasn't that what you always did? And so calmly and gently at dawn, your light left this world... a light that was handed down to the hearts of all the people we encountered in our way. The light that I did see in all the teary eyes around me at your last goodbye! And then I understood... A light like that cannot leave... it expands and travels everywhere! A small spark from it is hidden inside me and for that I'm eternally grateful to you

Farewell Agapi!

Eirini Kiletsi , 12/11/2016

CORRESPONDENCE

“Bare body, unveiled look”

Really, it hasn't been a long time since he started therapy and the therapeutic relationship is already quite evident. Till now, he hasn't

met with another therapist. His request is multiple and mainly concerns the difficulties he faces in his “intimate” moments in his relationships with women.

In these difficulties greatly contributes a genetic disease that creates nodules under his skin and deforms his chest. These nodules can reach the size of a hazelnut.

He cannot take his clothes off in front of women or even in front of his friends. Only the doctors and his parents are aware of this aspect of him. Invitations to sea sports that he has to decline make him feel frustrated. The summer that approaches is a torture to him, since this deformity can be visible even through his clothes.

He tells me that he has no problem looking himself at the mirror, but yet he hasn't encountered the glance of someone else at this part of his body. It's too much of a risk. It would be insufferable to see the disgust and rejection in someone's eyes. The fact that he hasn't seen the look in someone else's eyes looking at his naked body allows him to create in his mind the harshest and most extreme scenarios.

I feel confident enough to take the risk and suggest my glance. “If you wish, one day, when you feel ready, you can allow me to take a look at your chest so that you can have that experience...”

But I know it is a risk.

Really, I won't pretend. I would not have made that suggestion without knowing that this commitment is too strong for me.

I wasn't expecting that he would accept my suggestion so quickly. Few minutes later with a small hesitation he unbuttons his shirt. I feel emotional and I'm flooded with a sense of warmth. I had the sense that I was given something valuable and fragile that I had to manage with all my sincerity. It is also the fact that he is a man and I'm a woman and that is also important...

He reveals a part of his body that he usually hides. “No entry”, “Protected zone”, “Danger”, “Fragile”...and there, that moment, without really realizing it I will reveal myself. I will give him in return my honest look and whatever he can discern in it.

I encourage him to take care of himself, to take his time or maybe I do that for myself; now that he has momentum he doesn't want to let this moment pass. He is in a hurry to take this opportunity at the moment he is ready.

In front of these nodules on his chest I feel relief, curiosity and understanding. Not any sense of disgust or rejection. I know that my glance is clear and sincere. I don't have to try for that. He knows how to read it even before any of us utter a word in this intense experience. The revelation is mutual. It can only happen when the therapeutic relationship is strong with a solid framework that allows access to such a personal level. We had to feel that close to each other. Still it was a risk. But really don't the risk and the commitment of a Gestalt therapist go hand in hand?

It is very important to point out two things in this process. One is that this revelation in itself deeply enhanced our therapeutic relationship and what was revealed and shared helped him to make an important step in the course of his therapy.

(Proposition of «Petit Gris», June 19, 2017)



Isabelle Le Peuc'h, Director of EPG (Ecole Parisienne de Gestalt in France)

Impressions from the workshop “Creating my career”

My first thought when I show the title of this seminar was: “This is something that concerns me and it concerns me directly!” Being at a time of my life when I want to create my own career, I decided to attend with the hope that this seminar might give me the push, the energy and the organizational skills to make it.

I always have too many ideas, but in the course something “goes wrong” with their implementation... Is it an organizational matter? Is it a matter of energy? How can I implement my plans? These were some of the questions that I was hoping to address, if not, to solve.

To tell you the truth at the end of the seminar I was thinking about how a lot of my friends that are trying to create something on their own, would have benefitted and enjoyed them if they had attended. I wanted to call them and say: “Listen to what I learned today and let's put it in use!” I admit that yes, some of my expectations were met! So I will speak about this seminar as a personal experience.

Giorgos managed on one hand to show me simple ways to put in order the chaos that prevailed inside me in terms of how to organize a realistic plan to manage my business as a freelancer and on the other hand helped me to recognize unknown parts of myself that affect my behavior as a professional-entrepreneur.

But what touched me and remained with me most is that psychotherapy is a business like any other one. In our field there are many of us who are faced with an internal guilt when we think of our work also as a business that we wish to be profitable and not just as a vocation aiming to help others and contribute to our personal self-realization. So, what I realized was that I want to set up my own personal business, one that, like all the others, big or small, can follow strategic plans and rules that help it develop. And another important fact is that now I can think of ways to promote my career, leaving behind the ugly sensation that I have to “sell” myself.

In short, this seminar was very educational and in the same time enjoyable and personally I think that it would be very useful if it, somehow, was incorporated in the training program or if it was offered in more regular bases and focus on different career phases!

Electra Matzagou

“Earth, Water, Wind, Fire..., Flesh...: The Experience of Being”.

