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2025
Gestalt Camp 2025

«Body and Senses in a Dance of Self-Awareness»



EAGT
accredited
Training Institute

EAPT
European Accredited
Psychotherapy Training Institute



First of all, what was this workshop?

The idea was for the participants to come into contact with six materials, through their senses and movement, first activating the non-verbal, sensory part of the self, and then through a process...

Continued on the page 6

**GESTALT
THERAPY
AND RESEARCH**

**FERTILE VOID
LIVE
INSTALLATION**

**CANCER
ASSOCIATION
OF LARISSA**

EDITORIAL NOTE

It is with great joy, gratitude and pride that I write this editorial note for the 41st issue of GFNews.

Joy because the newspaper continues for 24 years now, since its 1st issue (November 2004) to this day, to be filled with articles from the activities of the Gestalt Foundation's collaborators and trainees. Gratitude for both new collaborations and stable values in relationships.

Pride for the quality, ethos, creativity, volunteerism, contribution to the community.

Book publications, participation in research programs of the international Gestalt community, workshops, poems, correspondence, are just some of the topics that we have

the pleasure of hosting in this issue.

In closing, I would like to express our warm thanks for their valuable contribution to all those who work with passion and vision to bring each project to its final form.

I hope that the following articles will take you on a journey, make you think creatively and, above all, keep you company pleasantly.

Happy reading



Katia Hatzilakou

MSc. Social and Clinical Psychology Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Psychotherapist, Gestalt Trainer & Supervisor, member of SEPS & EAGT (Ex-Chair of NOGT and External Relation of EAGT). Holder of ECP (European Certificate of Psychotherapy). Founding member of the Gestalt Foundation Psychotherapy and Training Center, and founding member of HAGT (Hellenic Association for Gestalt Therapy).

“Researching in Gestalt Psychotherapy”

Until recently, research was an unknown field for Gestalt Psychotherapy.

However, in recent years, there has been an increased interest in research.

Journals such as the British Gestalt Journal publish research paths, often with a cross-cultural character.

The gradual recognition of research in the field of Gestalt psychotherapy raises a number of questions:

What are the research objectives?
What is the main focus of the research?
What is the form of the data collected?
What is the form of the final presentation of the results?



The Gestalt psychotherapist, through research, seeks to form a genuine, authentic, dynamic, framed and holistic approach to the phenomenon of his study.

In addition to publications in journals, conferences are also held on research in Gestalt Psychotherapy.

My experience from the 6th International Gestalt Research Conference, which took place this September in Birmingham, was special. I felt like an archaeologist, yes, you read that right archaeologist, that through research I have the

opportunity to discover Gestalt psychotherapy through a new prism.

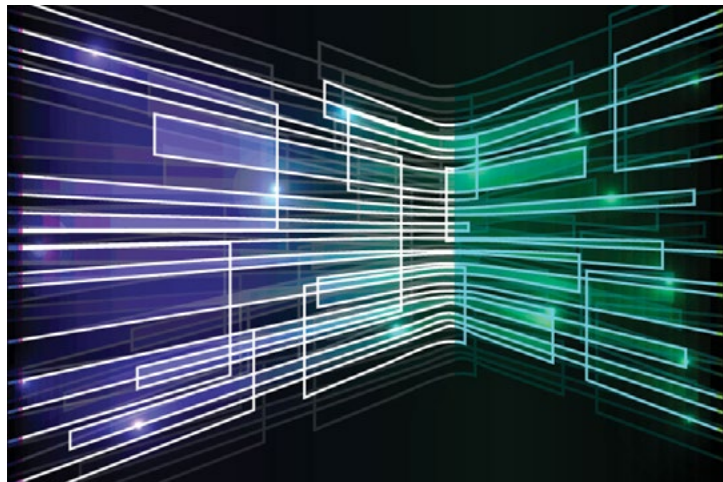
Everything that I know through theory, therapy and supervision I can document and through research and thus establish the effectiveness of Gestalt therapy in a new way. The old through the new, research.

It is a challenge and an invitation for all of us with a destination in Gestalt psychotherapy.

Melina Makridou, MSc. in Health Psychology University of Bristol, UK, Mental Health Counselor, Gestalt Psychotherapist and Supervisor, member of EAGT and HAGT.

Response from the 6th International Gestalt Research Conference

The 6th International Gestalt Research Conference, entitled “Building the Evidence Base for Gestalt Therapy”,



was held in Birmingham from 5 to 7 September 2025, bringing together therapists, researchers and educators from all over the world.

The aim of the conference was to highlight the research initiatives being developed within the Gestalt community itself, promoting the dialogue between clinical practice and scientific research.

The conference was attended by leading researchers from the Society for Psychotherapy Research (SPR), including Robert Elliott, Felicitas Rost, Ladislav Timulak, Christine Stevens and Margherita Spagnuolo Lobb.

Their presentations highlighted modern approaches to conducting research in psychotherapy without requiring the standardization of therapeutic practice, promoting a human, field-based and experientially documented approach. Different methodologies were presented, with particular emphasis on case studies, as an essential tool for understanding and documenting the therapeutic process.

Of particular interest was the presentation of the EAGT initiative to create the International Gestalt Psychotherapy Case Study Project, one of the most organized international efforts to record and document the effectiveness of Gestalt therapy. This experience shows that mutual support and cooperation between psychotherapists are the most essential and effective way to conduct research within the Gestalt community.

The Gestalt Foundation also actively participates in this program, through the trainees who are preparing their diploma theses. In this context, trainees meet systematically to supervise and support this research initiative.

The conference was characterized by lively dialogue, exchange of ideas and a spirit of collaboration, strengthening the connection between researchers and clinical

professionals. It was a dynamic and creative meeting, which concluded with a feeling of optimism and empowerment among Gestalt therapists who continue to dare, research, publish and share their clinical work both within and outside the Gestalt community.

