

III International Interdisciplinary Gestalt Congress

ON BECOMING A PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Exploring Authenticity, Creativity, Competence and
Responsibility of the Profession

12-15 September, Skopje, Macedonia

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INTRODUCTION



The Congress time is approaching and in front of it, so beautiful, so powerful and still with grace, there is not so much to say. The excitement we are experiencing is as a firework that sometimes blinds us, while in the same time shows what is left, still on pending, waiting for completion.

We enter brave hearted in this journey, accepting the challenge to host our colleagues from different countries and cultures, knowing that our souls are twinkling the same, in a gestalt manner. We trust that all souls are recognizing each other, since we all are interconnected, and lead by love. Dedicated to the Gestalt modality, we belong to, we know that we are similar in our differences, strong through our weakness, happy through our sorrow, and same equally beautiful not matter if are we crying or laughing. And the most of all, we are all entwined by gestalt ideas, aesthetic in their core.

We are happy to be with you all from 13 different countries, to show the praise toward our ancestors, the praise toward our teachers, the praise toward our profession we all belong to. As human beings we are often trapped in the maze of defining who we are, and even more so, how did we become that. These are both open-ended questions, naturally, since the process of becoming is a never ending one.

Carl Rogers in his unavoidable book "On becoming a person", inspires us to think about the journey we are experiencing in the process of becoming a psychotherapist. And how it seems like we are always reopening the double bottom box, that reverberates a dozen difficult questions like:

What builds us into the unique professional that we become?

What are our core values and principals that support us in the role of a therapist? How do we find our authentic voice?

What builds our competence as professionals?

Where does our creative energy reside, and how do we keep it free, flowing and vibrant?

To what do we stand responsible on this path of taking care of ourselves and others in this ever-changing field of social, political and cultural organization?

We have invited you to stand together in Skopje, to explore with cooperation and interchange, through dialogue and contact, while experiencing the place of melting of old and new while creating layers of different stories and cultures, co-creating the newest pages of the Gestalt history. Let's enjoy the emerging of all possible answers, to these and many, many more questions, that are tackling ideas of exploring authenticity, creativity, competences, and responsibility of a profession that is still in the process of searching for recognition.

Our hearth is beating in 7/8 rhythm, and we hope yours will experience fine tune with it, during these days, where we will point on the process on becoming psychotherapist, and allow me to say sustain psychotherapist with a good form. Here we will search for a that good form, like Joseph Zinker wrote, led by dozen of speakers that will share with us their good will to spread the knowledge and experience that is the leading learning form.

Dear Colleagues, Welcome to Skopje, where on the banks of river Vardar, you could hear how the wind is whispering the narratives from all around the world, from ancient time to present. Listen carefully, it is on the crossroad between East and West, South and North, almost perfect example of polarity integration work.

We believe, that our III IIGC will create the common ground for sustainable quality to unify and give birth to better comprehension, cooperation and collaboration.

Being very grateful to address you with Love and Appreciation,

On behalf of the Organizational Committee
Director of the III IIGC
Prof. Dr. Emilija Stoimenova Canevska

ORGANIZERS

Gestalt Institute Skopje

Gestalt Institute Skopje was founded in 2006 with the purpose of providing professional learning of the theory and methodologies of Gestalt Psychotherapy as well as practical implementation, by focusing on the individual experience in the present moment.

Gestalt Institute Skopje from 2008 is recognised and accredited by the European Association for Gestalt Therapy (EAGT) and the European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP).

EAPTI-GPTIM Network

EAPTI-GPTIM Network or EGN was established in 2018 as the result of the unique relationship of mutual trust, friendship, respect and support between Dr. Pecotic and her original group of colleagues, who are now head of the various institutes in the different countries, or their senior practitioners. The main function of the network is not commercial but an educational-professional one. Apart from EAPTI-GPTIM, all the institutes are independently recognised and accredited by the European Association for Gestalt Therapy (EAGT) and the European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP).

PARTNERS

European Accredited Psychotherapy Training Institute Malta, Gestalt Psychotherapy Training Institute Malta, Higher Education Institution (NCFHE)

European Accredited Psychotherapy Training Institute – Studio for Education Beograd

European Accredited Psychotherapy Training Institute – Psihika Ltd, Zadar, Croatia

Gestalt Psychotherapy Training Institute – Psiho-Integrum d.o.o. Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Association for Gestalt Psychotherapy Montenegro

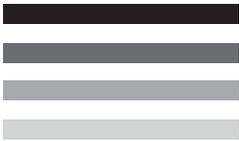
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Ph. D. Dashimir Beculi – Kosovo
Atina Tasevska, MSc – R.N. Macedonia

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS





Panel Presentation
Workshop

The myth of the wounded healer. the shape of a psychotherapist.

Camilleri Rene

Resilient people find healing for themselves as they work for healing others. The myths and model of the wounded healer explore the relationship between a psychotherapist's personal history of adversity and his/her role in bringing healing to others.



Panel Presentation

The politics of psychotherapy

Cassar Charles

Charles Cassar explains where the practical value of psychotherapy is an instigator of social and political change. He touches on the similarities between the psychotherapist and the politician and whether the political is an appropriate topic for therapy.

He purports that the political context can never be disregarded and needs to be taken into consideration to assess where we are coming from and how we operate in the social context we are in.

He also talks about the different kinds of psychotherapy modalities as reflecting a political philosophy and how time and personal and social paradigms effect the way we do psychotherapy.

Panel Presentation
Workshop

On becoming a psychotherapist

Das Ceylan

In this workshop, I would like to focus on the main points that Gestalt therapists need to follow. According to me the main points that need to be followed are the contact, curiosity, feelings, needs, dialogue, and phenomenological questioning. Contact is the most important point for the psychotherapists of course. For me, contact is the meeting of two equal persons in an equal atmosphere. Without curiosity, there will be no contact, nothing to talk about or nothing to investigate. Curiosity will lead the therapist to search for the feelings of the person and understanding the sensations and feelings of the client will help both the therapist and client to be aware of the needs beneath them. It is not easy of course to name the sensations, feelings, needs and find alternatives to meet the needs because of many reasons that Gestalt therapy put forward. Thus it is necessary to explore those in the therapy session with the client in a dialogic relationship. In addition, as every sense, feeling, need or the ways to meet that needs have specific meanings for that person (individually, socially and culturally) phenomenological questioning will help the therapist to work with creative indifference as Gestalt therapy approach recommends.

In order to be more aware of those keystones of therapy, the participants will kindly be invited to focus on their body sensations and personal expressions that could help them to work in a holistic atmosphere as Gestalt therapy indicates. For this aim in addition to awareness exercises, bodywork and expressing feelings through dance will be utilized.

