



# Gestalt NEWS Foundation

BIANNUAL INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION NEWSLETTER OF THE GESTAL PSYCHOTHERAPY AND TRAINING CENTER  
AUTUMN-WINTER 2017 - 2018, ISSUE 26



## 3rd International Gestalt Summer Camp

# ...the rainbow always comes out after a storm...



... in the canyon is “always raining”, do you think that “there are always rainbows there”? If you happen to be as curious as us and love adventure, team work in nature, taking risks and making changes, then come with us this summer on the 3rd Gestalt Summer Camp in the forest village of “Livadaki” in Karpenissi, between 5 and 9 July 2017... and we will search for those “rainbows” and the possibilities hiding behind the storms of our lives.

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## IANOS

ΑΛΥΣΙΔΑ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ

- IANOS ΒΙΒΛΙΟΠΩΛΕΙΑ
- IANOS ΒΑΖΑΑΡ
- IANOS ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ
- IANOS ARTSHOP
- IANOS MUSICSHOP
- IANOS ΠΑΙΔΙΚΟΣ
- IANOS ΧΩΡΟΣ ΕΚΔΗΛΩΣΕΩΝ
- IANOS ΑΙΘΟΥΣΑ ΤΕΧΝΗΣ
- IANOS CAFE
- IANOS DELI
- IANOS ΕΡΓΑΣΤΗΡΙΑ
- IANOS CLUB
- IANOS RADIO
- IANOS GR

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I close my eyes and say: “3rd Gestalt summer camp”...  
 First image: beautiful people... bodies dancing to the rhythms of the four elements, free and unashamed.  
 Second image: a fire that burns every emotion transforming it to whatever each of us wants and we stand in a circle around it...  
 Third image: the ascent to Via Ferrata: the agony and the care in front of infinity...  
 The walks in the woods and other magical images.

It was a moving experience. So many people together, adults, children, teenagers coexisting, having fun, laughing, crying, dancing, with such care and attentiveness till by the fifth day I couldn't tell whether my excitement and joy sprung from inside or outside of me. One of the most idealistic experiences I have ever had...

**Helen Mouslech**

*continue on page 8*

**19th 4DAY  
 GESTALT  
 PSYCHOTHERAPY  
 WORKSHOP**

**GIO,  
 GESTALT  
 IN 7 STEPS**

**ADDICTIONS**



Are you functioning on auto pilot? Take a break and read our news!!! "Something is happening in Larisa..." a series of interesting lectures. Gestalt therapy in schools... It refers to an organized activity for the

3rd East Thessalonica District schools, a great initiative that involved two years' work with educators and parents and continues this year. A constructive lecture on depression, as a relational process, both in its history for the afflicted person and its treatment.

The resonance of our continuous education program on the "Addictions in our Lives" with articles by Armin and Peter who shared their knowledge and experience on this painful, deep, personal, relational and social phenomenon of addiction.

Gestalt in Organizations... Gestalt in 7 steps... an approach to team coaching. Frans Meulmeester relates his experience on how Gestalt can "pave the way"..." Open the doors to evolution and growth" for

businesses and organizations through "parity", "respect" and "trust". May is here and we move forward to Agria, Volos for the 19th 4day Gestalt Workshop. «A life experience», "an interactive experience", and experience of meeting with "close friends", "old colleagues", "fellow travelers", with "body-sowing", the song of the "cinnamon root", with "belonging", "wrinkling", the "beauty and the power of a drop" and of course the "indispensable tsipouro"!

On our way for the profile... "19 life stories", 19 "beloved voices", proud trainers, "a sense of completion, freedom and nostalgia".

The fragrance of summer... on to the mountain to "search for rainbows", through adventure, game, the contact with nature and its "magic", and of course through the care of the Manitou...

Enjoy your reading!



**Despina Balliou**

M.Sc. Counseling Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Trainer & Supervisor, member of EAGT. Trained in Traumatotherapy's method EMDR. ECP holder (European Certificate of Psychotherapy). Founding member of the Gestalt Foundation and of the Hellenic Association for Gestalt Therapy (HAGT)

## Gestalt Therapy in schools

Between the 2015-17 school years, Gestalt therapy has made a powerful appearance in Primary Education. An action organized for the 3rd District EE Eastern Thessalonica Primary Education Prefecture. The aim was to cover essential training needs of teachers and parents on issues related to mental health, in the school and family environment of children aged 6-11. The program was put forward and headed by Mr. Dimitris Sidiropoulos, a school counselor. The Gestalt Foundation, which I was privileged to represent, provided the necessary assistance.

The program included:

- In-school meetings with teachers (2hours each); the number of attendees was decided according to each schools needs and the subjects addressed concerned issues that they face during school hours.
- Lectures for both parents and teachers (2hours each); concerning issues of cognitive, psycho-emotional and social development in school children.
- Experiential seminar (3 hours), as part of the annual meeting organized by the Prefecture at the end of each school year, with the participation of all teachers with the purpose of training.

My experience of this 2year effort was excellent. I came in contact with

a great number of teachers, I heard their concerns and anxieties about a difficult school reality, I shared in their experience and I offered assistance through the prism of Gestalt Therapy in order to find solutions.

My contact with parents was equally important. Beyond the training aspect of the lectures there was an opening and a sharing of their experience and some questions. The process drove some to explore their own difficult or easy issues and they didn't hesitate to interact with the attendees on these issues.

The same action will continue for the 2017-18 school year. I would be glad to continue with the help of the Gestalt Foundation. Gestalt therapy deserves the chance to provide its healing properties to the afflicted family and educational system.

My excitement for this year is great. The subject that I intent to present come as a result of my own work all these years with children- adolescents, parents and teachers. I also find that it is a unique chance to hear and implement the principals of Gestalt therapy on education. Let's continue!

**Despina Karpouza**, psychologist A.U.T., Gestalt therapist, A.G.P. member NKUA associate

## BEST SELLERS ΕΞΑΜΗΝΟΥ

ΛΟΓΟΤΕΧΝΙΑ



ΙΣΙΔΩΡΟΣ ΖΟΥΡΓΟΣ  
ΛΙΓΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΙΑ ΝΥΧΤΕΣ



ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΟΣ ΚΟΡΤΩ  
ΠΕΝΑ



FREDRIK BACKMAN  
Η ΠΑΠΑ ΜΟΥ ΣΑΣ ΧΑΙΡΕΤΑ  
ΚΑΙ ΖΗΤΑΕΙ ΣΥΓΓΝΩΜΗ



ΕΛΕΝΑ ΑΚΡΙΤΑ  
ΤΟ ΜΥΣΤΙΚΟ ΤΗΣ ΜΠΛΕ  
ΠΟΥΛΚΑΤΟΙΚΙΑΣ

ΜΕΛΕΤΕΣ



ΕΛΕΝΗ ΓΥΛΚΑΤΖΗ - ΑΡΒΕΛΕΡ  
ΠΟΣΟ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟ ΕΙΝΑΙ  
ΤΟ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΟ;