Antigone Mertika, PhD Psychologist, Gestalt Psychotherapist

“Memories of the Nonexistent”, Sofia Hadjipaschali, Shakespearikon Editions

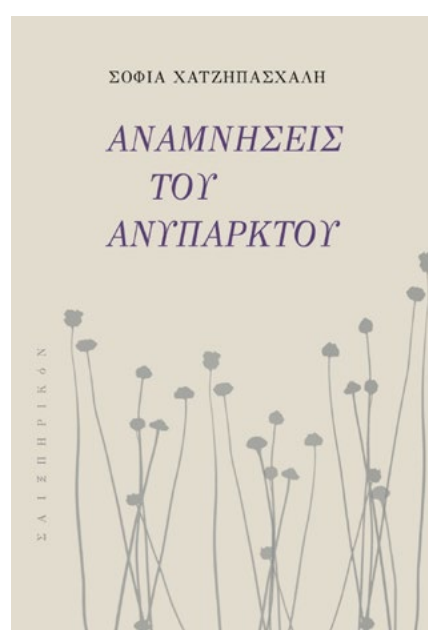
The writing process has something imperative. The words that have long resided within me, there comes a moment when they spring up and are placed, as if by themselves, in a certain order.

Sometimes I dream of the words that will replace other words, which is why I have a notebook on my bedside table, to write them down. These are the right words, the ones that contain exactly the meaning I wanted. And then the struggle with punctuation begins...

The publishing process also has something imperative, which requires patience. After the texts have matured in the drawers, some of them ask to be made public. The publication has exposure, but also encouragement. I often wonder what the texts of those who do not dare to make them public or those who wanted to be public but did not find a receptive publisher are like.

For me, this publicity was the completion of an open account. What I wrote then is not what you are reading now. Sometimes I, myself, am surprised by the words I have chosen and the stories that have inhabited me.

Writing is not an involuntary act. It is a conscious act, an act of exposure and awareness.



“Memories of the Nonexistent” were written in the heart of the lockdown, when the meeting had many restrictions and conditions imposed by Joint Ministerial Decisions. As if human relationships were once easy and the legislator wanted to make them somewhat more complicated.

Three heroes who mostly never meet, tell the same story,

each from their own perspective. The narrative is static with subtle variations. It is a rich background and what will become a form depends on the moment, the reader, his experiences and his history. It is a love triangle, a love disappointment, two love disappointments, a marriage that has fallen apart, the meddling father, the alliance of the mother with her children, motherhood, children who were not born, loss, expectations, our illusory memories, abuse, the loss of mental health and whatever else emerges in each reader.

Think of these heroes in the therapy room, as when you begin to grasp the thread of their lives, as they tell it to you. Sit back in your armchair and listen to them, without judging them. Listen to them with their passions and their mistakes because thanks to them they arrived here today.

Sofia Hatzipashali, Mental Health Counselor, trained in Gestalt Psychotherapy. Graduate of the Department of International and European Economic and Political Studies, holder of a postgraduate diploma specializing in Banking, postgraduate student in Criminological and Criminal approaches to corruption, economic and organized crime.

Teachers' Meeting

16.6.2025- Meeting the teacher in Greece 2025. In a constantly changing field of crisis, changes, upheavals, how as a teacher I am called to stand in a role that institutionally has remained the same over the years, but essentially and humanly I have been called to cope by changing.

Melina's group supervisions are meticulously detailed, she leaves no point unclear, and yet they also have a lot of freedom. I trust you and I care for you and I support you and I protect you. I am by your side!



In the group the atmosphere was warm and in the mood for play. For example, I, Dona Sofia, would coordinate the group with Sir Yiannis. This atmosphere of joy and play was very inspiring for us to work with enthusiasm, to have ideas and to find a way to implement them. There

was space for our creative selves.

16.6.2025, 8:00 a.m.: The pre-contact was essential. I got a bagel from the school cafeteria, walked through the classrooms, read the generous signs of the event organizer that awarded us titles such as Trainer and Associate of the Gestalt Foundation Psychotherapy and Training Center of Thessaloniki. The bell rang and we entered the multi-purpose room to attend the celebration that the Education Advisor and the students had prepared for the end of the school year and the awarding of the retiring teachers.

Then we were divided into groups, without getting up to mischief this time –unlike last year. In each room, something different happened, depending on the preparation and the proposal made by the coordinators, depending on the mood of the participants, but also something the same, what comes from the field: evaluation, devaluation, pressure, bureaucracy, crisis, livelihood, supervisors, parents, students.

In our room, we tried two positions: opposite and together. The participants were particularly participatory, cooperative and eager to contribute ideas and share their concerns. It was a magical moment when they realized that their unspeakable things were common, that there was an alliance that had not been visible until then. The design of the utopia was magical; each participant and we, the coordinators, proposed how we would like the school to be, as utopian as it may sound.

The bell rang again and we returned to the multi-purpose room, to the plenary session, where we presented the work done in each group. Another celebration. The teachers became students. In a climate of joy and satisfaction, perhaps because they were heard, perhaps because they expressed themselves, perhaps because they met, perhaps because their vacations are starting, the meeting ended.

The Advisor then awarded Oscars to Melina and Christina and certificates-thanks letters to the coordinators of the groups: Zoe, Nikos, Elisabeth, Antonis, Atta, Katerina, Giannis, Sofia. The photo shoot with the Advisor was mandatory!

My participation in this conference was restorative on many levels. How easy it can be to collaborate with anyone who is willing to collaborate, how enjoyable a team project can be if there is security built between the members and if the members are truly interested in achieving the common goal, and how nice it is to have someone listen to my proposal and enrich it. It was also corrective because there was a flow unlike previous experiences in the field of education. I identified with the frustration that the employees feel due to the Kafkaesque organization and culture, but above all I held onto the hope of utopia.

As long as there are people with vision and love for humanity, there is hope.

Sofia Hatzipashali, 4th year graduate of Gestalt Foundation Thessaloniki

Blood Donation: An Act of Relation, Responsibility, and Presence in the Field of Becoming

As Gestalt therapists, we strive not to see the human being as an isolated unit, but as an organism within a co-forming field – a system of relationships, interactions, and the continuous creation (and destruction) of meaning.