...“being” is in a constant state of flow, constantly growing and evolving and as Jan Smuts (1926) suggests “The evolution of the Cosmos is nothing more than the registry of all this living mobility in progressive development” (p. 326)

“Earth, Water, Wind, Fire..., Flesh...: The Experience of Being”.

In this 4day meeting, through theory and experience it was explored the human nature as an amalgamation of body and soul, as “whole”, as “flesh”, as “being”, as “living experience” of contact and withdrawal.

Christos Konstantinou (2013). “Merleau-Ponty: We need to get our hands dirty” Athens: Spanos pub.

Jan Christian Smuts (1926). “Holism and Evolution”. Gouldsboro: The Gestalt Journal Press.

Learning a foreign language

A bright, hot 4day workshop in Volos, between May 12th and 15th 2016.

My first time.

The last image I have from this workshop is the trainers sitting side by side. I look at their faces and each one is important to me. Yianna, the myth - the incomprehensible - the complexity of the mother. Despina, the leader - the justice - the truth both easy and difficult. Antonia, the silence - the plenitude - my role model. Kostas, my guide - the light that can harmoniously alternate with darkness.

Giorgos, the being – God - the deepest emotion. Katia, the earth - the body-the road for all to become tangible. Our guest Isabelle, the different - the shame - the meeting.

I had high expectations and still the aftertaste seems like the discovery of a new sensation. It seems like a taste acknowledged by every pore of the body. It seem like it expands to every hair on my head and even further. It seems like the experience is intense but difficult to express or like standing on a step that will take you to a floor different from the others. Like a temperature that although it remains the same can burn you or freeze you. Like a crash course on a foreign language.

I returned to Athens but I still keep something from there. Something I keep like a valuable object. No one can still it from me and yet I’m scared to lose it somewhere in my everyday routine. It is as if everything moves easily and more smoothly. People are important and everything else has become less important. I accept the situations, the others and through that I accept myself simply and calmly existing and interacting with “being”.

In Volos I learned to speak a language and communicate easier with others who speak it. I recognize them from afar. They are people that I admire. They are simple and they are great. They are poor and they are rich. They are educated and illiterate. They are all beautiful and special. I feel proud having something they do. I’m glad that they allow me to speak their language.

I would like to remember that language. It is not easy but I would like to spread it. I communicate it with silence and words. I need to exercise it so that I



“Earth, Water, Wind, Fire..., Flesh...: The Experience of Being”



won’t forget it or rather forget it again. When somebody answers me in that language I feel I have a place to stand, a home. And when he doesn’t answer I move on until I find that smile that recognizes this sound even though it’s the first time he hears it. Like he has heard it before he was even born in his first dueling. We all heard the same sound- a heartbeat. We all had the same house- a womb. Neuroscientists say that if only our right hemisphere of our brain worked we would be able to comprehend that connection between people. We would experience this “common language” as something that unites us all. But in the Western world we insist on exercising

and developing the left hemisphere.

Rounding up my first year in the Gestalt Foundation I’m happy that my training includes issues that are experienced and not just studied. The highlight of this experience was the 4day workshop in Volos.

I would like to thank the sixteen members of the 1st year in Athens, the members of my group, each and everyone individually for all the special

Wind, Fire..., Experience of Being"



things they teach me and for their trust.

I would like to thank the members of the 1st year Thessaloniki group, with whom we opened and closed the 4day, for letting me look into their beautiful souls.

I would like to thank my trainers for showing me the way and my therapist, Kostas, who helps me fine the ingredients to make a nest where I can find rest.

I would like to thank all those who attended the 18th 4day Gestalt psychotherapy workshop and all those who helped me with the decision to follow that path- Irini, Antigoni- in these difficult times. In conclusion I refer to the verse of the poet who seems to have felt what it happened there.

"I leave with a glance

A wide glance in which the world is recreated

Beautiful from the beginning to the dimensions of the heart! "

(Elytis, 1940)

Konstantina Stavrou, Gestalt Foundation trainee

First 4day workshop for the 1st year trainees inThessaloniki

Finally the day has come! The time has come! The 1st 4day workshop is a reality!

I meet the rest of the group in bus terminal and it feels like a school trip. Excitement, laughter, photographs and... a little anxiety!

We are the first ones to arrive in Volos. If we were there a little earlier we would be the ones cleaning the rooms! Freshman, rookies... that's what we say and we wait... And then people start to arrive and we get excited.

And we began... What to remember first... We attended the first seminar with the group from Athens. Now, that I think about it, it was funny. We stood there lined up, on this side "we from Thessaloniki" and on the other side "them from Athens", the two opposite poles! We looked at each other, we smiled, we examined each other and we waited. It was a nice exchange and there was to be more...

On the first night some of us were as decimated, forgotten, we were drinking beers and relaxing near



the pool. We really needed that!