Panel Presentation
Workshop

On gaining new territory for Gestalt

Ilieva Elena

Bulgarians are a nation that have survived over many centuries. On the background of reach and often turbulent history this society seems to be very traumatized and is progressing haltingly during the post- communist period. In this atmosphere during 2012 Bulgarian Institute for Gestalt therapy (BIGT) was established. Contemplating its conception, its founder asked herself and her fellow psychologists, "Is there a need and a room for Gestalt therapy in Bulgaria?" Seven years later, the question has changed, "What can Gestalt therapy contribute to our society and how it could do it?" The paper shares some experiences of practicing therapists, trainees and people that have become in touch with the gestalt philosophy and practice, attending some of the Institute public initiatives. For the time-being and in baby steps, we are striving to aid the personal growth of our trainees and clients. Within our small community there is readiness to inspire social change through accompanying change one individual at the time, one family at the time. We are searching and exploring for more ways to reach different social groups as well.

Panel Presentation
Workshop

What the gestalt therapist should know about the principals of developmental growth seen through the life span paradigm

Klarin Mira

The contemporary paradigm treats developmental growth as a lifelong process of learning in which the individual internalizes knowledge, skills and patterns of behavior typical for a certain age. Important characteristics of developmental growth are multidimensionality and multidirectivity. Multidimensionality correlates with the complexity and multitude of factors that impact the development, like biological, psychological and social factors, while multidirectivity means that the developmental growth is a process consisted of constant gains and losses. Therefore the theory of developmental growth does not emphasize any developmental phase in particular. Having in mind the characteristics of developmental growth, that what is emphasized is the plasticity of the developmental growth and the importance of the context for the developmental growth throughout the life span. Every developmental phase in life has its own developmental tasks that the individual needs to adopt. These tasks can be cognitive, emotional, social or physical in their nature. Despite the fact that all aspects of developmental growth are mutually connected, from psychotherapist point of view the flow of the social and emotional development of the individual is of special interest.

From birth to old age, the individual adopts certain emotional and social competences that enable him to adjust and gain more or less satisfactory social relations or collective gain. It is important for the psychotherapist to know these developmental principals, in order to make an assessment of the dynamics of developmental growth of the client, if it is in accordance with the age of the client, and in order to understand his own personal developmental processes in life.



Panel Presentation
Workshop

Importance and difficulties in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

Kocijan Hercigonja Dubravka

The integration of psychotherapeutic approaches in accordance with constitutional and maturation characteristics, as well as the characteristics of the environment, is the basis of psychotherapeutic approaches to children and adolescents. The development of children depends on biological, social, and emotional characteristics, especially in relationships that create children's images of themselves and the world around them; this is the basis for life-long functioning. In order to provide children and adolescents with optimal conditions for their development and recognize their needs, child and adolescent psychotherapists must have further knowledge and certain personal characteristics in order to establish relationships and to resolve transfer-counter transfer relationships. Today, we have very clearly defined laws and approaches to children and adolescents, families and environment. These are primarily defined in the WHO, through conditions for primary, secondary and tertiary prevention in mental health, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Family Laws, as well as the laws regarding psychotherapy. These same laws, however, lead to numerous ethical problems and dilemmas, both in relation to the family and the environment. This complicates the approach to children and adolescents, the psychotherapeutic process itself, as well as numerous preventive activities.



Panel Presentation
Workshop

Being a psychotherapist: the asymmetrical responsibility of our presence

Kostantinidou Antonia

Being a psychotherapist means facing human suffering every day. By the time people reach us, they are usually suffering, disappointed with themselves and others. The psychotherapeutic meeting takes place and a form of co-creation begins. Suffering becomes contact through exchange of sensations, words, and feelings. This contact makes the transformation possible, and new possibilities emerge from crisis.

What is crucial for this transformation to occur is the presence of the psychotherapist. According to the Gestalt therapy perspective, presence is not a technique, it is a way of being with the other, authentically, with inclusion and humbleness. From a field relational perspective, the modulation of a therapist's presence is the key of change (Francesetti, 2019).

In this lecture, and throughout the experiential workshop, we will discuss the elements of presence and how psychotherapists can support themselves in order to sustain their hospitality and their empathic stance towards the "suffering stranger" (Orange, 2011). As Lynn Jacobs (2016) describes it: "My daily experience of finding my way to presence-with-another consoles me at times. It certainly enlivens me. It is a most profound aesthetic experience that, while risking myself, also saves me."



Panel Presentation

How to transform the chains of the human being: the feeling of anxiety, guilt and shame into resource for an authentic life.

Mueller Bertram

Although anxiety, guilt and shame are genuine human feeling, they are also the three main obstacles of being yourself and authentic. What to do to release us and others from these impediments of an authentic life? Gestalt therapeutic concepts of the transformation of these feelings will be sketched and discussed in relation to latest neurological – scientific insight about the well functioning of the autonomic nervous system and function of emotions within the human brain.

Workshop

How to transform feeling of anxiety, guilt and shame into resource for an authentic life.

Mueller Bertram

The workshop will give an opportunity to discuss the therapeutic impact of the theoretical concepts presented in the speech and to get practical experience of how to support others to release one's chains of anxiety, guilt and shame.

The Pendulum Method to support one's process of becoming

Mueller Bertram

To become the person one wants to be, one needs individually meaningful future objectives as strong anchor for the brain to strive for. In Gestalt therapy we see the process of becoming essentially connected with how much one can stay aware in the "Here and Now," and how much one can mobilize from moment to moment and focus one's own individual resources for an individually meaningful self-development. Yet without an emotional attachment to our aims and visions our Self will not find a direction to strive for and will not be able to mobilize energy and discipline to make one's dreams true. Besides a short introduction to the psychological and neurological concepts of self-efficacy in striving for individual aims, a.o. the "Pendulum methodology"- going back and forth from experienced positive state of one's future and back to the present reality with some obstacles to be handled will be introduced to and practiced the participants.

How to become and live as a multiple personality with multiple authenticities

Mueller Bertram

Gestalt therapy teaches to see human beings not with one core more or less authentic identity, but as an flexible Self, which is able to creatively adjust its personality-function by mobilizing selectively one's resources of the "Id" and "Ego" to cope with a current context. We are not only a man, woman, lover, father, a businesswoman, gestalt therapist, private person etc. We need to self create and live with many identities within this complex world of today. The challenge is: How can we conducting these many identities at our best and even in an authentic way? The workshop offers opportunities to explore and profile one's individual multiple identities, follow by a short theoretical introduction to current neurological and psychological concepts, who support the development of a creative adjustable, authentic and multiple personality.



Panel Presentation

Creating a Gestalt psychotherapist through dialogical experiential learning and friendship

Pecotic Lidija

Ever since the beginning of the 1990s, in all centers of the European Gestalt Network (EGN), creating Gestalt psychotherapists is achieved according to the principles of the experiential, relational and dialogical learning. This kind of learning includes experience, an immediate reflection on the experience, with the ultimate goal of reflection during the experience. In the current stage of the development of our training programs, this type of learning is combined with academic learning, which puts emphasis on theoretical knowledge. In this way, through the integrative approach to learning and training, the deficiencies of both individual methods are healed.