In this spirit, blood donation is not a simple medical act. It is a deeply existential and relational act. It is a “call” to which the donor responds with presence, with touch without touch, with trust without knowledge of the other.

Martin Buber reminds us that the authentic way of being is not the “I-It,” but the “I-Thou.” A relationship where there is no objectification of the Other, but an encounter. Blood donation, even if it does not involve personal contact, is an act of encounter; a silent and existential acceptance of the Other in his or her vulnerability. The donor chooses to stand on the “You” that he does not know, recognizing it as essential. It is an act that transforms anonymity into proximity and fear into responsibility.

In his work, on the other hand, Emmanuel Levinas emphasizes to us that the Person of the Other calls us to moral responsibility before any logic or choice. Responsibility is not a choice, but a fact: we are already responsible for the Other. Blood donation embodies this call: a transcendence of the individual self towards the Other – a moral touch, beyond reciprocity or guarantee.

With all this in mind, in my attempt to creatively integrate all my roles, I accepted the call of GF about two years ago and together with Amalia we put the Gestalt blood bank back into operation.

I have been through and felt a lot until I write these words

today. Excitement, anxiety, responsibility, joy, gratitude, but above all genuine interest in our “humanity” and its care. So, I am writing today to invite you to get to know each other and share our knowledge, concerns and needs.

So, what is blood donation, which is the basic requirement for the existence of a blood bank?

Blood donation is a safe, simple process that takes a few (relatively few) minutes. After a brief medical check-up and filling out a form, the blood donor offers approximately 450ml of blood – an amount that the body naturally replenishes in a short period of time. The experience is physical, conscious, and for many, deeply moving.

Requirements for blood donation:

- Age 18-65 years
- Weight over 50 kg
- Good physical condition and absence of infections or recent interventions (e.g. recent dental work, piercings, tattoos, intravenous drug use)
 - Adequate sleep and light meal before blood donation
 - Waiting 3 months for men and 4 for women between blood donations (this is determined on a case-by-case basis for each individual).



The Gestalt Foundation Blood Bank operates as a form of collective care and availability in the face of need. The Bank is not

only a functional infrastructure, but a form that embodies our field ethics. It is a silent “I am here” to the member, the patient, the fellow human being, when faced with his inescapable vulnerability.

As Gestalt therapists, we are called to honor relationship not only in the therapy room, but also in the wider field of life. Blood donation reminds us of the deepest dimension of presence: where body, intention and relationship coexist. Where “I” meets “You”, without a face, but with full responsibility.

With joy and hope I invite you to support her in order to support us. Anyone interested in learning more, do not hesitate to contact me at 6972795800.

Marina Bikou, Adult Psychiatrist, MSc Forensic Psychopathology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Gestalt Foundation graduate

Continued from the cover page

«Body and Senses in a Dance of Self-Awareness»

...to move on to meaning and connection with the mental part of themselves.

Through the properties of each material, they found their own pieces. And this was a deep self-awareness process, as they were activated mainly and primarily through this primitive, sensory and kinesthetic way:

“Touch, hearing, smell, sight, and then movement, through the inspiration that the material gives to the body, either through its property, or through its weight, or through its own movement in space”.

Each meeting was a small journey into the energy of the material. It wasn't just the material and the inspiration we got from the material. It was also the energy of this material, which landed in the city. The materials were natural, mainly. And one of them was plastic, which, although not natural, also has a history in humanity, for better or worse. It has now become connected to modern humanity, modern civilization and the industrial and technological development of the last 200 years.

In a way, the energy of materials, their history, the way they exist, helps us connect with ourselves, with each other, but also to connect with the world. This group was not only self-aware, but also contained a deep need for people to connect with others and with nature.

Being residents of a city that in one way or another suffocates and binds people tightly to a rhythm, the existence of these elements within the space enabled the participants to reflect on their relationship with nature and their need to exist in natural environments, which for me is a very im-



portant act. That is, the awareness of our removal from nature (our) in every way, the opening to our senses, the restoration of memory to the sensation that the body has in the natural environment, is a therapeutic and political act.

It is a necessity for me as a therapist, as I place myself in this

world. I am here to listen, and I come with my own reports on the ways in which environments and psychosomatic disorders appear in the field. And one of the key factors is our removal from nature.

So, with this workshop, in a magical way (and I think this magic arose from the advent of materials), we connected on the one hand with our inner parts and with each other in a context of a very intense sense of security and warmth and on the other hand with the broader field, with the larger scale, with nature and the energy that it encompasses.

I am grateful for my companion, Eva Nikiforos, for the people who chose to follow this workshop with all their hearts, and I am also grateful for the materials, which in some magical way created a space within a space. I could say a bubble within reality but the truth is that they created a reality within the bubble.

See you soon.

Vicky Angelidou, Psychologist, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, studies in dance at the Dance Academy recognized by the Ministry of Culture, postgraduate Performing Public Space from Fontys in the Netherlands, Gestalt Psychotherapist.

“The senses are not just portals of information but active factors in the creation of meaning and our relationship with the world.”

Maurice Merleau Ponty

An experiential group, 6 elements (fire, air, plastic, water, flowers, earth), 7 monthly meetings, each dedicated to an element that surrounds us. A combination of tools (messy play, clay field play, kinetic improvisation), which met with the Gestalt awareness process and helped us explore the materials of which we are “made” and how they compose our experience.

The importance of the senses in our contact with the world is fundamental, as the senses constitute our main gateway to understanding, connecting and experiencing reality and are inextricably linked to memory and emotion.

Sensory experience brings us to the “here and now”. The body “speaks” through sensation – and the senses can lead us to a deeper connection with ourselves and others. A scent can evoke a childhood memory; a touch can evoke security or fear. Thus, the senses are not only biological tools, but also channels through which the world is made sense.

In this group, our senses did not function only as means of receiving stimuli from the outside world; they also constituted deep emotional channels of experience.