ΓΙΑΝΝΗΣ ΚΑΡΑΜΗΤΣΙΟΣ  
ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ  
100 ΜΙΚΡΕΣ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΕΣ



ΕΛΙΟ Δ' ANNA  
Η ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΑ  
ΤΟΥ DREAMER



ΓΙΑΝΗΣ ΒΑΡΟΥΦΑΚΗΣ  
ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΙ ΗΤΤΗΜΕΝΟΙ



GILL EDWARDS  
ΑΛΛΑΞΕ ΤΙΣ ΣΚΕΨΕΙΣ ΣΟΥ,  
ΑΛΛΑΞΕ ΤΗ ΖΩΗ ΣΟΥ



ΧΟΡΧΕ & ΝΤΕΜΙΑΝ  
ΜΠΟΥΚΑΙ  
ΓΟΝΕΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΙΔΙΑ



ΕΚΚΗΑΡΤ ΤΟΛΛΕ  
Η ΔΥΝΑΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΤΟΡΑ



RONDA BYRNE  
ΤΟ ΜΥΣΤΙΚΟ

## ΙΑΝΟΣ

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## ...in "lanos" Cultur Chain

Commentary on **Anneta Alexandridi's** lecture:  
**"Pause as a springboard**

**for action: do I provide space for my needs and choices?" Athens, 15/6/2017**

On the 15th of June 2017, I had the chance to attend Mrs Anneta Alexandridis, a Gestalt psychotherapist and Yoga instructor, lecture, titled "Pause as a springboard for action: do I provide space for my needs and choices?"

Through her lecture Mrs. Alexandridi suggested that we should take a pause from our everyday frantic pace and use some simple ways to literally take some breaths, taking breaks, physically and mentally; breaks that are necessary for a balanced life, for us and our environment.



Mrs. Alexandridi introduced the subject quite originally, interactively, suggesting experiential exercises, with simplicity, im-

mediacy and humor and she created such a friendly atmosphere that when I left I really felt exaltation.

She started by explaining the way we put ourselves in "auto pilot" mode and how this affects our brain and determines our actions. She made the case that, it is due to that, that we repeat "patterns" and "entrenched actions" that don't relate to the existing present situation but to habits that we have established in the past. This way, we live by "reacting" rather than "choosing our actions". She explained how stress defines our lives and that this is something primarily physical and mental. To be able to live according to what is really happening now, we need a "pause", in order to break free from the automation of stress, a "pause" from the auto pilot mode, to give ourselves the space to view more clearly our current situation and choose the appropriate action.

Mrs. Alexandridi suggested two ways to do that and emphasized that both ways require exercise and vigilance: 1) Mindfulness, where we train our brain to focus on something specific and 2) breathing exercises that help us to instantly change the state of our nervous system, our physiology in order, again, to stop automatic thinking and calmly assess the present.

Trying some of the exercises I realized how breathing had a direct impact on my physical calmness. At the end of the lecture we had the time to

discuss and the attendees' interest became even more obvious as they patiently waited to speak privately to Mrs. Alexandridi to ask their questions and make their comments.

**E. Kolovou**

Commentary on **Antonia Konstantinidou's** lecture  
**"When Space, Time and Meaning is lost... Depression and Gestalt Therapy" Thessalonica, 20/10/2017**

20/10/2017. "lanos" Culture Chain in Thessalonica. In a packed room, Antonia Konstantinidou, in her own special way, always accompanied by sweetness and calmness, placed the concept of major depression in Space, Time and Meaning which is lost for those who experience it.

Taking us through the diagnostic elements of depression, the symptoms manifesting in physical, emotional, cognitive and mental level, she guided us to the relational history that is hiding behind the term "depression". A relational history that finds its roots way back to a person's individual history, in the mother-child relationship and the unmoved, apathetic façade of a mother in that early stage of interaction.

The unfinished business that is created when the thread of our significant relationships are cut, but in a way these relationships live on inside us, is what we have to pay attention in Gestalt therapy when we work with people who are afflicted.

When an individual's resilience to grief is not sufficient and he doesn't allow it to exist and the environment doesn't reinforce its expression, then, the mental tolerance collapses and this unfinished business block the mourning over our loss, opening a window to grief.

The therapeutic process focusses on creating a safe environment- a relational field- where a person can learn to accept support from his environment and then create his own support system.

Therapy also tries to gradually and carefully retract the inversion of needs observed in depression in order to help the person establish a different way of relating and manage emotions and actions that were repressed.

At the end of the lecture, once again, I had found myself guided through the loss of meaning, in time and space to where everything find its meaning in through the authenticity of the relation.

**Amalia Apostolou, Gestalt psychotherapist**





***On the 19th 4day workshop in Agria...***

I made my way to this particular 4day workshop with a sense of thrill and achievement regarding my course. Almost 10 years ago,

as a patient, I attended, for the first time, a 4day workshop in Portaria, in Pilio, held in a Primary schoolroom, with a few wooden chairs placed in a circle; no desks. I remember looking at my therapists with such an awe. Today, as a trainee, from a different perspective, different responsibilities and different anxieties, I look at them as a whole and how I've grown amongst them. On the other hand I was with my fellow students knowing that in the room next door were some of my best friends, people with whom I walked together all these years and they were there as participants of the experiential group or as graduates. This, literally, made me feel like a social being with ties necessary to my survivor and devel-



opment. People who contributed to who I am today and I had contributed to their story.

Presenting our assignment was the conquest of our little group given that our video received such praise and moving comments. Essentially we dealt with an individual's capability to exist in the time-space continuum, in spite of his traumas and how eventually these traumas end up protecting him, expand and make him richer.

I also felt richer while I was working with the group.

Abstract ideas became concrete, I touched parts of my soul that were withdrawn or crashed by cowardice and fear, I meet people who I had never seen before and I might not see again, but their memory is imprinted on me as an additional information on the love we all need, the acceptance, the apology and the forgiveness, happiness and friendship.

I would like to thank the organizers and all the participants who reminded me these basic principles of our existence, our continuum in the space and time.

***Anna Mertzani***

"Write a few words for your experience in the 4day workshop..." That was what GF suggested and I willingly sat in front of my computer. And I thought "what can I write?" more precisely, "what to write first about such a rich experience?" I spent a lot of time sitting on my desk racking my brain! I wrote... I read... I deleted... I wrote again... I read again... I deleted again...

And that went on for days until an essay that I had written a few years ago came and stuck to my mind and reminded me that what I had experienced in the 4day workshop was a lifetime experience... a rich relational experience of interaction, sharing, respect and acceptance.

So I give to you these thoughts of mine:

The Circle of life, a big journey

The circle of life...the same for all

But still... so different lives

We are born with an empty backpack on our shoulders...

We feel weak...

And we stay still...

Until a gentle wind comes along...

And makes us roll away...

And we begin the journey...

To unknown places...

And from wherever we go...

From wherever we pass...