Of course, these processes are not our own uniqueness. Even 2500 years ago in his work *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle claimed that before we know how to do something, we need to learn about it by simply doing it. Our present workshops are the laboratories of new professional and personal experiences which unfold in the relationship and dialogue between the students and teachers. In the here-and-now, the students directly experience the methods and philosophy of the Gestalt approach. This experience is the foundation of the students' observations and reflections, which serve them to learn and assess what is right or good, and what is wrong in this psychotherapeutic modality; what can and what cannot be applied; and what can be conceptualized and improved from the participation in the experiments.

In most cases, the natural consequences of this approach to learning are strong bonds and friendships which are established between the participants in the learning process both during and after the Gestalt training, which often last a lifetime. Sometimes, this aspect of learning is suppressed by the individual intellectual, professional or economic goals which care little for the beauty and value of what has been created between people in the process.

Within EGN, we promote the dialogical learning in higher education by introducing those elements in education which include: the respect and support of other members of the student community; recognizing and acknowledging what is; and the growth through shared truths of the modality within which we educate ourselves. Promoting these aspects of learning does not make the education and the relationships in it confluent. On the contrary, education enables the assimilation of knowledge and experience, and thus supports the authenticity of a new professional identity.

The EGN provides the above-mentioned learning conditions, which enable achieving its goal – not only creating exceptional professionals but also improving the well-being of the entire community through their creation.



Panel Presentation

Where psychotherapy meets neuroscience

Pop-Jordanova Nada

Any form of psychotherapy is successful to the degree to which it enhances positive experiential change and underlying neural networks, its growth and integration. Data show that only 15 percent of therapy success is related to the type of therapy. The therapeutic alliance, environmental factors and even the placebo effect play a far greater role. In order to enhance the treatment of mental health problems and to be successful as a psychotherapist, we need to understand the neural basis of symptoms. The neural circuits underlying symptoms are treated as a proximal mechanism because they directly cause symptoms. At the other end of the spectrum, some distal mechanisms, such as personality and upbringing, indirectly shape symptoms. This approach is undoubtedly useful because it integrates neurobiological and psychosocial frameworks. Practitioners can advance psychotherapy by understanding how the brain internalizes distal mechanisms, particularly negative psychosocial experiences. Assuming that the consequent emotional conflicts underlie symptoms that are some kind of adaptations to these conflicts, it is possible to reshape or even erase conflicts to ease a client's suffering. The lecture will be an overview of more important knowledge in neuroscience which must be applied and used in the process of psycho therapeutic specialization.

Panel Presentation

The chair dance and the pronoun dance

Salonia Giovanni

The interest of Gestalt Therapy for family therapy has gone through two phases. In the first awareness was focused. So the therapist worked with the disturbed family member with a slight involvement of the other family members. In the second model (Zinker-Nevis) gestalt therapists work on the contact cycle of family members and turn to family systemic therapy to involve the whole family.

The third model - the Salonia model of Gestalt Family Therapy - includes awareness and the contact cycle but focuses on the intervention of the personality function of the family member. While the systemic perspective attenuates behaviors and roles, the Salonia model explores the bodily and relational experiences of the personality function of family members.



Workshop

The moon is made of cheese – Gestalt Therapy and borderline language

Salonia Giovanni

To the patient who states that 'the moon is made of cheese', IFrom answer : 'both are yellow'. This answer contains the secret of Gestalt work with 'patients borderline relationship mode'. In this answer it is clear that the first gestaltic intervention with these patients is the translation of their language. The answer that Fromm suggests is not a lie or a humiliation: but an understanding of the intimate experience that led the patient to put together moon and cheese: so the 'yellow' combines the moon and the cheese but also the patient and the therapist. The model of 'gestalt translation of the borderline language' is presented with examples that highlight the radical difference with other intervention models (O. G. Gabbard and O. Kernberg)



Panel Presentation
Workshop

On becoming a Gestalt therapist: The importance of the person of the psychotherapist

Schulthess Peter

Not every therapist is a good therapist. There are significant differences when you compare outcomes of therapies. There is no therapist that has always good outcomes and there is no therapist that always have no good outcomes. How can we explain this? What makes the difference? What personal, social and professional skills and competencies should a therapist have? How to develop them in training? Research based some information will be given as a base to discuss this topic and to compare with the own experiences of the participants. In the workshop these aspects will be deepened.



Panel Presentation
Workshop

Mirror, mirror

Sciberras Joyce

Who am I in my life and who am I as a psychotherapist? Does one reflect the other?

This workshop will explore the congruence and authenticity with which we develop the therapeutic relationship and the way that we live our everyday life and face our challenges. Does one support the other or do we live in “as if” way?

Reflective questions will be generated so as to invite a reflexive attitude. The sharing of experiences and the wisdom that is gained can help each one of us to have a good look at our varied roles with the focus on being a psychotherapist.



Panel Presentation

The impact of networked quality assurance on psychotherapy training

Spiteri Sandro

The Gestalt Psychotherapy Institute Malta (GPTIM) was created in 1996 after the beginning of the fratricidal wars of the Balkans in the 1990s. The collaboration between erstwhile colleagues and students in the original Belgrade Gestalt Institute continued throughout the successive conflicts, and out of this work grew the new Gestalt Institutes of North Macedonia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro, that along with the Belgrade Institute work closely with and under the oversight of GPTIM. In 2018 this relationship was formalized through the setting up of the European Gestalt Network (EGN). The relationship between EAPTI-GPTIM and EGN is a unique one in terms of transnational accreditation. It is not a franchise or simply of local providers of courses accredited in Malta. EGN is a permanent transnational partnership in which EAPTI-GPTIM is the first amongst equals. This paper compares this new mechanism of networked quality assurance with other more traditional forms of transnational quality assurance arrangements. It then discusses the advantages of this mechanism that make it particularly suitable to ensure the quality of psychotherapy training provision by the EGN. Finally, it discusses the opportunities and challenges that this mechanism poses for the EGN member institutes and their member psychotherapists.