Through the senses, the body became a vehicle of memory, of relationship, of desire, of security or of threat. The body did not have a passive presence but actively participated in space and made its being known. And what happened is what Merleau-Ponty describes so clearly, “Movement was not a decision based on the mind, on the subjectivity of the moment, and it did not concern some simple change of body position, which magically occurred in the wider space. Movement was the natural continuation and maturation of vision, it unfolded itself, it did not ignore it.”

In each encounter, what was born was a sensation that remained in the body, an image that persisted in the mind, a word that had never been spoken before. As we touched all the materials without haste, we also allowed ourselves to be touched by some of the following questions: “what does it mean to be present through my senses? When can I acquire the properties of fire? How do I let the air move me? What material do I transform into when I get angry? How do I bloom? How do I take root? How do my attitude, beliefs, and emotions expand or limit my sensory experience?

Each element was a compass that helped us ask ourselves deep existential questions and supported each and every one of us on our personal path.

I feel deep appreciation and gratitude for my meeting and collaboration with Vicky, almost 20 years since the last time, gratitude and admiration for each unique member of this group who, with their presence, bravery, and authenticity, contributed to creating a community together that became a beacon in our daily lives in the bustling city.

And perhaps, ultimately, we don’t need to give answers, but to let the physical and non-physical, materials continue to speak within us — as only the senses know. Because meaning is not only in what we perceived, but also in how we existed.

Evangelia Nikiforou , Actress, Gestalt psychotherapist.

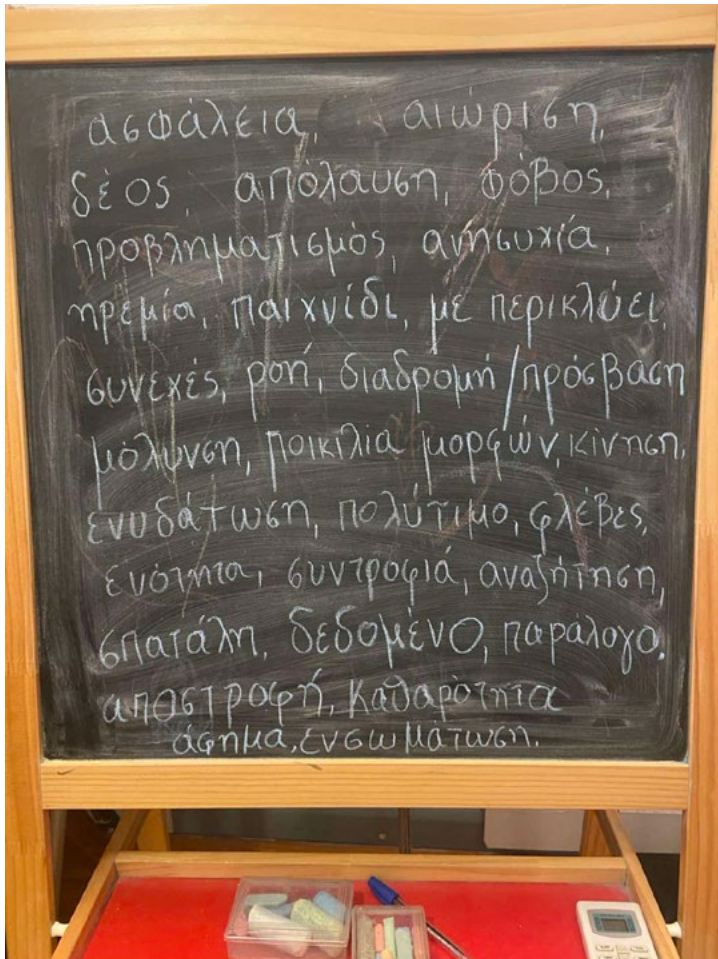
She studied psychology at the American College of Thessaloniki, postgraduate studies in Cultural Administration (Northumbria University, England) and in Clay Field Therapy (Institute for Sensorimotor Art Therapy Australia).

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“The workshop I participated in was for me a journey of connection with the desire that exists within us and that we have often buried. It had companions with a warm gaze and valuable qualities. I will have it in my luggage to look back there whenever I encounter difficulties and to remember that every small step and every small or large bridge we have to cross is enough to first desire it deeply. This journey was also a crack in time, a good omen, the search for childhood memories, a small refuge to remind me that in arid times there are oases for your heart to rest. Finally, I thank Vicky and Eva, these bright beings who put a little stone in order to make this world a better place and instill a little of the magic like stardust that we so need in our lives.”

Stella K. (participant in the workshop)

“Gestalt Psychotherapy as a support and space for relief for cancer patients and their caregivers.”

The Gestalt Foundation, with consistency and stability, offers free individual counseling sessions to members of the Larissa Cancer Association this year. These sessions are not just a service, but a process that invites you to get in touch with yourself. Based on the philosophy and principles of Gestalt Psychotherapy, they encour-

age self-awareness, cultivate empathy and strengthen self-support.

Through the meetings, people have the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings and concerns, to process their difficulties, to find new ways to move forward and to adapt creatively to the new situation.

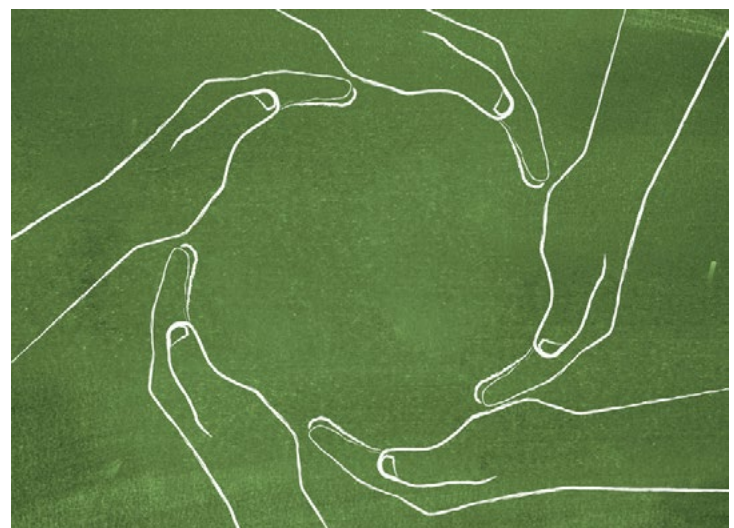
Gestalt Psychotherapy creates a space where the present – no matter how difficult it is – becomes a point of observation and recognition. The sessions do not offer ready-made solutions, but support the connection with our own strengths and capabilities.