A few hours later it was the crucial time to give our presentation! Oh boy! Anxiety! Panic! "We don't have an introduction", "really guys do you think it is good?" "Hide me" and other famous last words... We went up to the stage and the video we had prepared starts playing. Laughter for the audience, laughter and laughter again... I wonder "why are they laughing?" and instantly I start to laugh... I laugh so much that I feel tears running from my eyes. No more anxiety, I'm left with the enjoyment. Lovely comments and satisfaction...

That night we would co-present; another kind of anxiety!

Ultimately "togetherness" has a hidden magic and I was enchanted! And then? But of course tsipouro! The next day we were completely acclimated. So after the morning workshops we decided to go for a dip in the pool! How were we to know what we were to expect...

I choose the workshop on nostalgia and I experienced something unprecedented. For the first time in my life I found myself with other fifteen, familiar and not, people, sharing our experiences and crying... Even now I get nostalgic... for the hugs that followed and the warmth I felt...The hours, once again, past so quickly and there was time for the evening party! Festive atmosphere, smiles, music and an all around happy mood. Sitting with the guys sharing the news of the day and in a little while we find ourselves on the floor dancing to "Macarena"! What comfort! What security! What craziness! All together... An unforgettable night! A wonderful release!

On Sunday morning we close the group and we started to get ready to return. Goodbyes and emotions... On the way back I was silent. I felt sorry that this wonderful 4day experience was over, happy that I would rest, fear for some things I discovered, anger because I don't know what to do with them... And then? Then I thought of the presentation and I smiled; I gave all my feelings their space and I breathed...!

Christina Papadaki, 1st year trainee in Thessaloniki.

The 4th year 4day workshop

Another 4day workshop!

As I was making my way to Agria I had a sense of joy, thrill but also anxiety. Joy and thrill because I would see, after a year, the people with whom I have connected parts of my being that I had never shared before in my life. And still this 4day workshop is yet another safe "place", a place of soulful humans where I can reflect on experiences, deeply hidden by pain and shame, kept on an impasse. And that impasse takes form and background through the sharing of humanity - soul; and then my experience takes on another meaning, shading light on part that have been in darkness for my whole life, liberating my trapped self...

And that anxiety, my own anxiety for the presentation of the group paper that was there with me... The anxiety to be able to present, in front of a lot of people, trainers, trainees, colleagues, parts of a theory that exist inside of me... But all these people, that came to hear the presentation, are but one- my people, the members of my family, of a beautiful house that I carry inside me!



And like that, I arrived to the 4day workshop, carrying the security of the people I trust. And I meet Despina's embodied reason, giving shape to the concept of love, my love that I don't have the strength to express, the love of the I and the Thou, the Between. And when my internal dialog took written shape and was expressed to the members of the group I realized that my thoughts found a way out, that I'm not alone in what I'm experiencing since I'm sharing.

And the next day my experiences take shape through Katia's dolls and Konstantinos' movements. With the sense of my physical energy I can express my feelings and my thoughts to a doll, co-creating in the field an unprecedented contact and meeting with the other.

I listen through my "perspective" the reality of the other; I learn to coexist and to accept the similarities and also the uniqueness of the other. Through a doll, the I meets the Thou, I co-create with the other in the Between, I include you and I include myself!

And after all these expression it was time for Antonia's and Katerina's silence. I learn how to relate and interact with my colleagues through silence! It is something familiar to me and then again the process takes a new meaning; a co-creation of the silence that I'm already aware of, that gave me the encouragement to keep it in my life as much as I need it...

It was a full 4day workshop filled with emotions and people, people that I will carry with me! I would like to thank you all and each and every one of you for your presence, for your co-creation, for the sharing, the trust, the acceptance, the glance, the touch, the hug!

Ioanna Goutzioti, 4th year trainee in Thessaloniki

Experiential Group

My name is Panagiota Kontoleon and for the last year I'm doing Gestalt psychotherapy. Following the encouragement of my psychotherapist I decided to attend the experiential workshop of the 18th Gestalt Psychotherapy conference in Volos, more so since I was contemplating taking the training course.

I had an interesting experience. When I arrived in the venue, a lady who was already there came up and warmly introduced herself. After a while another lady came in and also introduced herself and I realized that she was the coordinator because when we were walking towards the workshop hall she leaned over and said: "wouldn't it be better to wear your tracksuit?". I was wearing a dress and I was left speechless. I asked her why and she told me that the workshop mainly involves movement and we will be sitting on the floor for a long time. I obeyed her although I felt a little awkward. Going to my room I felt angry by the way I was advised to change my clothes. A mishmash of feelings took over me. Feelings of rejection, imposition, punishment and generally I felt that I wasn't welcomed. As if I knew what I was supposed to wear and decided otherwise. And that made me really angry. I felt that the way it was communicated was inappropriate and especially by a supervisor towards an attendee, and especially to someone who was taking part in such a workshop for the first time. I tried not to take it personally but it left me with a bitter aftertaste.