Panel Presentation
Workshop

Exploring authenticity, creativity, competence and responsibility of the profession through supervision

Stoimenova Canevska Emilija

The supervision practice was originated a century ago in psychoanalysis, where it was mainly based on the authority of the supervisor. Today, time has changed, and supervision process especially in gestalt clinical supervision practice is embedded in the relational attitude. The relation between the supervisor and supervisee is crucial to the process of supervision, where both of them are engaged to achieve and sustain the authenticity of the all involved sides, to support creativity and experimental approach, and through that establish and constantly develop competences of the supervisee as well as the supervisor. Involvement with dedication and trust in dialogical and experimental long life learning process is the key for developing personal responsibility as well as capacity to develop responsibility of the profession. The supervision process that is build up on these pillars could be the guardian of the psychotherapy as the profession, in the process on becoming psychotherapist, and after even more in the process of sustaining a good form. The workshop will offer possibility to explore and exchange authenticity, creativity, competence and responsibility of the profession through supervision.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS





The therapeutic benefits of care-work interactions: how do social support workers perceive the impact of their role on children's development and resilience

Agius Audrey

This study is based on the assumption that there is considerable potential for therapeutic intervention in the daily interactions between Social support workers and children in out-of-home care. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is used to investigate whether Social Support workers are aware of this potential, explore their meaning making and personal experiences, and identify main themes related to therapeutic input in their daily work. The context of the study is a residential facility for looked-after children in Malta, where a purposive sample of five Social support workers were interviewed. Data analysis revealed six themes that captured the lived experience of participants in relation to their client group: perception of role, developing by relating, unconscious dynamics, the container-contained relationship, supporting resilience through reparative experiences, and the therapeutic potential of inter-disciplinary work. These results can be used to increase our knowledge of the interactions that take place in a residential care setting. Through this insight we can promote a more therapeutic approach that improves practice by meeting children's developmental needs, thus helping them increase their resilience. Consideration is given to indicators that point towards the training and supervision needs of Social support workers in order to deliver more therapeutic care-working.



The experience of aggression in adolescents

Axiak Rosalba Maria

Abstract: In adolescence, the disengagement with the adults in their life is central. Aggressive energy gives the adolescent that much-needed drive towards finding new ways of belonging and becoming and allows them to actively reach out for what in the environment can satisfy their needs. If instead, aggression remains ungratified, it is sublimated and would come out in other ways. This together with other unmet needs and expectations might turn the aggression into self-destructive impulses or violence towards others. In this research, two focus groups with adolescents of ages between eleven and sixteen were organized to understand their experience of aggression. After analyzing these findings phenomenologically, the researcher could understand their subjective experience better and could detect fundamental differences in the experiences pertaining to the developmental stage they were in. This research aimed to gain greater insight into the work with adolescents and facilitate further research in this area.



Scar Tissue: how can addiction be trauma's manifestation – A Gestalt Approach

Baldwin Romina

As a practicing Gestalt therapist, I noticed that I had an increasing number of clients who have addiction issues due to previous trauma. The question being put forward is the idea that trauma may manifest itself through addictive issues. A Single Case study strategy of an adult survivor of childhood trauma was adopted using Thematic Analysis method. Two in-depth semi-structured interviews were carried out and served as data collection together with field notes. The root of addiction is not conceptualized as weakness of character but psychological trauma. Addiction is a signal that a person has been seriously wounded by life and has turned to an addiction of some kind to cope with their pain. In this way, addiction can actually be adaptive; for some people on the verge of self-destruction, addiction provides enough psychological distance from problems to allow them to keep going, keep living. The concept of addiction is explored in this paper in relation to the traumatization literature. The goal of this article is to evaluate addiction and the trauma experience and growth process from Gestalt point of view.



Politics of psychotherapy as politics of care

Blazheva Ana

The presentation will examine the political aspects of becoming and being a psychotherapist. The goal of the presentation is to use the experience of becoming a psychotherapist in addressing both the uncertainties, isolation and anxieties I've faced as young psychotherapist at the begging of the carrier and the possibilities for collegial and communal support for their overcoming. I will use this experience to explore the connection between the political and therapeutical.

I argue that the concept of intersubjectivity, intercorporeality and self as developed in gestalt psychotherapy can be a resolution for overcoming the shortcomings in the poststructuralist and postmodern views on subjectivity and/or identity. This intervention into the notion of self and identity creates a ground for rethinking of the field of the political as well. Therefore I propose this line of thinking for further exploration of the relation of both fields of knowledge and practice and how can they change the field of political and for psychotherapy as a profession.



Show me another way

How is anger involved in the process of childhood trauma later elaboration in adolescence?

Borg Elena

Aim:

This study explores retrospectively the involvement of anger in the process of childhood trauma later elaboration in adolescence.

Method:

A Single Case study strategy of an adult survivor of childhood trauma was adopted using grounded theory method as analysis. 2 in-depth semi-structured interviews were carried out and served as data collection together with field notes.

Results:

The involvement of anger was conceptualized as 'anger as a transferred phenomenon. Anger was observed as spreading across internally for the survivor and externally in the environment as though it was a vicious cycle impacting the body, mind, soul and environment. Its involvement within this case study, was outlined in Peter's seven-phase Trajectory model of Anger.

Conclusion:

The model reflects an in-depth process of the micro processes of the involvement of anger as seen through the eyes of a survivor of childhood trauma. This model allows us to understand in detail the transformation of the emotion of anger as captured by the lived experienced of the survivor and to appreciate the power and effect this emotion holds.

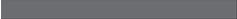


Understanding spirituality in gestalt therapy literature

Božović Ljiljana

Until the last decades of the twentieth century there was resistance in psychotherapy towards mentioning the term of spirituality in professional and scientific texts. Some authors of Gestalt therapy explain this by language difficulties, or by the fact that academic texts are written in an objectivistic language that can hardly cover all the aspects of this term. At the same time, since the early beginnings of Gestalt therapy, spiritual topics have been embedded in its background. Early founders of this therapeutic approach were influenced by spiritual and/or religious traditions, primarily the eastern ones, which influenced the formation of basic concepts of Gestalt. In today's world of extremely fast-moving technological development spiritual needs of the individual are ignored or are dealt with in a consumerist manner. Using a holistic perspective, the Gestalt approach also takes into account the spiritual dimension as essential for a balanced and integrated functioning of an individual. Analyzing the literature one can notice three tendencies in understanding and explaining the term of spirituality in Gestalt therapy authors:

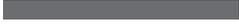
1. Emphasizing the transpersonal in Gestalt therapy
2. Connecting with the spiritual traditions of the East and West
3. Equalization with relational in therapy. The method used in this paper is an analysis of the concept of spirituality in Gestalt therapy literature. The goal is to bring from the background and focus on the notion of spirituality in order to understand better the subtle therapeutic processes which establish the connection between the individual and the Field.



Competent psychotherapist in the contemporary world

Bratina Sanja

In times of expansive development of the profession of psychotherapy and uneven legal regulations of the professional practice, the topics of competencies and education of psychotherapists are becoming issues of increasing interest. The psychotherapists are directly responsible for their work, both legally and ethically and quality insurance of professional practice in transforming world is becoming more challenging. Equalizing the criteria of education and defining the core knowledge and skills that comprise a competent therapist are seen as an important way of ensuring the quality of psychotherapeutic practice. The aim of this paper is to contribute to the knowledge of how to protect the quality of the psychotherapeutic profession and support its further development. It is to be done through the theoretical and historical overview of the psychotherapy educational processes. Research data suggests that the most important contributing factors in the process of psychotherapy education are supervision and personal psychotherapy. Hence, we are presenting a historical overview of the ways in which supervision and personal psychotherapy were part of education in different psychotherapy approaches. We aim to show the emergence and development of the concept of psychotherapy competencies and a competent psychotherapist, especially within the Gestalt psychotherapy approach.