From whoever we meet...

We take something...

And we carefully place it inside...

And that "something"

Little by little...

Fills up our backpack...

And become "Us"

They become our "Treasure"!

In our life's journey...

Carrying our backpack on our shoulders...

Someone shows us the way...

Someone holds our hand...

Someone wants to push us...

Another one tries to stop us...

Another one is dreaming to keep as close...

Someone want to liberate us from the weight of our backpack...

Someone says "I love you"...

Someone looks at us angry...

Someone smiles...



Someone is willing to give us whatever we need...  
 And someone simply "rolls" next to us...  
 In our life's journey...  
 We have to learn to choose...  
 To try...  
 To dream...  
 We have to learn to dare...  
 To demand...  
 To listen...  
 We have to learn to evaluate...  
 To try  
 To reject...  
 To make decisions...  
 We have to learn to move on...

And when after years...  
 We sit on the trunk of a cut tree...  
 And open the backpack we carried...  
 Since we were children...  
 And we carefully take out our "wares"...  
 And remember our life...  
 Happiness will draw a big smile on our faces...  
 Because we will feel so lucky...  
 That, that gentile wind, that we once meet...  
 Made us roll...  
 Gave us the push to move forward...  
 And become aware of our life and ourselves!

The circle of life...the same for all  
 But still... so different lives

With regards,  
**Nikolas Raptis**

***Impressions from the 19th 4day workshop "Process: the continuum in time-space".***

Another 4day workshop. What makes it different from the previous ones? It's my third time as a trainee. It's the umpteenth if we count the experiential 4day workshops I participated before. It is the first time that we present a complete and documented work and not a poster. For me, there is also another meaning: it is my last workshop as a trainee. With the group. With this group. For a strange reason I don't feel like that. My actions and preparation for Agria feel more like a déjà vu. Like they are embedded. We are waiting for Fotinoula to come before we go, because it is raining heavily. Meetings. Old fellow students, fellow travelers from Thessalonica. How I missed them! How they've changed! How I've changed! The necessary tsipouro to get as ready for the plenary session. With two beloved friends.



We began with Yianna's workshop. The Doric style of language and historic references and the "magical" ability to connect it with the work and the process of the therapist.

Then we followed with Antonia. I had missed you so much. Working with the body. With that special style. Both sweet, acerbic and insightful. And the presentation. So much work to get it right. To show our work. To cover the sudden departure, due to illness, of one member of the group. To try to take care of her. And to present...

On a personal level, I gain a lot from this process. Even though it wasn't paved with rose pedals. **Because** it wasn't paved with rose pedals. And the personal connection with the presentation's subject brought a lot of tears. In front of everybody. Even though I had work for a long time on the subject with the group, the tears appeared there. Like it was their time to roll. The hug and the care. And my premature departure for an important journey. And for other meetings.

Surely the journey doesn't end here. We have a date for next year. At the same familiar place. In a different role. A year richer.

**Solomon Mordachai**, 3rd year graduate, Athens

***My experience at the 19th 4day Gestalt Workshop***

...Another 4day Gestalt Workshop is over. The 19th! The Subject: "Process: the continuum in the space-time". Place: Agria, Volos. However this 4day workshop was special because it marked the end of my training. On the one hand it was the familiar situation of the trainer with his group, the people with who I shared this unique experience for 4 years and on the other hand the anxiety and care for the group presentation as well as everything that was happening in the backstage of everyone's life up to that moment; this made this meeting exceptional.

I'm tempted to compare the then with the now, 4 years ago, I wonder, like small children do, "let's see how much did I grow"! Well the fact is that I did grow up. Everybody did. To be more precise, I changed. Everybody changed... everything changes. How much is something that I can't

count. And whether that is good or bad it's relevant and makes no difference here. For all of us, the change, placed in space, maps a course, a route. The height, the length, the alterations, the pauses compose a melody. How can I sing it for you here? It is made up of laughter and tears. From silence and whispers. From voices, conversations and grimaces. It bares the excitement of sincerity and the warmth of a confession. It has joy, rage, fear and grief. It has the bright color of discovery and the satisfaction and calmness of response. It is touch and an improvised dance. It is made by the sweetness of companionship. The pulse and the continuum of the breathing sea. The surprise of the presence of new faces and the tracks of those who came before. It is a composition of all the things I lived and experienced all this time.

In our 4day "subterranean" workshop this year we "worked" on a lot of subjects, so many that I could keep on writing. In a few words they included the change and the transformation. The space-time. The certainty and uncertainty. The touch, the sharing. The self... the "who am I"? Life and death and what I consider to be my debt to life. My sex and ageing and other more specific things, as well as all the personal and unresolved things I carried with me. All together and one by one lighted my mind and heart and were seen through a different light themselves. Through that process I bid goodbye to Agria and our sweet nights by the sea, to the Gala dance, to the tsipoura, the mezedes, the games, the singing of "Kaneloriza"...

The thing I've learned through this 4 years, for myself, for others, for things were enough. Now these, still slowly, find their way to jump through me in every chance, in every occasion, all more clearly. They are connected to a whole and become tools and a new way of walking, a new world and a search for a new course. I feel that we are all in this, together, despite the fact that each and every one of us follows his own way. Each and every one of us special and important to me. Thus, with a sense of "belonging" for the first time, I experience strongly and steadily parity, respect and choice. I feel that I stand firmly on my two feet and even though sometimes I feel scared, I eagerly enjoy the view looking outside my window. Good luck! A good journey to all of us! Till we meet again!

### **Pegi Tsomidi**

#### **"How to create or enhance safety/security when working with clients with great difficulty in contact?"** με την Isabelle Le Peuch.

I decided to participate in Isabelle's seminar because I believed that I would have the chance to satisfy some of my needs. First to reconnect with the training process; because the issue of safety in the therapeutic process was something that concerned me that period and second to reconnect with the people of Gestalt, to reunite with my old fellow travelers and to meet new ones. In short, I need to "take care of myself" in some way and I was sure that this circumstance would prove appropriate. Looking back at my experience, the first thing that comes to mind is the sense of security I felt during the whole duration of the workshop.

I'm sure that this sensation derived from the combination of a lot of different elements. But I have to single out the people who made up the group and their standing in it. I was fortunate to be surrounded by people who felt close and others, who although far, seemed willing to bridge that gap. There was sharing, participation, interest, revelation, a willingness to take risks, to "wrinkle" one self, respect to each other's pace from all of us. And of course Isabelle. With her vibrant and warm presence she guided us



to explore the themes she introduced in a way that was both structured and free. In general, what I keep from her presence, is the sense of "whole" that she emitted, as I experienced her moving with ease between poles; adult and child, man and woman, serious and funny, old and young.