The first day didn't go well and that feeling of being an outsider and even not a welcomed one lingered in me. In the evening I went to a nearby restaurant and I had my dinner alone thinking whether I should stay or leave. I decided to give myself one more day, especially since I made a commitment to myself to participate in the workshop and gain a better understanding of Gestalt psychotherapy. So I stayed. The next day the supervisor asked if we wanted to share something from the previous day and without giving any details, since my feelings hadn't

yet subsided, I told them that I felt like I didn't "belong", I felt like a stranger because I wasn't introduced and I didn't connect with anyone

from the group. From that moment the whole group embraced me warmly and very quickly I started feeling comfortable. I smiled again!

I felt the group very tight and I felt connected with each and every one of the participants. I could say that I made 6 new friends, each one special and each one different that mirrored something beautiful. So I decided to stay until the end.

I was very happy for this experience. The people I was with were exceptional. It would like to congratulate Antigoni for putting everything together. Now, as far as the training program is concerned, I came in with expectations that weren't fulfilled; nevertheless I'm glad I had this experience.



Panagiota Kontoleon

“When trauma corrupts the experience of being, Gestalt can restore the feeling of wholeness”

Professionals' group workshop at the 18th 4day Gestalt psychotherapy workshop (2016)

Once again we gathered; this time for the 3day advanced workshop. Isabelle Le Peuc'h, a French Gestalt psychotherapist, trained in different physical approaches, was the coordinator. In our meeting with her we explored ways to approach traumatic experiences that our patients bring in the therapy room.

The first day our pre-contact as a group started smoothly with a very interesting presentation from Isabelle on the neurological base of a traumatic experience. Her countenance, her voice and her phenomenology gave out an unexpected sense of familiarity. Meanwhile the new unfamiliar members of the group started



to acclimate while the older members created safe space. The whole mood was inquisitive and exploring. Our subject was the tearing down of physical unity;

an experientially strong subject with a lot of non verbal dimensions that helped the contact with darker personal experiences.

The experiential part of the workshop started the second day. As a group, our first challenge was to differentiate our position from our patients. It was something that not all of us were ready for. With surgical precision, Isabelle, set the first boundary, so the team could remain focused on its goal, which was the support and training of the member therapists. Besides one of the crucial elements for the therapeutic effectiveness is the ability of the therapist to differentiate himself from the common aspects of the patients' experience and the clear bracketing of these aspects in favor of the patient. And somehow like that, with boundaries and support we continued our training on the approach of the traumatic experience. Setting boundaries was defined as the necessary prerequisite to achieve the support and the framing of the trauma progressively, step by step, covering every small aspect of the whole experience. The concept of support and framing is a wide one and in this specific case we focused on the contact with the Other as well as the field, in the here and now. How could someone remember something traumatic, maintaining the awareness that he is safe in the moment, that he has a support system around and inside him and at the same time choose to share or “leave behind” the weight of his story in the in between space of a therapeutic relationship. This provides the opportunity to progressively consolidate the broken pieces of the whole experience and restore a complete sense of Self, in a time that flows slowly, where someone may have the time to “conquer” each step, in a slow and remedial time regarding the violence, the haste and the startle of the traumatic time. Otherwise the recounting of a traumatic experience remains just a forced repetition of the same unfulfilled attempt to manage or even a revival of the trauma itself.

And that is how I sum up the context of my experiential training

experience, excluding a number of methodological and experiential details. I close with the sense of softness, respect and mastery that these 3days provide me; something that I recall while I'm writhing this.

Nostalgically, till we meet again!

Zoi Theofilakou

When Yianna and Despina proposed me to come to Greece and participate, as a trainer, in the 18th 4day Gestalt Psychotherapy Workshop by conducting the workshop for Gestalt Foundation graduates and other mental health professionals, it was more than a pleasure to accept.

In 2011 a Gestalt had been opened: we had met shortly in Athena and found ourselves converging on ethic questions. We wished to meet more fully. It happened five years later, in May 2016, in Volos. I am the director of EPG (Ecole Parisienne de Gestalt in France). This school, born in 1981, is important in Europe and well known for the strength of the group process and for its quality and anteriority in body work.

During this event in Volos, I felt that we are very close, regarding these strengths. The way that students are working together and supporting the group process to produce their study results highlight it. Same thing happens with the different shows which were created to illustrate the Gestalt-Theory.

The theme of my workshop was “When Trauma corrupts the experience of being, Gestalt-therapy can restore the feeling of wholeness» and it was such a pleasure that I felt better when leaving than when arriving. Warmed up, linked, and fed with what I had seen, heard and felt.

For me, the process came through discovering the students, the post-graduated professionals, the trainers, the way you train and work, your consideration of psychotherapy and Gestalt, and also... dancing and sharing grilled fish by the sea :-)

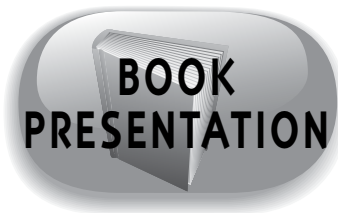


I was touched by the commitments shown by the students and by their creativity. It is a great release for my concern and a privilege to be a witness of your orientation, quality and ethic rigor. It makes me feel your institutes are contributing to the wide Gestalt Community with a clear and fair balance of humanity and professionalism.