The counseling offered by the Gestalt Foundation does not separate the person into parts. It sees the whole – mind, body and emotion – and encourages connection with the present. Participants have the opportunity to stop for a moment, give space to what they feel, to observe what is happening within them. In each session, an opportunity is offered to rediscover a sense of self and to be relieved of the burden of thoughts and emotions.

We warmly thank the Larissa Cancer Association for their cooperation and trust. This journey is not only for those who trust us, but also for us – a reminder that the essence lies in the connection, in the presence and in the power of human coexistence.

The counseling sessions are coordinated by Gestalt Foundation psychotherapists in training and for which they receive supervision from the Center’s supervising therapists.

The Thessaly supervision team





When Gestalt Meets Organizations

Having traveled a fairly long professional path in the field of organizations, in the training of their executives, but also as a consultant, trainer and Gestalt supervisor in Organizations, I will share with you how useful and creative it is for a Gestalt therapist and supervisor to know some issues related to the special field of Organizations.

Let's first look at some differences between Gestalt therapy and Gestalt counseling for Organizations.

While the environment of Organizations is characterized by great contradiction, as their field is unstable, uncertain, complicated and unclear (V.U.C.A), at the same time the almost identical/existential need of the Organization demands fast, visible and measurable results. Rather a difficult job!...

But how does this contradiction usually arise?

According to the Prägnanz principle, an organization is healthy when the field is organized in order to satisfy its dominant need concerning its primary process, with the formation of forms in the broader professional background, which will lead to a better understanding of this need.

This primary process, which is identified with the need for the existence of the Organization (e.g. a car industry to produce cars, a hospital to offer health services, and so on), instead of constituting the basis for the better organization of the organizational field, very often unfortunately, is hindered or blocked in order to satisfy other needs, such as power, competition, fear of loss of control, bureaucracy, factorism, non-assumption of responsibility, etc.

And in fact, we see this contradiction being reinforced, as the more the primary need is hindered, the more the expectations and demands for immediate results increase.

Thus, a perpetual «vicious cycle» is reproduced, as while the Organization should seek a way out of its pathologies, the pathologies themselves do not allow it to do so, resulting in the development of phenomena such as conflicts, resistance, obsessions, addictions, work neurosis or even depression, burnout, etc.

And these phenomena are gradually amplified instead of being addressed, as a «technocratic» rationality usually dominates organizations, without taking the human factor into account.

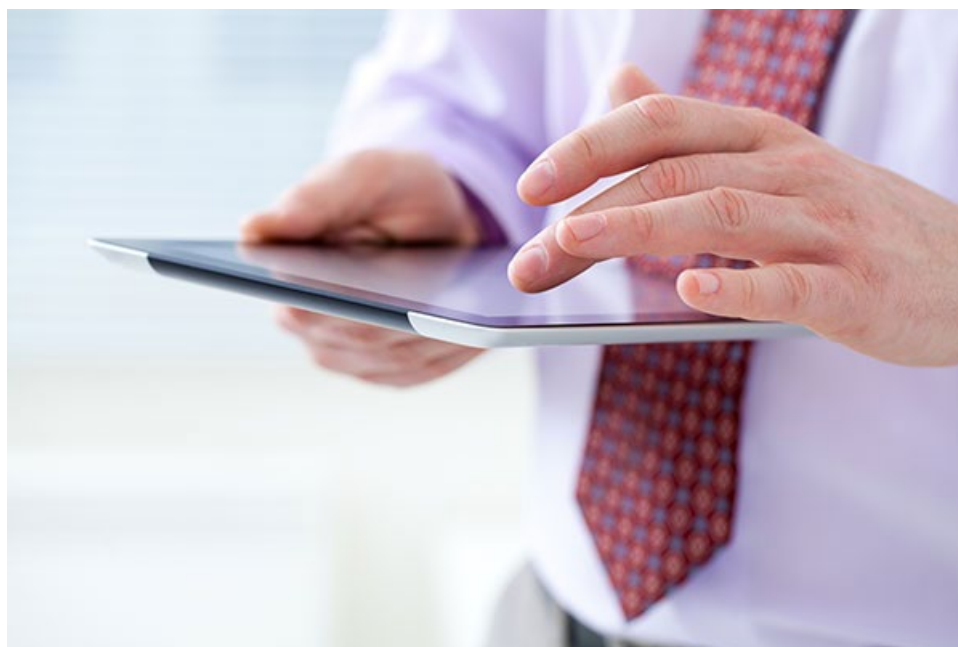
Let's now look at some conditions that dominate in the context of Organizations that differentiate it from the context of therapy:

- The person who usually calls the Consultant in an Organization (e.g. a manager) does not belong to the group that will be supported. It is indeed a very common phenomenon that the problem does not originate from the group, but from the individual...
- The space offered by the Counseling Services does not belong to the Counselor, but to the client-supported person.
- In therapy, private issues dominate, in Organizational Counseling the issues are public.
- In therapy, the client tries to demonstrate his progress to the therapist, while in contrast in Organizations the Counselor is called upon to demonstrate his effectiveness.
- The three basic questions that must be answered for the intervention to proceed effectively in the Organization are: who knows, who can and who cares, something that does not happen in the therapeutic context.
- In Organizations, the «ego function»

dominates, there is no time for withdrawal, therefore there is no space for a «fertile void».

- Organizations usually do not complete a cycle of awareness, as they are more in the «Action» phase (or often in bureaucratic and Public Bodies in the «Withdrawal» phase), with Reflection and Projection being the statistically majority forms of contact.

I believe that it will be very useful to highlight an inclusive perspective between Organizational Therapy and



Counseling, as Gestalt itself is par excellence inclusive and holistic!