Spirituality as experienced by Maltese Gestalt psychotherapists: an exploratory study

Bugeja Therese

Background:

Recent years have seen increased interest in the relationship between spirituality and Gestalt psychotherapy. Spirituality may provide a lens through which one may view relationships and experiences and may be crucial during moments of crises and times of transition. Therefore, attending to the spiritual dimension in therapy seems an unavoidable reality for Gestalt psychotherapists to the extent that some practitioners regards it as an ethical obligation, particularly within a multicultural context. This research report presents an overview of a qualitative exploratory study of the experience and perception of the spiritual dimension of psychotherapy amongst Maltese Gestalt psychotherapists.

Methods:

A phenomenological approach was taken to capture the salient features of the spiritual experience of the participants. Focus groups were created from which data was collected. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data to remain faithful to the participants' subjective experience and understanding of the spiritual dimension.

Findings:

Seven themes were identified. Spirituality was defined as a personal and unique experience providing meaning and purpose in life. It emerged that a spiritually integrated psychotherapeutic approach may provide a more holistic service to clients since it includes the person's spiritual dimension. Furthermore, participants highlighted that there seems to be a spiritual professional silence in the field of Gestalt psychotherapy. Central to the concept of spirituality were the elements of 'connection and relationship', 'meaning-making and purpose' and 'being'. This research emphasized the need for professional training and supervision to integrate the spiritual dimension.

Conclusion:

The strengths and limitations of the research process, and the ethical considerations are discussed. Recommendations for further research, further education, and clinical practice are presented.



The perception of intimacy amongst gestalt psychotherapists a qualitative study

Camilleri Anthony

The purpose of this research was to investigate the perception of intimacy amongst Gestalt Psychotherapists. A qualitative research approach based on Grounded Theory was used throughout the research process whereby six participants were interviewed using in-depth interviews including the Likert scale PAIR questionnaire. Six different categories were identified as being important, namely, relatedness, change, isolation, self-development, novelty, and growth. Data Analysis showed that the categories are interrelated leading towards a core category with intimacy being defined as relatedness. The findings discovered a dynamic process and 'movement of intimate relating' whereby Psychotherapists' self-development becomes the instigator of change within the individual leading towards an active movement between novelty, growth, and isolation. Findings display that this active movement lead towards stronger relatedness and/or fracturing of intimate relating amongst interpersonal relationships of these Gestalt Psychotherapists.



Reflections of victims of crime

Caruana Katya

The provision of psychotherapy for crime victims in Malta is offered freely from within the system by the Victim Support Unit (VSU) of the Executive Police and through collaboration and co-operation with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). To date, there have been no published studies in Malta on reflections of victims of crime who have received and/or who are receiving psychotherapeutic support from within the system and their perceptions thereon as regards possible changes they might have experienced as a benefit of the psychotherapy received.

This study examined interview-based research with five (5) crime victims who received or are receiving psychotherapeutic support from within the system and explored their experience of psychotherapy using thematic analysis as a method. The results comprised four (4) main themes derived from several meaning units taken from the participants' experiences as expressed and stated during interviews.

This research showed that crime victims perceive psychotherapeutic support received from within the system as a positive experience. However, one important variable that came out was that one must primarily be willing and disposed to work through.

As a recommendation and way forward in Gestalt Psychotherapy and holistic justice as such, one might also be encouraged to conduct similar research with larger populations through a longitudinal study and/or with perpetrators, aggressors or, authors of crimes, which would be interesting in context of contemporary debates in Gestalt Psychotherapy as a holistic approach as such and that of a restorative justice in the criminal justice scenario.



The impact of spirituality during the psychological support in the process of curing and healing

Ćirković Olivera

Today, there are no dilemmas that difference between curing and healing processes exist. There is a clear line between these two terms. In the curing process, symptom exist, same as a diagnostic procedures and therapeutic also, and, if necessary, rehabilitation procedures. Without symptoms, the person is cured. Process of healing consider deep work on ourselves, on our feelings, our soul, in order to come up to the spirit and become aware of same. The healing process necessarily leads to spirituality. Healing is a complex and difficult work on ourselves and represent one long journey. Spirituality as a support in the process of curing and healing can also play an important role (but only when self-spirituality itself emerges spontaneously). Most patients consider spirituality and religion as a significant part of who they are. The aim of this study was to look at the importance and role of spirituality during the psychological support in the process of curing and healing. We reviewed published scientific papers in the fields of medicine, psychology, psychotherapy and theology. Practically, the process of healing without spirituality cannot be imagined. We can talk about spirituality on several levels, from different places, from different distances and areas.



The Power of Presence: experiences from therapy with a client suffering from a neurological condition

Falzon Rose

Clients who are suffering from a chronic and/or progressive medical illness is a recurring experience encountered in therapy. A chronic physiological condition is a complex and multi-layered experience, which may not have a specific cure and comprises persistent symptoms. The extensive impact on such a client's daily functioning accentuates the important role of a psychotherapist whose relational presence is deep-seated in the therapeutic process. This reflexive article discusses Gary's (pseudonym) three-year therapeutic journey after being diagnosed with a progressive neurological condition. Within the medical model, the behavioural and cognitive behavioural approaches are often solely considered in therapy. In this article, the author considers the benefits of the Gestalt paradigm, where the focus is not to eradicate the problematic multi-layered facets emerging from the illness, but in staying in steadfast contact, be present in the here and now of the figure emerging and process the existential repositioning in one's life. Analysing this therapeutic journey, it is evident that therapy is beneficial if it is embedded in contact and soulful presence of the 'I and Thou' relationship (Buber, 1958), cultivated through a non-judgmental stance, validating, firmly staying, carefully listening and seeing.

Gary's illness is progressive; however, he is handling his experiences more effectively and has the empowerment to be an active participant in the management of his life, in holistic contact with others and the environment. The author envisages that though this is an idiosyncratic case, the effectiveness of the described psychotherapeutic interventions may be extrapolated and applied to other clients with other physiological conditions.



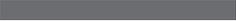
Healing: Two paths one journey. Meeting the spiritual in Gestalt and Salesian approaches to presence

Formosa Paul

Spirituality and psychology are sometimes perceived as going in opposite directions. However, just like a bird with only one wing is unable to fly, neither a spirituality that ignores the dynamics of psychological growth nor a psychology that denies the spiritual nature of the human person can serve as an adequate guide for people today who seek to live in greater harmony and integration.