It was my first time with you, and despite my ignorance of Greek language, your warm welcome made me feel nearly at home.

Although overloaded, I did not hesitate one minute to book May 2017 for coming again!

Isabelle le Peuc'h, Director of EPG (Ecole Parisienne de Gestalt in France)



The idea for the book «The art of Change» started with Frans Meulmeester's suggestion to translate in Greek his book "Changing is standing still"; a book that vividly analyzes the Gestalt theory and how it acts

as an agent of creative change in organizations. In this wonderful initiative with the encouragement of the Gestalt Foundation, we found the unique opportunity to enrich the core content of the book with two more segments.

These segments are:

- a) the connection between the world of business and management with the Gestalt approach and
- b) a series of Case Studies on which we have worked that demonstrate in a practical applied level, how Gestalt functions in Organizations and Businesses. For that purpose we choose to present three characteristic cases.

The first one refers to a training seminar for one of the major retail companies in the world in regard to stress management.

The second, a group counseling and training workshop for a big multinational manufacture in regards to change and the third the advisory support for a group of members of a management team of a Non-Government Organization.

The book is addressed to:

- (a) To a wider audience interested in finding out how psychologically based approaches work in supporting Businesses and Organizations.
- (b) To Managers of Businesses and Organizations.
- (c) To Human Resources managers (H.R.)
- (d) To employees who want to improve their workplace life.
- (e) To consultants, coaches and trainers working with Organizations and Businesses
- (f) To psychologists, psychotherapists and mental health consultants who are interested in learning more about how the Gestalt approach functions in the world of Businesses and Organizations.
- (g) ...And off course to fellow Gestalt consultants in Businesses and Organizations (G.P.O.).

Our goals and, why not, our ambitions for this book are:

- (a) To "introduce" Gestalt in the world of Businesses and Organizations.
- (b) To explain how the Gestalt approach works and what it offers to Businesses and Organization.
- (c) To "bridge" the two worlds (Gestalt and

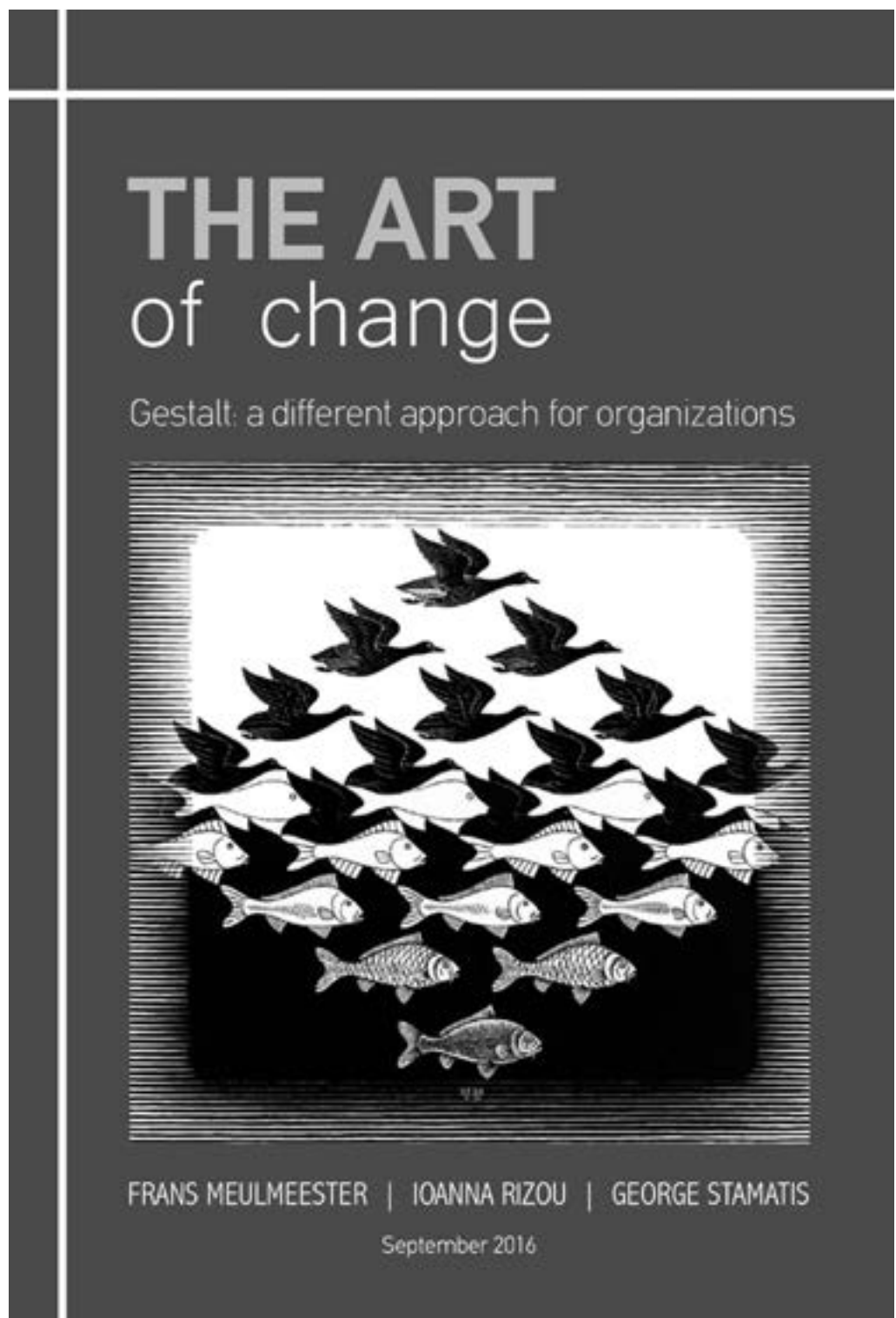
Businesses) that are not yet well acquainted.