"The sense that I exist, that I'm being in the here and now whole, is the basic element on which security is built" she told us at one point. "... Ask your patients permission to take them somewhere... (but still)...too much protection sometimes confirms the fear of danger" she told us at some other point. "Any form of support, even the smallest one, internal or external, animate or inanimate, real or fictional is very important. The greater the permanence (duration, stability) of this support and the greater the variety is, it is for the best". These are a few of the things I carried with me, in terms of context. But most importantly I came back having enriched my sources, happy and "taken care of" and with an appetite to bring something of that treasure to my therapy room.

Thank you, good luck, till we meet again

### **Gina Dimakopoulou**

#### **On the presentation "A body that delivers and is delivered"...**

I am a seed. I travel through eons carrying a thousand information inside my small body. Once in a while, I make a stop to take root and blossom in order to maintain my body through the passage of time.

I take roots, I throw anchors, deep seeded in the past. Then, almost simultaneously, the body develops. I sprout everything delivered by the initial seed of my existence, ancient, ineffable information.

I use what I've learned, what I encounter, I make yeast and I mould. I mould

my body tense and willing, both controlled and boundless. I admire it and I detest it, all these pieces together tangled, my body which I don't want, I don't recognize, I don't accept.

This way I move on, I learn and I meet through it. And there, in "the middle of the road", I meet a pixie, a fairy elf and a source of gargling spring water, power. They dance in front of me, they enjoy it and they invite me. I surrender to the air and the water to create my earth. An earth stable and my own, together with a soft, malleable body, that move shamelessly in space, touches, feels, connects, speaks the ancient language-the non-verbal- knows that it is being watched and that is ok. My body is placed differently in space, it carries the knowledge that was delivered to it and still makes its own history. A body, a small seed which nourishes its own fruits, its own seeds, with love, respect and freedom.

And that is how I experienced my journey with the "airy" Nia, the "watery" Helene and the group. A difficult journey, overwhelming at times, other times left me wondering "what am I doing here?", but each time I heard inside me the beating of Decision, Commitment and also Curiosity for what comes next.

And so the months passed and slowly I started to see things. Images and emotions started to jump out of me. But – who would believe it- without using words, since our only instrument was our body. A tricky instrument but when I started trusting it started to pay off! I abandoned myself to silence and my body guided me. Then I became an excellent observer of myself. Walking that path, filled with contacts, revelations and trust we reached the 4day workshop in Volos. People from Athens traveled up, people from Thessalonica traveled down, we joint.

-Let's start the rehearsal, everybody!

Stomach in knots, mouth clenched, heart pounding and only the eyes watching and the ears hearing. Directions, coordination, last minute decisions and caution... hoping not to lose the steps...

45 minutes to relax- not even an hour-to freshen up, to get dressed and... the time came. We all stand in a circle. All radiant, familiar, beautiful! The percussions started to invite the people and my heart tuned into their sound. We grasped the pulse and brought it to us. And then I felt the energy of our circle, I relaxed and as of a miracle I abandoned myself to what I learned, to what I knew, to what I was aware! And I danced. I danced my heart out. And I enjoyed it! And at the end I was happy to receive the praise.

And here I am, exposed in front of you, to tell it all. The whole of what I experienced!

Thank you Nia, Helene, Katia, Konstantin, Group!

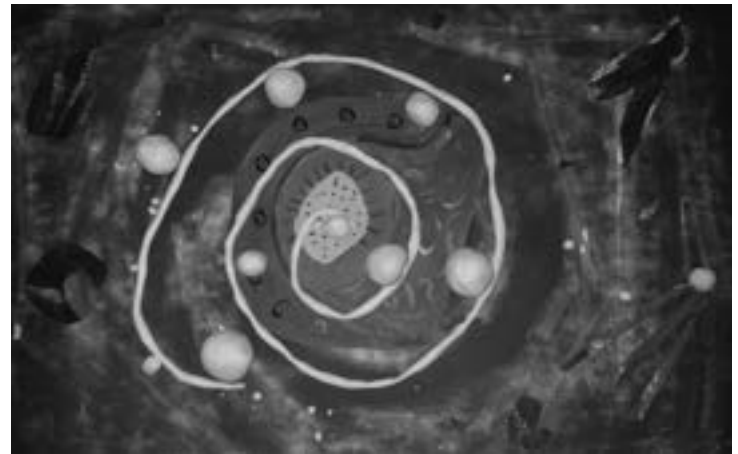
**Alexandra Giannaki**

### **About a drop...**

In a loud and intense field, the presence and the impact of a drop in contacts and in our relationships may be overshadowed. It is very difficult to direct our attention to a "minor" whole.

The phrase "a drop in the ocean" has become the ground to numerous interactions (actions and reactions) and it emerges as a point of view in the field, oriented towards the effort to a quantitative balancing of our inner and outer world. To struggle to be, struggle to sense, struggle to feel...

...Sweat, drop, trickle, whole, concentrated substance, liquid boundaries,



space, motion, this are words that come up in association and refer to specific relationships. A blue drop on white, airdrops, drops on leaves, raindrops on windows, drops on a face, drops on a body... etc.

A minor part of existence provokes, creates, assimilates, incorporates, evaporates, stirs, and exists. The beauty of a drop!!! One can observe it in the human contacts, where there is tension, unimpeded energy and it meets or and it confuses, in commitment to struggle, in action and reaction, when the body shows drops of tears and sweat.

Examining the relationship between parent-adult-child, I inevitably stand to the way the anxiety of the adult meets the excitement of a child.

**Tears**, is a common form in this phenomenology. A code of communication and contact in the relationship between organism-environment. Liquid drops that bear seed of a complete mental world, ready to be realized in a meeting.

**The power of the drop!!!** The tears of a newborn is a challenge and an invitation for the infant to move with his environment.

Tears when they exist, sometimes express sorrow, sometimes anger, other times despair, others pain, other relief, other times joy, other grievance, embarrassment, shame and other times fear.

A tear equals thousand words, thousand meanings, thousand positions and confrontations, thousand misunderstandings and blockages.

In a loud and intense field I have a personal responsibility to trust my tears and my sweat, to trust and to evaluate my "drop".

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**Maria Farmaki**

**Manitou** (according to Wikipedia)

**Manitou** is the word used by many North American Algonquin Indians to designate a protective spirit that may take the form of an animal, object or natural phenomenon. His presence was revealed to the young Indians at their initiation ceremonies. Each manitou was defined by the tribes shamans by the interpretation they gave to the visions the pains caused by the painful, even torturous, tribulations of initiation. The term manitous in the Delaware tribe, as well as some of the Indians in the United States, has come to mean the protective spirit of the entire race, hence the supreme deity (Great Manitou) and thus it became known to the white colonists.

### Origin

Manitou is the spiritual and fundamental force of life among the Algonquin tribes in indigenous mythology. It is ubiquitous and manifests everywhere: organizations, environment, events etc. Aashaa manitou means «good spirit», while otshee manitou means «bad spirit». The Great Spirit, Aasha Manitou, gave the land to the sailors when the world was created (namely, Shawnee).