This qualitative research study aims to discover how the two modes of presence as experienced through the Salesian Educative Pastoral Approach and the Gestalt Therapeutic Relationship resonate in an Educative and a Therapeutic Environment. It explores how the two paths of healing converge and diverge while embracing the journey of holistic growth. The research uses an in-depth literature review that will focus on three areas in particular: the therapeutic, the educative and the relational aspects of presence. Building on a critical literature review, the notions of presence and relationships will be studied and observed through focus groups from both the Gestalt and the Salesian experience. The project will examine how therapeutic and educative-pastoral approaches to presence inform and challenge each other.

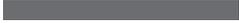
The research will use a phenomenological approach to give value to personal experience and understand how this is interpreted by participants in the focus groups from Gestalt and Salesian realities. The analysis of the focus groups data will use a thematic approach. This will require a deep immersion in the experience of the focus groups, remaining open to the phenomena that will emerge.



Gestalt reminiscence group therapy for persons suffering from dementia: reflections upon a forgotten group

Galea Rose

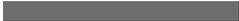
Reminiscence-based therapeutic approaches have recently been used widely with persons suffering from dementia. However, there has been little research on the experience and outcomes of reminiscence work, particularly in gestalt psychotherapy groups and in the Maltese context. This reflexive qualitative research paper focuses on the experience of implementing short-term reminiscence multi-sensory, gestalt group therapy sessions with elders together with their family members and care-givers in a Maltese residential home. This case study constitutes a qualitative, interpretive approach to understand the experiences, features, behaviors, and processes of one bounded unit. The group was made up of five participants suffering from mild to moderate dementia, together with their relatives and health care workers and was led by two gestalt psychotherapists. The process consisted of one initial meeting, eight multi-sensory therapy sessions and one final evaluation meeting. Both the experiential and the research experience were carried out from a humanistic, phenomenological, existential and social-constructionist conceptual framework. The presentation discusses the self reflexive stance of one of the authors on the personal experience of the group process with a special focus on the aesthetic contact with the elders throughout the development of the group, and how the behaviors, attitudes and experiences of the participants changed. Main themes presented are discussed along with the self reflections, in terms of effectiveness, benefits and limitations of the elders in the group.



The experience of caregivers' participation in gestalt reminiscence group therapy sessions: reflections on connection, growth and development

Mikela Gonzi

This presentation focuses on aspects of a qualitative research carried out with elderly persons suffering from dementia and their caregivers. The full research project consisted of implementing short-term reminiscence gestalt group therapy sessions with elders together with their family members and care-givers in a Maltese residential home. The group was led by two gestalt psychotherapists positioning themselves from a humanistic, phenomenological, existential and social-constructionist conceptual framework. Using a case study methodology, five participants suffering from mild to moderate dementia, together with their relatives and health care workers participated in the group, which consisted of one initial meeting, eight multi-sensory therapy sessions and one final evaluation meeting. Questionnaires were used for feedback and evaluation. The aim of the presentation is to discuss reflections of one of the authors, zooming in specifically on the caregivers' perceptions and experiences of being in the group with the elders. This is in an effort to contribute to the gap in literature related to reminiscence therapy, caregivers' experiences and the Maltese context in the field of gestalt psychotherapy.



Hidden dynamics of shame in partner relationships

Ilic Dragana

The aim of the paper is to increase the sensitivity of therapists working with couples, as well as couples themselves, on a subject of shame. Shame can be hidden and an unnamed dynamic that lies beneath various unexplained events in couple's functioning. It can be a "silent killer" in partner relationship. This means that it affects the partners' dynamics and potentially can destroy the partner relationship, before we perceive its manifestations. Shame, when it's pathological, is an affect that is very disturbing for Self. It is a relational phenomenon.

As partners get to know each other and increase their closeness and intimacy, as they connect intensively and start to belong to one another, the unaware and unrecognized aspects of Self begin to appear. Consequently, what has tried to be hidden, becomes visible and the risk of appearance of shame is higher. In an attempt to fight the shame, partners will use different strategies: rage, criticism, degradation, humiliation, humor, and so on. One partner's strategies for overcoming shame, cause negative feedback from another partner. This process of mutual intensification of destructive reactions is called a Cycle of shame. By bringing awareness of the shame that lies between them, partners can take responsibility for their behavior. In that way they can respect each other even when they are ashamed. A Cycle of shame that has been started, can be interrupted. Only then, the partners can really meet again and develop their relationship.



Gestalt relational approach in working with partner crises in today's time

Jovanović Dušanka

The aim of the paper is examining the significance of a relational approach in couple therapy in modern context of life. Our practice in a couple therapy shows that the ever increasing number of young couples come to therapy who are unsupported and unprepared to manage the conflicts and dynamics of crises they are experiencing. In order to understand the psychology dynamics of young couples, it is important to understand it in the modern context of life, its specific features and impacts. Due to the loss of clear social values, young people are without stable background and groundedness, unaware of deep fears and anxiety. They seek high excitement and tension relief, while being alienated from their bodies and their authentic needs. In today's age of the Internet, functioning within cyber and virtual reality, young people are trying to find the solutions for living the illusion of belonging in a relationship. These problems are particularly manifested in the relationship of young couples. The risks of belonging, intimacy and being with others are the biggest in couple relations. Consequently, the aim of the therapy is to support the couples to take a risk and build the experience of belonging to each other. The current therapy focus is the process of self-regulation in the relation with others, particularly through the work on the body therapy and desensitization as the protection from anxiety. This is the way for the couples to get experience of redefining the partnership relation to gain safety and support of being together in Buber's I -Thou relationship.



On becoming a psychotherapist and further: what's on the road?

*Nedinkovski Tome
Canevska Ena
Stojkoski Frosina
Dukoski Nikola*

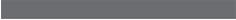
In the latest years many European countries have started and concluded their process of elevating psychotherapy on a higher level by making psychotherapy a different profession, protected by law. This is a clear sign of a healthy development of the psychotherapy in Europe. Inspired with it we have decided to explore more. We want to investigate in here and now, the process of becoming a psychotherapist and the point of development of psychotherapy as a profession. For this purpose a qualitative research design was used. Taking into consideration that the process of becoming a psychotherapist is never ending process, as well as the process of developing profession, two focus groups were formed. One was consisted of Gestalt psychotherapists and the other one of Gestalt psychotherapy students. The sample was formed by students and graduated psychotherapists from the EAPTl Gestalt Institute - Skopje, volunteers that accepted and signed informed consent, 12 in total. The focus group interviews were audio - recorded and transcribed, after which analysis was undertaken. From the analysis three major themes were formed. The first theme deals with personal and social challenges, the second one deals with personal and social benefits and the third theme was formed around "Law for psychotherapy". Further results and discussion are presented in the paper.