(d) To bring a new perspective and a new approach to Organizational Development

(e) But above all (as Frans' book title suggests) to show a new way of approaching the (necessary) creative changes in the life of each Organization.

In our modern world where everything changes, where everything is flowing, where almost nothing seems stable and often we seem to reach an impasse, the Gestalt approach provides creative outlets, proposing a new paradigm standing on a humanistic base for a Creative Adjustment, Innovation and Healthy Change in the world of Business and Organizations.

Ioanna Rizou- Giorgos Stamatis





Something of a home...

2nd camping...

We were anticipating it. The end of the year provided as with a gift, a gift to soften its end. An excursion to the mountains. For the second time we visited the mountains of Macedonia, Rodopi, and the Forest Village Erymanthos. Another year, another process, as if... Really this again; everything is different but also the same and this same which is never the same in the perpetual wheel of change? It's up to you to view them as the same or as different... and I wonder which of the two is simpler or which need extra effort. Anyway... we were talking about the camp, although the conversation is not irrelevant. The camping has beauty, creativity,

was our naturalistic adventure on the canoe, exploring the nature and our nature... with acceptance, together in the together, in our beautiful trip to Nestos.

So I together with you, with you and you and me. The forest village had something of a home. It was somehow a home. The idea of a forest village, the idea of that camping, the need for home.

And that was something very intense for me. It incorporated the "while I can", "it is ok where I'm going", "I'm changing", the "I should" together with the "acceptance" and "security". So "I'm here" with you and with all of you... like that night when we gathered around the campfire, holding hands, on a glade in the forest under the stars! This communal sensation... it had a warm and sweet power. It had a dynamic, a pulse and it had trust. Despite the difficulties (that should be mentioned) ...it had energy. Despite the fatigue, when the elves woke up and awaited us with riddles and secrets under



purpose and presence. Just like last year. And still not so. It is not a matter of comparison rather of continuation... and yes I like that. It is like it acquires substance in its early years, like a living organism. The organism "camp"!

We were the first ones to arrive and in a few days this organism were growing, woke and flourished.

People, groups, workshops... painting on written canvases, poetry and yoga, hummocks hanging from the tree reminding us of our embryonic state, materials from the forest creating and being created, games in the sand, exercise and relaxation, wishes with meditative journeys, talking puppets, experimenting, dancing to the beat of drums and tambourines and touberleki, to their own rhythm, to the rhythm of this organism.

Splendid, isn't it? It seems so... and we climbed down mountains, we climbed up singing, we played with the children. And how exciting

the trees at night, we run after them trying to find them. All ages together, my age and their...

The wooden village houses, with all their contents, their human eyes and their noises, they were something of a "home". And now that I'm thinking about it home is where my heart feels warmth... even though it was so cold.

See... camping was quite the adventure... and there is more to come! Let's see what is installed...

Aspa Zigaki, 4th year Thessaloniki

P.S. I would like to thank the girls that tirelessly supported, organized and designed the whole experience, Hristina, Maria, Katia and Antonia.

Creativity Workshop

"Someone understands that he is working well when each incident, even the smallest, the most insignificant in his life and his mind, comes and alone contributes a pebble to what he is creating"

G. Seferis

Trying to find the words to express what was my experience in the 2nd international Gestalt Foundation summer camp, entitled "The "legendary" Wisdom of the Forest" and the "Creator or creation? Painter or canvas?" workshop; I encountered Seferis words and I felt that there are no better words to express what I experienced. As Melina, as a patient, as a participant, as a therapist, as a human... And my God! What greatness when someone's creativity can connect, support and help in the expression of someone else's feeling! And what my greatness God, when creativity one can encounter, to support and assist in the expression of emotion of the other!