The term was already widespread during the period of the first European contacts. In 1585, when Thomas Harriot recorded the first glossary of an



Algonquin language, Roanoke (Pamlico), he included the word mantó ac, which means «gods» (plural). Similar terms are found in almost all Algonquin languages.

In some Algonquin traditions, the term «gitche manitou» is used to refer to a «big spirit» or a supreme one. The term was also used by some Anishnaabe Christian groups, such as Ojibwe, to refer to the only God of Abrahamic tradition, often due to the missionary coalition. However, there are similar terms dating back to before European contact.

In shamanistic traditions, maniots (or manidoog or manidoowag) are connected to achieving a desired result, like the manitus plant for healing or the mushroom buffalo for a good hunt. In the Anishinaabeg tradition, «manidoowag» is an aspect of the Great Connection. The relevant terms used by Anishinaabeg are «manidoowish» for small animals and «manidoowag» for insects. Both terms mean «little spirit». In some Al-

gonquin languages such as lynu (Montagnais), the word «Manitou» refers to underwater creatures in which hunters offered smoke to bribe them when they were in their area.

The Fox Indians believed that the manitus lived on the stones of the «sweat lodge» With the heating of the stove, the fire made the mushrooms come out of its place on to the

stones. It then exits the stones when the water is sprinkled over them. Then it springs out of the steam and enters the body. It moves throughout the body, purifying everything that causes pain. Before the mushroom returns to the stone, it transmits some of its nature to the body. That is why someone feels so well after he goes through the «sweat lodge».

### Other interpretations

The God Manitou, as the Indians believed, represents a supreme divinity, a superior to man. This is, in essence, a protective spirit.

These properties of «Manitou» over time have turned into a fun game between a - usually - large groups of people.

The game is quite simple and it is as follows: All the team members are writing their name on a piece of paper and then putting them all together in a box. Everyone holds a piece of paper secretly over someone else's name and so the one who has drawn the paper becomes the «manitou» of the one who's name is on the paper. So, as long as the game lasts, he is transformed into the «protector» of the person who has it. Its purpose now is to protect and be next to the one he has as a protected person. This is done in a number of different ways,

...the rainbow  
comes out af





# How always after a storm...



depending on the type of team involved in the game.

“Manitus” aim to make his protected cheerful either by making gifts (of any size and value), by writing letters or by simply making friends with his protected person. The goal of the game is not to be perceived either by the protected person or by the other members of the

group, since the disclosure of the «mush-

room» is set at a specific date depending on the group's needs.

This game has a lot to offer to groups as it helps people get to know each other, get into the process of making things for each other, getting closer to each other and feeling beautiful. The game is well known and is applied to various groups of people, such as in student classes, where the revelation of «manitou» takes place at the end of the school year, at camps where «manitou» is revealed at the end of the period but also in theater groups that reveal of «mushroom» is usually done after the end of the performances. This game offers joy to all members of the group as they learn to ignore whether they like someone or not and learn to do things for each other, go into the process of discovering what they like about their protégé, trying to keep their identity hidden while clearly at the same time, they draw joy themselves by taking gifts or letters from their own « mushroom ».

### **12 tips to become the perfect Manitou**

- Act promptly, act with courage! The days go by and your protected will be wandering whether his manitou is



thinking of him. What could be more wonderful than the reminder that you have him on your mind? A surprise from even the first day will win him over!

- Use your creativity! Don't let any of your talents untapped, paint, draw, and sketch, create something unique for your protected. Surely he will appreciate that.
- Alcohol and sugar are your aides. When you don't know what to do to show your protected that you care a drink or an ice-cream can provide an immediate solution that would be greatly appreciated.
- If you have been called a gossip then it's time to be enjoy it. We all know the importance of knowing your people, in order to take care of our people more effectively. Your observations and skills can connect information that may prove useful!
- Ask others to join the game. You are not alone in this effort to take



care of your protected. Ask the waiter to offer a refreshment, ask a kid to deliver your gift, use another camper as a messenger.

- Muddy the water. The goal is not to be found and to maneuver skillfully. If your protected suspects that you are their Manitou, whistle indifferently, deny it and claim that you are on a mission by their real manitou. Try to be inventive and glib.
- They figured out that you are their manitou before the desirable date? It's time to become rude, boorish and unpleasant! You will create a paradoxical relationship between the obvious- social interaction and the hidden one the manitou inspired!
- Cloud their eyes. Ask him to supposedly do something protective for someone else in your behalf. After the joy of discovering his manitou the sense of disappointment and resentment will follow and at the end the immense pleasure and surprise. Raise the volume and the multitude of





successive emotions to reach a greater and more enjoyable feeling and outcome.

- Surprise him! Catch him in his sleep, with the food in his mouth, next to the fire, under the waterfall. Make your appearance the most unexpected moment.



- Don't fret! You lost your piece of paper and you don't know who is your protected? Try to take care of whoever you want or all of them.
- You are taking care of the wrong person and you realized it at the last moment? (presumably this would be one of your characteristics, carefreeness, the chaos, the lack of attention, indifference and other positively connoted characteristics)... we are humans, we make mistakes! Remorse and acceptance of the misunderstanding could be paid with beers and a mixed grill.
- You're not feeling good and you are not in the mood to take care of someone? What can we do? It is ok, enjoy the others taking care of you (manitou or not) and who know maybe in this carefree coexistence you might find a way to take care of each other.

***Adamandia, Xenia, Sofia, campers***





## ADDICTIONS

### **“The intersection of addiction, trauma and shame”**

Shame and trauma have been the focus of relational Gestalt therapy literature for over 30 years. Yet the problem of addiction has been addressed from a relational Gestalt therapy perspective with increasing urgency only more recently. What becomes more clearly figural, as our work in this field continues, is that addiction, shame and trauma are so intimately entwined that we can hardly investigate any one of these without taking into account the other two.

I had the great privilege of meeting with a committed group of 13 Gestalt therapists at the Gestalt Foundation, Psychotherapy and Training Center in Athens, for a three-day workshop, March 31, April 1 and 2, 2017, to explore just this: the intersection of addiction, shame and trauma as it relates to our relational Gestalt therapy practice. With the constant support and participation of Despina Balliou and Yianna Yamarelou, we all took an intensive look at this topic.

We investigated the nature of shame from a relational and field perspective.



This involved both definitions of shame (versus guilt) as well as exploring our own experiences of shame, and especially how shame does not exist outside of relationship, but is rather a co-created experience. We discussed shame in the development of, experience of and recovery from addiction and we went through an experiential exercise of discovering the presence of shame in our own habitual, unwanted behaviors in order to get a feel for shame in the addiction context.

With a focus on trauma as a relational process and a state of mind, we were led to a discussion of the prevalence of trauma, the relationship of gender to trauma, and the reciprocal interaction of trauma and shame. We then applied all of this to the associations of trauma and addiction/substance use, and the consequences and meaning of trauma experience in the work of addressing early recovery from addiction.