To do this, the ability to understand each other should be strengthened, because it is certainly natural for there to be contradictions, resistances or differences, which may stem from an ideological or moral dimension, fears, stereotypes, but mainly and above all, traumatic experiences!

Here, it is worth mentioning the many possibilities and opportunities for therapists and supervisors, which arise from closer contact, communication and interaction with Gestalt Counseling in Organizations, such as:

- When they have clients or supervisees who work in Organizations.
- When they coordinate groups of people working in Organizations.
- When they supervise group coordinators who work in Organizations.
- When they have clients who are executives of Organizations who need support for issues that arise in their workplace (and not only).
- When they themselves work (and there are many) or have managerial or coordinating positions in Health Organizations, Mental Health, Social Care, Education, Public Benefit Institutions and so on.

It is important to mention here something that is not at all taken for granted, that even therapists themselves as professionals, work in an «individual» work organization. Therefore, they themselves experience and deal with issues, phenomena or conditions related to the professional organizational field (e.g. finding clients, communication, reputation development, bureaucratic and operational issues, collaborations, financial issues, etc.).

Without requiring knowledge or training regarding the application of Gestalt in the professional environment, it is sufficient for the therapist or supervisor to include the Organizational field in his or her horizon. In other words, when investigating the client's request, it is up to the therapist to investigate whether the request concerns a purely personal issue of the client or whether it equally or even more concerns the Organization itself, in which the client works. In this way, the client will be supported to gain awareness of what, where and how is happening, so that he or she can not only manage it effectively, but also proceed with a process of healthy change!

Finally, it is characteristic that Gestalt supportive intervention in Organizations is, proven and according to many studies, particularly effective in issues concerning relationships, groups, organizational identity, the direction to be followed, ethical dilemmas, confusion, uncertainty, visioning, creativity and innovation!

Therefore, while Business Administration deals mainly with the functional issues of the Organization (such as organization, planning, strategy, procedures, commercial - economic - production policy and human resource management), Gestalt intervenes at the same time in issues of relationship dynamics, healthy management and development of human resources and in issues of ethics and values, all of which constitute the foundations for a healthy, creative and useful Organization for employees, for the economy and for society.

George Stamatis, *Consultant, Trainer and Supervisor Gestalt for Organizations (G.P.O.).*

Supervision Group at the Larissa Cancer Association

For two years now, we have had the opportunity to coordinate the supervision group that has existed and operated for years at the Larissa Cancer Association, in collaboration with the Gestalt Foundation.

The group aims to support, educate and empower volunteers who are faced with demanding and emotionally charged situations. The meetings are held on a monthly basis and last two hours. They constitute a safe space for reflection, where volunteers can express questions, concerns and feelings, strengthening their resilience.

The themes developed include:

- Boundaries: The management of boundaries between volunteer and beneficiary, in order to ensure the mental balance of both parties.

- Support: The recognition of emotions that arise during the volunteering process and finding ways to manage them.
- Role-playing: Through experiential exercises, volunteers practice dealing with real-life situations.
- Case study: Focused on realistic features, it helps volunteers analyze and understand complex interactions.

At the same time, we focus on increasing the awareness of volunteers through Gestalt therapy techniques, inviting them to make contact with their feelings in the “here and now”, to share them and to trust them.

Equally important for the smooth functioning of the group is the commitment of all of us to the contract that we have co-created and agreed will function as a framework for the safety and care of all of us.

The supervision team offers a framework for learning, empowerment and skill development, maintaining the

effectiveness and mental resilience of volunteers in their demanding role.

With love,

Margarita Tartambouka, Psychologist, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and Trainee Gestalt Therapist

Apostolia Harmani, Psychologist and Trainee Gestalt Therapist.



Trust-Distrust, Half & Half equal one, One and One equal Infinity

"Individuation that denies the necessity of the Other is an individualization of pseudo-differentiation"

(Jessica Benjamin, 2023)

"No tree can reach up to the sky if its roots do not reach down to hell"

(Carl Gustav Jung, 2014)

Two months ago, we attended Gianna's workshop entitled "Trust-Distrust, Half & Half equal one, One and One equal Infinity".

The title itself predisposed us to a topic that has to do with the totality of existence, relationships and the differentiation that is a prerequisite for both the integrity of man in the world and for the healthy contact that leads to reciprocity and not to its bad impact which is none other than the complementarity generated by our polarizations and shadows.

In this workshop, we experienced the oscillation between mistrust and trust. Is it possible to have a safe ground of trust if the rock of mistrust is not included? Oscillation, in other words the dance of opposites is what keeps homeostasis and harmony alive in the world.

Gianna constantly (and rightly) emphasized the importance of standing as a therapist and not only.

Standing means taking space and time to listen to the experience so that I can position myself, define myself,

and invite the patient into the clearing of the encounter of existential dialogue, without losing myself or losing the other. In this way, we as therapists, but also, he (the patient), learn a way of contact that escapes the rush of haste and the automatisms and reflexes of violence; in the words of Bataille (2021): "Only violence can put everything at risk, violence and the unspeakable disorder that accompanies it!"

Here it is important to keep in mind how easily the expression of care in the form of overprotection constitutes abuse to the extent of psycho-emotional mutilation. Behind the rush (which can also be expressed as overprotection) there is phobic control which is the consequence of how deeply afraid and terrified a person can be.

The point is for the therapist to be able, through his firmness and rigor (and not authoritarianism), to invite the patient to a healthy meeting point. Because if phobic control grasps all the dimensions of reality, makes things obey the laws of the prescribed, in the words of Baudrillard (2019) he creates his own hell.

Today, a few days before the official start of spring, as we write this text, through our meeting emerges our need to focus on the concept of re-meaning, or re-entry, which, as neurobiologist Dr. Gerald Edelman (1972) tells us, concerns the higher functions of the brain, such as consciousness, thinking and memory.

For Edelman, being able to re-enter a state such as the one that was empirically recorded within me, allows me, through the continuous processes of my functions, to change. It is a change that comes from accepting what has happened, in the words of Beisser (1990): "Change occurs when someone becomes what they are and not when they try to become something they are not."