Makridou Melina MSc Health Psychologist, University of Bristol, Mental Health Counselor, Gestalt Psychotherapist

Camping

Camping- solemn as a prayer- in the wake of meeting

Form the encounter to the farewell
Nature lights differently people's faces

Endless encounter under the lustrous sky

Clear reflections away from mirrors

Many routes –one destination

Partakers of a single substance, a powerful experience-it's called life

Alive Reflecting

people fellow travelers- settle down by the rivers

people companions- mapping routes in the mountain

people lovers- scatter fragrances on the stone

people loved ones- illuminate fears with a candle

people caretakers- they tie the rope with trust for the young one to

fly, the child. Alive they walk the fellow humans

On the trains over the rivers

On the roads beyond the rocks

Beyond habit- luck and coincidence

Crossing with the unknown- for the simple, the daily

Singing the toil and the return

Warming the cold in the darkness

Gathering wood for the fire, for the food

Turning dust to fertilizer for the new crop

With a rhythm like music

To the hearts –to the pulse –to the deep breaths to the eyes I meet

Farewell till we meet again

Efrosini Kiatikidou, Efrosini Kiatikidou, Graduate of Philosophy-Pedagogy-Psychology, Skilled in Psychology of Kapodistriako University, Skilled in Special Education of A.U.Th., Gestalt trainee (4th year of Gestalt Foundation Center in Thessaloniki)



2nd summer camp

Exhilaration. Freedom. Justice. Independence. These are some of the emotions I felt in the Gestalt camping. Even though I'm not a member of Gestalt, even though most of the people there were completely unknown to me, these 3 days I felt like we all moved together as one. That without exchanging words we could agree to

develop a harmonious communication leaving behind all the things that separate us; either it was age or difference of character. The energy was unbelievable, you could feel it everywhere. From a conversation and a laugh to meditation and group therapy. I thank you for these 3 days and the journey to explore myself.

Stefi Pantelidou, first grade high school student



FREE
EXPRESSION**Trap / Country**

Everything begins from fear. The fear of an unprotected baby born into an unwelcoming world. As luck would have it, I was born into a bombed landscape, into

a world between a mother and a father that I didn't chose. They didn't know that they frightened me; they didn't know they were imprisoning me in a blindfolded life. They brought me to their world and I was trapped. No father showed me that I can rebel. No mother raised me to be proud of being a man. There was always a gap inside and I never felt me as a separate being, since I was never given that opportunity by my parents. What they showed me was their fear, their insidious fear for a life that they themselves haven't chose.

I took that fear and made it into an entity and I identified with it. I always felt it and I took it upon myself to calm us down. I became the good child, the quite child, the obedient child. I never made trouble. And if I dared (which was rare) to talk back then there was the beating and more often the anger and the threats. What could I do? I loved my kidnappers, my parents and I loved this relationship like nothing else in my life. If I didn't how could I have endured? I could not speak and in my childish eyes it was the only way to survive. So I put on my best to hide the fear of my nonexistence. I was left with a cold smile.

And everything was supposed to be alright. School, life..., then so many successes... What a pupil, what a student, how handsome, what a role model!

And inside me, there was anger, as they had taught me. But I couldn't communicate, I couldn't express myself. How could I speak since I didn't have a voice, how could I speak since I had no feeling, how could I speak since I had no existence?

Everything had to be perfect. Nothing should upset this trapped relationship, otherwise I would be in danger. Under the table with my eyes closed. That was where I was hiding but I didn't even know that. Nothing should bring to the surface my absence. No contact with the environment.



And my body was always my tool. That was where I would run to... With my imaginary illnesses I was asking my parents to come and calm down my fears, just as I did when I was a child. Then when I was sick the house was calm, there was no fighting. But I would also breaks out on my body as a punishment. Exactly, as my parents did, when they beat me. Either way I don't feel that my body belongs to me. It always obeyed my parents' commands, so it wasn't me who controlled its fate. It could be called a castration. In the same time is the vessel that keeps me connected - joint to them. So, every time I try to make a connection with someone or something else, I react through my body to protect my parents. All this gives me a sense of fake security; it is what I know even if it hurts, anyway I was used to ignore it.

And then the real life came into play, and the trips were over and the money. Reality came in. Relentless. It came to show me my problems. But how could I accept them? How could I hurt? How could I stand my total frustration, from even the smallest defeat?

To bid farewell to something first you have to contact. I was never allowed to feel the pain of emotional loss. I could never make a contact. I was only allowed anger. And I attacked myself. With all the power I could master. Again and again. Again and again. Everything had to be as before. I, the small Alexander and them, my parents, the people who take care of me.

Mum I'm sick, don't shout. Dad I hurt caresses me! Play with me. Sweeten up. Don't fill me up with the harsh reality. I don't want more pain from

the outside. I only want yours familiar pain, that I consider normal.

There was no living space inside me apart for those. There was nothing else besides them and their reflection on me. Whenever they were in danger inside me, I was in danger. I would lift walls of anger before me. I still do. I treat myself badly in order to protect them. In order to protect me. And I still create the conditions for an unwelcoming world. In order to go back to that familiar country. With the pain that I didn't realize that it was pain. With the fear for my life that I couldn't feel. Me in my hole. In my mother's womb. In the endless life of an embryo, without the fear of death.