Subsequently, we explore, in applying these shame and trauma concepts, what it means to Gestalt therapists, who practice a relational attitude, when we are meeting people with addiction, shame and trauma in the clinical setting. We contrasted this with the traditional individualistic model of addiction treatment, and we saw how that can compound shame in the addiction context. Finally, we looked at addiction as a form of dissociation, and explored how the experience of choice and agency can be healing within the context of addiction coupled with shame and trauma.

Students and faculty shared from their own painful experiences throughout the training, and the loving dedication of this group of clinicians will stay with me for a very long time. I am deeply grateful for the care, attention and commitment that were a part of our experience here. Thank you all!

**Armin Baier**

### **A Gestalt Approach in understanding addictive behavior**

Addictive behavior is very common. It can be related to substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, caffeine, tobacco, etc) or the development of certain patterns of addictive behavior (i.e. excessive eating, working, gambling, sexual activities, and internet-computing).

Each one of us displays addictive tendencies. There is a fluent boundary

between habit (for pleasure), misuse and dependency.

Addiction is the final stage of a developed dependency on a substance or a behavior characterized by lack of control, the establishment of tolerance (needing more and more to get the same effect) and the phenomenon of withdrawal effects. A person's life style becomes more and more determined by the addiction, often combined with severe effects on their own health, social integration and on the people who live with them.

This behavior becomes compulsive and the patterns of addiction are so persistent that the addict is not able to break by a simple choice.

Physical health, the state of emotional balance, the social surrounding and the social behavior are affected.

Following the Gestalt perspective we can use the contact circle, described in the Gestalt bibliography, in order to understand the addictive behavior. The self-regulation of the organismic system of an addict is gravely disturbed, and the contact-circle is blocked in almost every phase.

The contact circle of addictive behavior is of poor quality: usually in the phase of sensation, unpleasant sensations arise as an after-reaction to abuse. Awareness does not lead to real intimate needs, but to a demand for using the substance again. Energy is mobilized to get “the kick” again. The contact with the drug or game or sex is intensive, but does not lead to satisfaction, because the deeper emotional needs are not satisfied.

This makes it difficult for someone to find himself in a form of withdrawal that gives the experience of being balanced in an undifferentiated emptiness. Therapy of addiction works in different phases.

First step is for the affected person to become aware of the addiction. They have to learn to make the distinction between a habit that can be easily changed and an elaborated addiction that is out of a patient's control.



Patients and members of their support system, have to admit that the person has fallen to addiction, which is a serious illness, and that they will need professional help. They have to capitulate in front of the power of the addiction. This provides an important base and a

motivation for therapy and change of behavior.

Second step is to interrupt the automatized circle of behavior in the self-dynamic of addiction.

This can be achieved with small or bigger changes in habits or by a change of environment, which makes the change of behavior necessary.

The third step is to discover the unsatisfied needs hiding behind the addictive behavior.

What is the basic disorder besides addiction?

Keeping in mind that the addictive behavior can settle and support a patient, it is important to not only remove the substance that he is addicted to but also to help him explore new alternative ways to fulfill his basic needs.

It's very important to work on perspectives towards a future that is worth living for.

It will be important to support them in rediscovering their own body, its sensations, needs; to help them create a new loving relation with the own body.

Psychotherapeutic work will be important in exploring the psychic conflicts rooted in their biography.

Social training will be important in their effort to socialize and integrate in a more effective way.

Milieu therapy is used in therapy of addicts, group therapy and the setting of therapeutic communities.

**Peter Schulthess**



## ***Gestalt in seven steps (an approach to team coaching)***

### ***Introduction***

In this short contribution, I like to present the basic idea and structure of how we work with Gestalt in organisations. I will do this by presenting a simple model of 7 steps.

### ***Step 1: Something is happening***

The moment we work with a team, there is an interaction going on, in other words: something is happening. Even if the whole team is staring at us in silence, then that is what is happening. It is impossible that nothing happens. If we think so, we apparently are missing something.

### ***Step 2: We resonate to that; it does something with us***

Whatever is happening will somehow affect us. We can become tensed or more interested or we can get bored or irritated. Actually everything is possible.

From the Gestalt point of view, we do not judge this 'resonance' of the practitioner, but we rather welcome it, because it offers us very valuable information on what is going on in the situation.

Very often, this resonance is considered as 'counter transference': as an unconscious reaction from the practitioner, based on his unresolved issues from the past and it interferes with the present relation with the team. We do not deny that it may come from unresolved issues, but we do not see it as 'interfering' with the present. We see it as very useful information on the present situation of the team or organisation.

### ***Step 3: Giving meaning to the resonance***

With just noticing that something is happening and sharing that with the team, we will not really support them. It is our function and task to take a moment, to realize, and understand the meaning of our resonance. We need to understand the sensation in relation to the situation of the team or organisation.

The questions we have to ask ourselves are: what is happening here, that gives me this sensation? Do I recognize this from other situations, where it also occurred?

By taking the time to understand the meaning of our resonance, we actually dis-identify from this sensation and take the meta-position: we become the observer of our own sensations.

### ***Step 4: Sharing our awareness with the client***

The moment, we have the meaning of our resonance clear; we can share this with the team.

Of course, it is important that we are able to bring our awareness in a way that the others can handle it. This means that we have to be selective in what we bring and when we bring it (timing).

We have to select and bring only that information that is functional regarding the process of the other. This is a matter of timing and

estimating which information our client can handle at this time.

### ***Step 5 Asking, how it is for the client to hear this information***

After we have shared our awareness, we can ask the team: "How is it for you that I share this with you?" or "Do you recognize this?"

We will be surprised, how many times, that something that is so obvious for us, comes as a total surprise or even shock for the others.

### ***Step 6: Exploring the phenomena and possible patterns***

As a next step, we can explore together, what is actually happening in this concrete 'here and now situation' and if the team recognises this also from other situations. Do they recognize certain patterns? And if so, can they see, what the function is of these patterns. In most cases, patterns have once started as the best possible creative adjustment to a certain difficult situation. They had a very clear function. Unfortunately, after a while, they have become more and more a fixed pattern.

The goal of this step is to support the team in increasing awareness on this kind of patterns, because this awareness can help them to change the pattern and become more effective.

### ***Step 7: Introducing an experiment***

As a possible step in the process of exploring and gaining new awareness, we often introduce or propose an experiment to the team. We introduce an experiment to give feedback or to cooperate together in another way.

Normally, such a new awareness will help a team to improve their functioning and become more effective. Sometimes, more than one cycle of these seven steps is needed.

In that case, we will notice that while the team is practicing the experiment, something will happen again, e.g. another old pattern starts to show up.



In that way, we are actually back at step 1 from a new cycle of seven steps and we can help the team to increase their awareness on this pattern as well.

***Frans Meulmeester***

Being trained in Gestalt psychotherapy since early on, it has become a way of life and a beloved employment for me. The contact, the boundary, the dialog, the other, the conflicts but also the respect, the parity and the ethics.