Sophie Meunier, Mental Health Counselor, trained in Gestalt Psychotherapy

Philippos Villiotis, Psychologist, Psychotherapist, Gestalt Foundation graduate

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I am The Fertile Void

I am a black canvas
I am not empty
I am ready



I have no form
I have no meaning
Yet

I am the fertile void
The space before birth
The pause before movement
The in-between together.

I do not invite you to decorate me
I invite you to touch me
To leave something of yourself on me.
A movement, a trace. An intention.

Next to me there are colors
Various materials. Sand, ropes, textures, colors.
Nothing is right or wrong
Everything is a possibility.

Here you do not create alone, we create together
One after the other, one within the other
The "New" is born, that which did not exist before
That will not exist again in the same way.

The work is not me
It is what emerges when you meet me
And when I let you transform me.

I am the Fertile Void
And you are the passage to the "New"
Let the mind be free and the body to
choose

- Colors
Spread them as you would spread your thought
Don't paint, just touch
Feel the brushes in your hands
See how they change, as your intention changes

- Sand
Let it roll in your hands, from your fingers
Glue it to the canvas
Give it shape or let it be free
Feel the weight and lightness together.

- Ropes
Wrap them, untie them, cut them, let them go
They are lines, they are connections
They are paths that may not lead anywhere
And that is okay

Don't just look. Touch, Press, Feel.
Leave your hand free
Create
The canvas remembers that it was passed over.
Mix paint with sand. Sounds with silence

- Taste
If you want, take a candy
Taste it
To remember that contact and creation
Is a whole experience. Sensory.

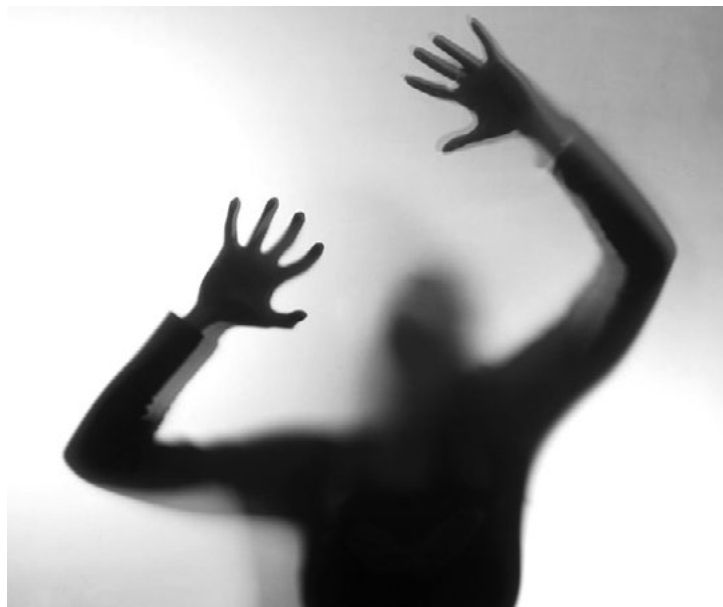
Eleftheria Margariti, Life Coach (National Kapodistrian University of Athens), Student of Greek Culture at the Hellenic Open University, Trainee Gestalt Mental Health Consultant.

The Fear of Fear - A Babushka with an Ending in Hope

I find myself hesitating, avoiding putting into words an experience I have been eager to share – an experience of profound significance. And then I ponder: How easy is it, really, to consciously approach fear? To look it in the face, to draw it from the depths, to taste it, to chew it until it becomes one with one's blood and cells – until it becomes me?

This workshop was a revelation. I wish it had a place in the core curriculum because it brought me face to face with the shadowiest, hidden parts of myself, the ones I avoid seeing and touching. And yet, through this face-to-face contact with the darkness, the awareness is born that fear is so universal that all beings share it.

If there is one thing I keep as a byproduct of this journey, it is this: I am afraid to be afraid. And as the title of



the seminar says, “The Fear of Fear,” it is like a Russian babushka: you open a shape and find yourself inside it again – and another fear, and another. But, as in the myth of Pandora, there in the depths, at the bottom of the box, there remains something small, almost invisible: Hope. And I will keep it. It will accompany me in all my moments of awareness and evolution.

Varvara Skafida, 3rd year trainee of Gestalt Foundation
Athens 2024-2025

Profile

A dark room. In its center, a piano. No one around, and yet a melody breathes through the space. The keys move up and down on their own, as if moved by a wind or an invisible hand. The door opens, the room freezes, and I wake up terrified. This was my childhood nightmare, the shadow that came and went in my sleep. I haven’t seen him for years, but I always carry him hidden inside me. And I wanted to share this dream in Karpenisi on my profile—and yet I didn’t.

And I didn’t share the other dream I had constantly when I was a child either. In that dream, I was flying with wings that were as much my own and that I could control as naturally as my arms or legs. Nothing was needed; I was simply flying because I wanted to, because that’s what I desired at that moment.

Years passed without seeing this dream again until I saw it again recently and woke up happy. I thought: “What would Perls say about this dream?” and I noted it in my “profile under construction” file— but I didn’t bring it with me.

In the end, what did I bring to Karpenisi? Two letters for sure and a sense of anxiety about what to say about my-

self. How much can fit in and how much should I leave out? How can I fit 54 years and experiences that have shaped who I am into my “profile under construction” file? And when the process opened up, I did what I always do in difficult times: I took a deep breath and dived in first.

I started talking. I focused on two important things: my power to be reborn from my ashes and my vulnerability that allows me to connect with your vulnerability. I looked at the clock in the hall not out of consistency, but out of fear of being too broad and depriving others of a minute. At every tick and every tick of the clock, I carefully touched two or three things about myself. And when the time that was given to me, or that I allowed myself to take, ended, I was left a little numb.

And then there were those letters that I was carrying in my suitcase. With me were Sofia, my colleague from KEDASY, and Philippia, my friend and now my maid of honor as well. Both of them, indifferent to the ticks and ticks of the clock, presented me so tenderly, so truly, with my dark and my bright sides. They introduced me in my entirety – almost – to those who had known me for four years and to those who had met me that day.