Alexander

“Addiction”, this is the subject of this year’s Continuing Education Program in Athens.

Considering the importance of the continuing training of each Gestalt Psychotherapist and Mental Health Counselor, the Gestalt Foundation organizes and offers its annual continuing education program for 2016-2017 in Athens. The programs’ goal is to delve into the theory, supervision and the personal development of professionals in the field of this complicated, multifaceted and multidimensional problem of addiction.

The program, under the general title “Addiction” includes 3 workshops, of a total of 49 hours, allocated in a 1day and two 3day workshops, begins in January 21, 2017 with the 1day workshop.

To conduct this program we have invited Gestalt therapists with extensive experience and specialty on the subject. For this reason Anastasis Mavromihalis, will come from Thessaloniki, Peter Schulthess from Switzerland and Armin Baier from Los Angeles.

Anastasis Mavromihalis, Psychologiste – Gestalt Psychotherapiste, M.Sc in Social and Clinical Psychology of Addictions (Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki). Member of HAGT, of EAGT, of the Hellenic Workers Association in Prevention Centres of Drug use and the Hellenic Association of Actors. He has been working as a psychologist since 1996 in Organizations of psychosocial intervention and treatment of high risk populations (prisoners, ethnic minorities, street children, addicts).

Peter Schulthess: Msc, is a Gestalt Therapist living and practicing since 1976 in Zurich, Switzerland. He is living part time in Greece. He teaches internationally since 1991 for several institutes. One of his focuses in his teachings is the working with clients with addictive behaviors. He has worked many years with drug addicts and alcoholics in connection with therapeutic communities and clinics as an external group therapist or supervisor. He has also experience with other kind of dependent behavior, such as eating disorders, sex-dependency, gambling.

Armin Baier: LCSW, has a private psychotherapy practice in Los Angeles specializing in relational gestalt therapy, addiction and trauma, and he is on the core faculty of the Pacific Gestalt Institute in Los Angeles. He provides clinical supervision in two Los Angeles mental health programs, and he serves as an officer and director of the Gestalt Therapy Institute of Los Angeles. Armin teaches at the Columbia School of Social Work Masters Program online campus. A former Clinical Director of the Parallax Center chemical dependency treatment program in NYC, his clinical experience, teaching and published writings include research, method and policy in the field of addiction.

12th European Gestalt Psychotherapy Conference and the 1st EAGT and AAGT joint Conference, Taormina, September 2016.

To my trainers and colleagues trained in Gestalt Psychotherapy

Taormina
Conference 2016

It is 14:40 in Greece, 13:40 in Italy.

I’m outside the plenary session meeting and I gaze at the people while I wait for the next workshop to begin.

I’m so happy that I’m here!

I had a few difficult hours before I got used to so many people (almost 1.200 participants), until I found the key areas (admittedly a difficult task since there were 12 WC that you needed a map to discover) and other such procedural issues that made me want to flee the place the first two days...

And now I’m sitting here and I feel safe... among 1.000 different people. Different races, different cultures... a lot of different Gestalt approaches. The same Gestalt? Could Gestalt be the same?

As I sit here waiting, I feel.

I feel, whole... I’m not scared... I’m not lost amongst the others.

Once that would seem to me like science fiction... Now I’m.

I am... Do you hear that, Katia... and Despina, and Yianna and Giorgo and Antonia... I am.

How enormous is that, I am...

As I watch others, a lot in so many, I feel pride and joy meeting my trainers and other colleagues, that in time I was privileged to watch make their own presentation, watch their own work.

I feel happy not only for the warm meeting (like good old friends) but also for the inspiration, and the continuous challenge to become better... and most

of all for the quality of the contact and the friction with co-trainees that they ardently exposed us.

I attended a lot of presentations, some interesting and others not so much.

What I’m thinking, while I’m waiting, is how powerful, energetic and well thought out, inspirational, and innovative are the presentations in the conferences in Greece. Our preparations for our presentations and workshops in our own (what I thought at the time) small conference were filled with “exposition”, vitality, risk and fight from both sides of trainees and supervisors. The purpose of this “letter” is not to praise or eulogize our trainers but to inform our colleagues that are now in the process of training, that: NOW, exactly where you are, you are listening to the best there is...

Now in front of you!

You are experiencing a rich and vibrant part of Gestalt. About 1.000 kilometers away and a lot of frozen miles I felt the need to express how proud I am for all that we create in our conferences!

While I was at our “local” conference I believed that the presentations abroad would be more inspirational and more... something more...

I wouldn’t change that tip for anything in the world, for a number of reasons. My participation in it filled me with experience and knowledge. But the most important lesson for me was that today in Greece, facing all our current problems, both trainers and trainees...

We rock!

Elisabeth Partheniotti

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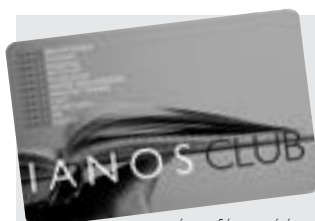
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