This year I attended a total of five 3day workshops on the application of Gestalt in organizations and businesses, from which, the last one was on conflicts, at the beginning of May.

I started the workshop trying to find a solution for an inner conflict. How Gestalt -an anthropocentric approach- could be connected to business? And in the same time: How businesslike, a work that provides humanitarian help, could be?

Prejudice and deeply rooted beliefs that are often verified by what I hear and see about the “cruel world of business” and the profit oriented fixation that can crush a man and his principles.

In the meanwhile, in my line of work, which is associated with providing humanitarian aid, for some time now, I come across attitudes and a form of solidarity which seems restricted to the weak but not to the different. So I face two opposites. On one side humanism, sacrifice, offering and on the other hierarchy, competition and profit. And in a time of crisis that has led to the rise of extreme attitudes, beliefs and actions, in polarizations and conflicts focused in profiting over others or to the annihilation of both...

For this internal conflict that exists in my personal and work life (as well as in the here and now of the workshop) which becomes interpersonal, I couldn't find a solution (I suspected that much). Moreover as it became evident through the theory, exercises and the cases we presented from our own experiences in our working environment, unresolved and hidden conflicts, avoidance, rushed solutions and compromises lead to the blocking of energy in the workplace as well as in any other interpersonal relationship.

That results to reduced efficiency in the area of providing service whether in humanitarian aid or sales. And I think that if we take a moment to notice we will see that this is also evident in the social environment. Untold, hidden conflicts survive unresolved for years and eat up the dynamic of our society, hindering its development. So in this conflict I couldn't find a resolution. But what I saw was an opening on the road. Gestalt provided that



opening. A road where these two opposites might clash, but in a way, according to Gestalt, that supports and proves how a clash can avoid becoming a conflict but instead become a point of intense contact. A ground for development and growth.

Focused on the process and the relational, Gestalt offered a road which I walked on for a while and I allowed my conflicts, internal and interpersonal to help me evolve. A road where evolution requires trust and respect. A road where I show hope for organization and entrepreneurship as a part of humanitarian work.

I would like to thank Giorgos, Demi, Ioanna, Frans and the whole group for this enriching experience.

**Ioanna Alexia**

## ***Commentary on J. E. Frew's essay on the relation between leadership theories and the Gestalt Psychotherapy theory***

It is really impressive how the Zeitgeist influences the sum of the expression of human activity and that in itself justifies the “relational” character of Gestalt therapy.

In the beginning of the 20th century, through a backdrop of crisis, conflict and rivalry we show the rise of a model of governing and leadership focused on the charismatic and radiant personality of a leader, a person “born to lead”. A person who would be able to carry the fate of the people and lead them to a course of progress, consolidation and expansion and why not, triumph. But that model eventually prove to succumb to its inherent weaknesses: the powerful leader is not surrounded by equally dynamic collaborators or the fascination that power has over him lures him to bold and arrogant decisions and eventually the weight of the responsibility crushes him. It is a heroic model of leadership but, in order for it to work, it needs a number of other elements to support it; elements that do not depend on the quality or the behavioral patterns of the leader.

And there is where the important factor of environment come into play. The wider field, the people, the land, the social, economic and political conditions, the conflicts, differences and agreements would mold a complicated backdrop in which the leader is required to maneuver, balance, reconcile opinions, smooth out disagreements, at times overcome his own prejudices and chart a course

through an ever changing environment.

So, as the beginning of the 21st century showcases the value of the individual and recognizes the power of standing out from the crowd and at the same time functionally integrating in it, the sense of leadership acquires a context that doesn't only touch on intellect but also on emotion, communication, interaction, and the ability to adjust to change. This comes in correlation to the abilities and adjustments that an individual has to employ throughout his life in order to create a stable condition of “happiness” and “sustainable development”.

Key concepts like (self) awareness, the boundary of contact, the sequence of action-reaction, the smooth transition between figure and ground and the organic self-regulation can be valued as “universal laws” whose understanding and application become a key to an efficient leadership and a meaningful life.

**Kiriakos Economidis**

## SOMETHING IS HAPPENING

### in Larissa...

In recent years, in Thessaly, there is a Gestalt Foundation supervision team working. The two supervisors are Yianna Kalota (MSc Counseling Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist) and Sevi Hatzipoulou (MSc Psychology of Health, Gestalt Psychotherapist).

Our team provides volunteer collaboration with associations and other bodies in both cities (Cancer Patients Association, MS association, YMCA, University of Thessaly). Within the frame of our collaboration we volunteer actions and organize training workshops for these associations' volunteers, supervising groups, counseling groups and we assist undergraduate and post graduate students.

Each June we have a custom. We evaluate our year's activities, we set new goals and we lay out our expectations for the New Year.

In June 2015 we decided to organize a series of lectures held at the bookstores "Paideia" in Larissa and Volos.

At November, the same year, we presented three lectures on these subjects:

First lecture: **"Stress: friend or enemy?"** by Lefteris Siakis (Bsc, MSc, trainer Gestalt Psychotherapist).

Second lecture: **"My body hurts... or does it speak to me?"** by Styliani Dactyla (Psychologist, trainer Gestalt Psychotherapist, Specialized on Special Needs) and Vaso Sakka (Mental Health Counselor, trainer Gestalt Psychotherapist)

Third lecture: **"Diet: From I am what I eat to I eat what I am"**

by Yianna Kalota (MSc Counseling Psychology, Gestalt Psychotherapist) and Sevi Hatzopoulou (MSc Psychology of Health, Gestalt Psychotherapist).

The bookstores "Paideia" provided us with a warm and hospitable venue. The audience responded to our invitation and suggested we continue the series of lectures in the following years.

Here we present our own experience, viewed by each of us, as a speaker, a member of the team and as member of our audience.

**Sevi Hatzopoulou:** "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts... And that is how I feel about this series of lectures by us all, the Gestalt therapists, to the audience of both Larissa and Volos. An enriched whole who we took care of and took care of us!

**Yianna Kalota:** A fruit that we took care off to grow! All of us, speakers and audience, we were satisfied by its taste.

**Lefteris Siakis:** My experience of exhibiting an hour's presentation on Gestalt strategies and techniques that can help in Stress management

was a delightful challenge. Even more enjoyable was the feeling I had from the active participation of those who attended the presentations both in Larissa and Volos.

**Liana Dactyla:** The thread of knowledge and collaboration unfolded in a series of lectures that thrilled both our audience and us. What followed was a dance and a marriage of opinion, knowledge and experience that created an enjoyable atmosphere.

**Vaso Sakka:** I take care of myself and I take care of others. A safe and supportive collaboration. Ready to provide knowledge and receive experience.

**Katerina Moutou:** The lectures presented at the "Paideia" bookstore, concerning dietary issues, psychosomatic symptoms and stress through a Gestalt therapy approach, were extremely interesting and focused on the audience's needs. I especially consider that the detailed analysis as well as the comprehensive way that the lectures approached the above subjects, helped introduce the audience to the symptoms that we come across every day and the treatment provided by the Gestalt therapy.