Shame as a relational phenomenon in education of gestalt therapists

Opacic Snezana

The aim of this paper is to point out the necessity of educator's sensitivity to the relational phenomenon of shame in the process of education for gestalt therapists. Shame is a sense of inadequacy that overwhelms our whole being. It is being co-created in interpersonal relations, but it also obstructs them, and most often it is hidden from our consciousness. Different authors speak of several types of shame, and in this paper we will observe shame as functional and dysfunctional, in relation to the learning process. Shame is an inevitable companion of the learning process in training for therapists, because specific working practices in training require a lot of exposure in groups of people, while experimenting with something new. Together with the demands for quality and excellence, education for therapists is a perfect ground for generating shame among the participants. It is important for educators to recognize the manifestations of shame, the defense reactions, as well as typical situations and relationships in which shame arises, which will be discussed in this paper. It is also important for them to be familiar with their own shame and the ways in which they participate in creation of shaming interactions.



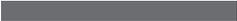
The matryoshka dolls symbol as a metaphor in psychotherapy

Parnis David

This presentation focuses on the idea that pain travels through families until someone is ready to feel it. The project proposes the idea that pain demands to be felt, and somewhere along the family-generations, a child will be born whose charge is to feel all of it, and possibly acknowledge, own, honour and heal the generational trauma. The Matryoshka nesting doll is used as a symbol and metaphor to facilitate the investigation of the transmission of trauma across generations, and across types of trauma. The Matryoshka symbol is used to simplify how inter-generational trauma is nested inside generation, and as each cohort, symbolized by a doll, splits in half at the midsection and opens to reveal another smaller doll stacked within, so is it with trauma. As with the uniqueness of each doll, from mother to the seed, daughters and sons will imitate the feelings of pain. Generations carry all, and like the big matryoshka with other dolls inside; stories, relationships and traumatic experiences are transmitted.

The ideas put forward suggest that intergenerational transmission of trauma is perpetuated across generations. As with the nesting doll, trauma is scripted and nested within the previous generations.

The project also suggests that through their creative adjustments, trauma survivors have the ability to heal the family-pain and carry the label of their gift as depressed or anxious, or any other mental disorder. This may be so because, generations, like sets of dolls are unique, with a family soul expressed through many persons, with similar experiences.



Cultivating and nurturing resilience: understanding and articulating the Gestalt perspective and approach

Perić Cathy

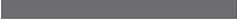
The aim of this article is to contribute to a dialogue on Gestalt's perspective and approach to resilience, by exploring how the concept of resilience is understood and defined within Gestalt theory and practice, and whether the Gestalt approach enables resilience in psychotherapy clients. Eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with experts in the Gestalt Therapy field from various countries around the globe. A subsequent thematic analysis of the interviews revealed that although the word resilience does not appear to feature in Gestalt Therapy literature, there was general consensus that cultivating and nurturing resilience is in effect intricately woven into the tapestry of the Gestalt approach. This article presents a synthesis of various points of view of the experts interviewed in order to support the articulation of the Gestalt perspective on resilience.



Experience of transpersonal relationship in psychotherapy from client`s and psychotherapist`s perspective

Petrovic Jelena

This paper represents the result of a qualitative research of a separate personal experience of a transpersonal relationship in psychotherapy, from the perspective of both the therapist and the client. Two women in their late thirties have been examined. The first examinee was describing personal experience during a transpersonal relationship from the client's perspective, whereas the other one was describing personal experience of a transpersonal relationship from the therapist's point. People involved are a long-term client and therapist of the same gender and similar age, and both of them come from the same Gestalt psychotherapy modality. The data has been gathered using semi-structured interview and analyzed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. The obtained results show the dimensions of experience divided into several topics ("consciousness", "authentic peace", "absolute happiness", "complete acceptance", "absence of thoughts"...) for each individual examinee which have then been processed with comparative analysis of the results of every individual case. It showed that there was a match in all the categories for every individual experience acquired. The obtained results are significant in order to explain and validate the transpersonal experience in a psychotherapeutic relationship. The results show that both personal experiences, which have been examined, are almost identical and the prerequisite for achieving this relationship is therapist's personal openness and readiness. Since it is well known that transpersonal relationship is the integral part of phenomenological framework of Gestalt psychotherapy, as a part of a dialogic relationship inside the I THOU relationship, we find the results of this research to be important for a clearer explanation of the experience itself - how to recognize and understand it. It is also emphasized that it is necessary to support the psychotherapist in his/her personal readiness and openness for this experience, which is authentic and unique and which brings about a change for both participants.



How attachment wounds in infancy affect contact functions disturbances in adolescence. A Gestalt perspective

Pillow Gillian

This project supports a theoretical framework for understanding attachment from a Gestalt psychotherapy perspective whilst exploring the etiology of the development of the child's inner self at the contact boundary in infancy and later in adolescence, where it changes due to developmental growth. Fritz Perls (1951) postulated that the "self is contact." The aim of the research question was to investigate how: 1) dysfunctional attachment patterns in the child's infancy can have a significant impact on the 2) contact function disturbances of the self in adolescence.

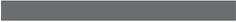
Qualitative analysis, specifically through the use of in-depth interviews with two 18 year old adolescents, was used to correlate care-patterns, family memories and other life events. Attachment patterns in infancy and adolescence were studied using The CAI/AAI (Child/adolescent attachment) interview based on Ainsworth's (1970) attachment styles in infancy. Reference has also been made to the relational patterns of attachment proposed by Bronagh Starrs (2014) in adolescence. A number of sensitizing concepts have been used to guide the narrative analysis. The emerging styles of attachment were identified and a comparative method of analysis between the two was established. The main styles were then coded according to a Gestalt understanding of the contact cycle. Dysfunctional attachment patterns in childhood point towards the creation of disturbances at the contact cycle, where the emergent self is present. Indeed, as stated by Besser Van Der Kolk (2014), "the parent-child connection is the most powerful mental health intervention known to mankind."



Psychotherapy- profession or destiny

Rakocevic-Medojevic Danijela

I started to wonder if it was my calling, a destiny, professional choice or personal need of my being to offer healing and help. Whether my professional competence was influenced by my personal growth and life events? It is also an important moment to emphasize the situations when the life events of the clients matched my own. The fact that I was in a situation when I had to manage my personal life issues, and be there for a client that was going through the same process, helped me enormously to sharpen and articulate my professional identity as a psychotherapist at the contact boundary, and be able to make an intense contact with the client in the "here and now". That is how my inner authentic therapeutic voice was created, and that is how I managed to find that exceptionally important place of being present at the contact boundary, that gives the sense of security for the client and for me.