Then I let myself go and listened to the profiles of the others. I was moved, I admired, I silently accompanied their presences on the paths they shared. Somewhere in the second profile after me, however, I realized that M.M. was missing, a fellow student of mine with whom our melodies never played on the same frequency. And yet, her absence caused me an unexpected and intense sadness.

So, without much thought, I made sure that she was present — even if through another frequency. And this left me with a beautiful feeling but also helped me to clearly understand how much I need to be taken care of.

The moments I experienced during the two days that we shared our paths in Karpenisi filled my heart. Unique lives. Colorful and strong vulnerabilities. I caught myself many times thinking deafeningly loud and full of childish enthusiasm: “We are all fucking children!!!”. I felt proud but above all blessed to have met these wonderful and strong-vulnerable people.

And on Sunday the moment of closure arrived. We gathered in the great hall for the graduation of our hearts — a different, human graduation. And we all stood together for one last time as students of groups closing their circle, a circle that resembles that of Gestalt, ready to open again, in a different place. The profile is not the end of our process. It is the baptism. I think that is the word that best expresses what I feel right now, present for the last time but also for the first time, if you think about it in this position, in this place.

“Do I trust our process?” I asked myself... I am not sure

if I trust the process in life in general. But here, in this community, I trusted it and I feel grateful for it. For every trainer who illuminated my path, I feel deep gratitude. For all my trainers, for my supervisors, my therapist... For you Despina, Gianna, Katia, Antonia, Giorgos, a big thank you, because without you I wouldn't be here today either. Here where we are all flesh. Here where we all hurt, bend, cry, meet, care for each other, forgive, grow.

The profile is not the end. It is a beginning. It is a birth. And the time we lived together is like a womb that I must part with. It is not easy. It is painful like any closure, like any birth. But at the same time, it is also comforting. Like any birth.

In closing, I want to say a big thank you to my team — my Dodecanese as I call them. Marianthi, Elena, Alexander, George, Dimitri, Elena, Xenia, Katerina, Maria, Sofia, Maria, every moment with you was precious to me. I will miss our lake. I will keep it like a talisman in my heart as long as I exist — for after that... I don't know-.

Even when a pebble falls into the lake and everything seems still, immersed in silence...
Even if everything seems — or is — frozen...
The lake will never be the same again.
The lake within us — unseen — changes, and its concentric ripples will travel silently, drawing back memories, sensations, thoughts and feelings for years, laughter and tears, silences and words.
All precious.

Rosa Maria Gova, 4th year Trainee of Gestalt Foundation Athens - until June 2025.

- Symi (from the Dodecanese I choose this island for its wonderful feathered inhabitant).

FREE EXPRESSION

Among My Ghosts

An unsafe body
is like a house under siege.

Walls lean in,
Floors shake,

Within that seeing,
the world exhales,
and the eyes reveal
what the heart cannot conceal.

Marievi Agapinou, 2nd year trainee of the online Gestalt Foundation

Uncertainty obscene.

Every room a trap,
Every shadow a warning.

And still, a whisper stirs-
you can befriend the ghosts;
broken rooms can become home again.

Different Eyes

Different eyes,
A world remade.

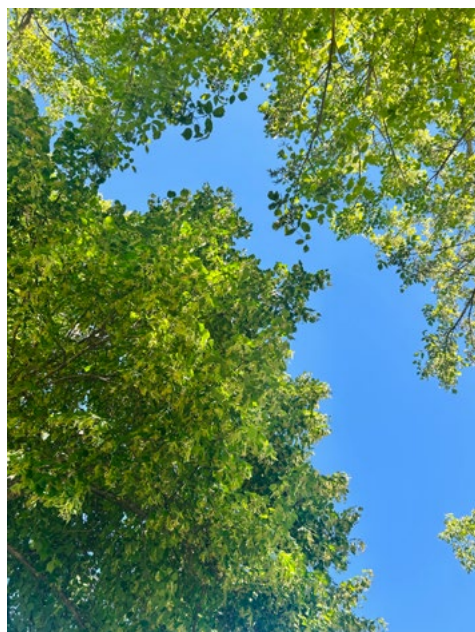
We wander apart,
yet crave the same light.

Name is as you will,
it all touches us,
all shapes us.

But when eyes meet,
with the intention to heal,
it's like we see for the very first time.



27th 4-day Gestalt, May 2025



The “aftertaste” of this year’s four-day workshop is bittersweet, like dark chocolate.

On the one hand, this community, which allows me to feel safe, to hurt and to mourn as I know that there - in every corridor and room - there will be some hands that can hold me, some eyes that will look at me

with understanding and some mouths that will offer me a word of comfort.

The fact that I can move around the hotel premises without having to hide my tearful eyes, without being ashamed of what I feel, is something very important for me who has learned to hide my vulnerable side.

On the other hand, the emptiness. It seems that this prevailed over the common and the new - at least for me. I turned more to myself and came into contact with figures - ghosts, people who have left my life.

Mourning is necessary for the process. And opposite, this sea. Always there, reminding me (when I strain) of the fluidity of the self and ultimately of life itself.

And so, I return again to dark chocolate: its bitterness is

the awareness of farewell, but its sweetness is the longing for life. That is why it is my favorite - because it does not pretend. It is real.

Varvara Skafida, 3rd year trainee of Gestalt Foundation
Athens 2024-2025

Gestalt Camp 2025: A few days of LIFE in life.

With losses and presences.
With experiences and gaps.
With connections and distances.
With withdrawal and with “together”.
With respect for my & your needs.
With care.
With creative adaptation and organizational self-regulation.
With polarities.
With awareness.
With a “rain” of lime-tree!

A few days... whole!

Gestalt Camp 2025, Livadaki Forest Village, @gestalt_foundation



Anna Sarvani, Gestalt Psychotherapist, Preschool Education Trainer, BA Social Administration (DPTH), probationary member of the Hellenic Association for Gestalt Therapy (H.A.G.T.) and of the European Association for Gestalt Therapy (E.A.G.T.)

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