The detailed analysis, through a power point presentation, combined with the use of examples helped the lecturers to interact with the audience,

and provided the attendees with the capability to be informed and comprehend fully that our diet, stress and psychosomatic symptoms appear and operate in our everyday life as well as what are the ways to manage them.

**Athanasia Hatzizisi:** I enjoyed the presentations because the lectures provided an in depth approach to subjects that interest and concern me, documented in Gestalt theory. Seeing that a number of my friends showed interested I would like to suggest that we continue with them.

**Audience member 1:** I felt that I was there for myself and others for me. There was a structure, quality and substance to the information I received. When I left I carried with me the sense the "I Can". Mind, heart and body worked together... I don't know to what percentage each... but all together in a special way.

**Audience member 2:** Excellent presentation by the Gestalt specialists, who, by putting their own touch, managed to raise the awareness of the audience to everyday "problems". The alteration between two speakers kept the presentation fresh and interesting. Personally I would suggest that the presentations include an experiential character with even a small audience participation. Good luck.

We would like to thank you for the support. We are empowered and filled with energy for the future...

**Liana Daktila**




**PROFILE**

We met for the first time, 4 years ago, as future fellow travelers in a journey with a beginning colored by expectations, fear and hope for the unknown. We stepped towards the experience of being accompanied

by accepting, impartial teachers that would teach us the art of meeting. The profile, the culmination of this 4year course, the moment that we all waited for with the joy of completion and the anxiety of exposure was finally here. Our training was over and we had two days to share with our fellow travelers and our teachers the course of these years and the course of a lifetime leaving behind the status of a student and taking our place as therapists.

The process was magical and unique. A narrator and a 23 member audience each time. 19 unique life stories, so different and still so similar in their core, crossed paths in a hotel room. That room filled with pictures and colors from different places, different people and different experiences. Dark parts were illuminated and unknown aspects of our personal lives exposed. A room filled with authenticity, respect, care, love, concern and emotions. Each one of us alone and all together shared our vulnerability and our strength, our fears and our dreams, ourselves as humans and therapists.



In each story there was something that touched us deeply, that made us identify and brought us closer to each other. And the existential anxiety of loneliness emerged from this process, how we walk through life alone, exactly as how each one of us felt narrating his story, but, realizing that, this burden can be shared with people we truly meet, then the burden becomes lighter and in this meeting our existence acquires a true meaning.

When we left that room, since the process of presentations completed and the anxiety has ended, the happiness was apparent since our meeting was embellished with conversations, small talk on the balcony, swimming, singing and laughing and the sweet nostalgia of farewell.

Because when the meeting is genuine there is no goodbye but a farewell that carries the sense of completion, freedom and nostalgia. The familiar pain of past goodbyes gives its place, for the first time, to the joy of seeing you again, the thrill of looking at how we've grown both inside and outside and the anticipation for our next meeting. Growth came through the internal search and the meeting with the other on the boundary of contact.

**Electra Matsagou, Mirto Fragatou**

“When you set out on your journey...”

(Ithaka 1/9/2017- Maria, Thomas, Efrosini- we are writing words on our graduation experience: bittersweet, quietness, pride, excitement, maturity, support, approval, perspective, completion, mirroring, tradition, continuity, company, singing, parity, airplane, air, sea, saltiness, piano, music, organism, multicellular, multilayer.)

Battling a sense of denial to write for something that is over, that has past and still remains present, motivated by the “voices of my beloved” and a sense of commitment to the relationship, I set out to cite pieces of memories, experience and process from the 3day profile of the 4th year 2017.

Meeting of souls in space-time, meeting of life stories in an endless here and now. Friends, fellow travelers, trainers, trainees, colleagues, we meet

in order to complete this important circle of our 4 years of training.

Typical quietness- everything is going to be ok or simply things would go as they are meant- a subcutaneous anxiety, longing for each ones presentation.

The distillation of this, now intangible, experience of training, incarnated in glances, smiles, words, hugs and beneficial feedbacks, compasses for our future course, for one last time, for one last time as trainees- for the first time as professionals. Our sole existence stands in this circle with respect and space, with restrictions and rules but mainly

with love and courage.

Besides authenticity is a key characteristic of a Gestalt therapist.

I retrieve information from the bottomless box of memories- I ask myself what do I remember about this 3day profile?

A wonderful location near the sea, an openness that waited for us; I thought of a right to vacations and at the same time the deep and essential work that has to be done, similar to how it's been for me these four years in Gestalt...

An excellent organization in terms of transport and accommodations. A great big thank you to Naum and Artemis that contributed to that part. A sense of gratefulness to the group that embraced like a family and constantly reminded that “the group is an entity in itself, an entity greater than the individual member”.

The first relaxing dive into the hotels pool and the simultaneous dive in the our common sharing of life stories; something that reminded that there are no dead ends, what looks dead end is only the way we view things.

An anxiety and in the same time harmony for the list of presentations, a sense of flow in the communication between us.

A deep sense of pleasure in connecting the presence of each one with the meaning of life that brought him here.

A mutual support with the unexpected sea urchin thorns and the taking care of physical pain, which reminded me that "in order to survive we need each other".

A chance to speak and embrace people that I hadn't connected as much these 4 year and also to embrace once again the people who were with me in this journey that reached its final destination...

The joy to meet again my trainers, to thank them and to embody the respect and parity of the I-Thou relationship that their cells emit.

The humor and the laziness during lunch and dine; were our glasses meet, were our voices became songs.



What it means to be a Gestalt therapist?

To give life to time, to breath in space, to exist spontaneously, to exist authentically, to create freely

For the 4year profile, 2013-2017

«The past is never dead. It's not even the past» William Faulkner

I ascertain time and time to write

To sew letters

To wear next to the skin the experience in her intangible body

To fit soul in the bubbles of words

To blow breath to what has been lost and always present

To squeeze the stone of my history

To turn it to stardust- a fairytale for children

A puppet show for young and old

A versed epic for heroes- warriors

Bittersweet tear- distillation

of heartbeats of presence and absence

A baby's blanket to hang from you cradle

Scent- odes and notes

Laughter- echo of joy-reverberations of game on the beach

Where the sky meets the sea

It is called horizon

Where the sea meets the wave

"on the boundaries of touch" we meet

Poetry – companionship - flame

A song for travelers who rest for a while and croon

"here is heaven and here is hell"

And the mixed emotions flood the mind and body...

Senses like brewing in a pot

Images like joyful sorrow on A4

Written and colored by our measure

Four years "without flash"

Echo in my hummock of thoughts...

"We are done!"-or maybe not?

**Efrosini Kiatikidou**

### EDITORIAL TEAM

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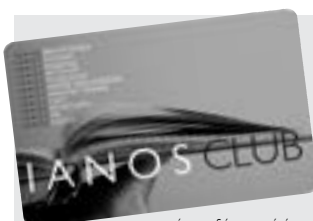
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