Humor as a cure in psychotherapy

Saljic Milenkovic Brankica

Humor is fundamentally a social phenomenon and it is clear why it can be an important part of the relationship, between a client and a psychotherapist. Since humor is co-creation, it can be a mutual nourishing experience. The aim of this paper is to unite the results of recent researches and literature and to understand in which ways the use of humor can affect the therapeutic process. The method that is used is a comparative analysis of the available scientific literature. It has long-term and short-term positive effects on physical and mental health. It could also have negative effects and it's calling a therapist for caution. On the one hand, it can consolidate the relationship and the working alliance. On the other hand, if it is untimely and it is not in accordance with the phase of the relationship that we are in, or if the content is inadequate, than it can be toxic. Timed, spontaneous humor within a safe and nurturing relationship between a client and a therapist can be healing on the deepest level of beings. It is expected to show when and in which phases of the therapeutic process, humor can be helpful or harmful, as well as the method and frequency with which humor is used by the therapist as an assessment tool and a therapeutic tool.



Therapeutic aspects of Sufism

Selmanovic Podrug Sanela

This presentation is initiation of research process aiming to explore what influence both, Sufism and Gestalt psychotherapy have to mental health and personality. Sufism is dealing with examination of the soul; it is experience of becoming aware about its own identity. That is path back to original state of human being. One of aims of Sufism is to remove obstacles between human being and God. In this path person is experiencing true reality and acquire knowledge about that. When looking in therapeutic aspects of Sufism this paper observes process of becoming aware through Sufi rituals as well as meditation. Also, this paper is based on principles of Gestalt therapy recognizable in Sufi philosophy. Gestalt therapy as humanistic and existential therapy states that human resources are manifested in contact with others where true reality is also experienced and the person creates the meaning about it. The aim of this work is to present therapeutic aspects of Sufism. Methodology is based on analysis of scientific and professional literature from 2000 to 2019 as well as interviewing persons who are on higher levels of awareness in Sufism.



THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND STABLE FAMILIES IN GROWING CHILDREN IN TODAY

Stefanovic Filip

According to fact that children constantly grow and change (psycho-physically), during the years of growing up and aging in an adult, quest for homeostasis and equilibrium can be followed by crises and problems (Oaklander, 1997). Children respond to problems in the family and environment, on trauma, crises and losses in approximately similar developmental ways. Today, we increasingly encounter children with a manifestation of a developmental impediment in effective social communication in a greater or lesser degree.

Gestalt uses techniques that focuses on gaining an awareness of emotions and behaviors in the present rather than in the past, here rather that there. This presentation describes how we can use gestalt therapy in everyday practice as support, as well as prevention.

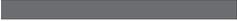
The aim of the paper is to emphasize the importance of working with children and their parents or home-families at the present time.



Invisible dynamics in the field of couple perceived through the processes of spiritual experience of the soul

Stefanovic Marija

Deepest needs of any human being are to love and to be loved. Beside primary family, couple's relationship is a field where these processes are painfully confusing. Through pain of partner's mismatching in the therapeutic process, the therapist monitors the hidden dynamics of the same couple, following the path of love. In the space between the phenomenology of the body and mind, that searches for narrative, appear pictures and words of the poetic soul. The crisis brings into focus couple's invisible experiences of the soul. Supported by sense that comes from the area of religion and spiritual, crisis opens new opportunities for couples dwelling together. New relationships, through the growth and development of both partners create space "between" where is the happiness of the soul, where two of them become one. This makes the partnership alive. The aim of this paper is to link awareness about the importance of growing and nurturing the space of the soul. Soul, itself, easily becomes invisible in everyday dynamics of concerns for the existence of the couple and the family. Therefore, the focus of therapists in couple therapy should be focus precisely on these processes.



Gestalt Supervision in Action

Tasevska Atina

The supervision has got a long and rich history. It is considered as a way through which Gestalt therapists learn how to become more effective and efficient in their work. Still the lack of empirical evidences that support its importance is evident. However, very important notion is that the supervision is not just an integral part of the process of becoming a Gestalt psychotherapist, but what is more important is that it supports the therapist's knowledge, skills as well as motivation through permanent development on professional and personal level. The main goal of this article is to present a literature review in the field of supervision in order to emphasize the importance of it during the development of Gestalt psychotherapy as a discipline and gestalt psychotherapy as a profession. The method that is used in this paper is an analysis of the scientific and professional literature on one side, as well as the literature that deals with an integrative approach to the therapy and supervision. The supervision is a challenge and also a support. Throughout this process of supervision, we explore, learn, and same time we recognize, respect, support and develop. It is continuous co-creative process throughout gestalt psychotherapist who is loyal to the profession creates maximum possibilities for development of all involved parties.



DYNAMICS OF THE „IN-BETWEEN“ – RELATIONAL FIELD IN A GROUP SETTING

Todorović Bojana

Work from a field perspective can be a fruitful place for any therapeutic process. Relational field consists of the individual fields of the client and the therapist, but also includes the one they create together. When a therapist understands and becomes aware of this field, he/she can organize an intervention and monitor its outcomes. A commonly formed field becomes recognizable and gets its own organization, activity and quality. In this study, we examined how therapists in a group session experience the relational field and how it changes over the time. Therapist reflected on their experience of the relational field at the beginning and at the end of a session. As a support to qualitative data we collected quantitative measures of their subjective experience of the relational field. Both qualitative and quantitative results show that the relational field is formed through the stages of the Gestalt contact cycle and that its quality changes over time in the positive direction. When assessing the relational field in a group, therapists report that they are constantly changing focus from themselves to the others. This research by using the mixed method showed the potential of the relational perspective not only in individual but also in a group setting.



Gestalt psychotherapist – professional identity formation through contact with one’s inside and outside world

Violetta van Vliet

In this paper, the author explores complex processes of professional identity formation – becoming Gestalt psychotherapist through contact with one’s inside and outside world. The individual experience of Gestalt psychotherapists in Malta is shared and described here, using Gestalt theory and methodology. The focus of this paper is on the individual experiences of “healing and becoming” a Gestalt psychotherapist and on the unfolding “nature” of these processes as well as their integration. The question becomes, what supports these processes and further, facilitates their integration? As our human nature and our identity of Gestalt psychotherapist is developing continuously, we become more aware and present to ourselves, to others and to the surrounding world.



See Me Through My Art

Vassallo Caroline Maria

Abstract: The focus of this research regards the use of artistic techniques within the field of Gestalt Therapy by questioning the confidence and resistance of a therapist on the occasion of using these said techniques. A phenomenological method of inquiry was used to collect data through a focus group, made up of three Gestalt therapists. The participants were gathered through the European Accredited Psychotherapy Training Institute – Gestalt Program Training Institute Malta (EAPTI-GPTIM). Thematic Analysis was used to evaluate the individuals' patterns of thought, attitudes, observational capacity, and emotional responses.

The source of information will be papers and articles published in the last five years in the field of psychotherapy with children. Simultaneous review of existing online print, social networks, etc. will be important to compare, as today's generations grow up to be the same.



Subjective experience of loneliness in a person with experience of panic attacks

Vesić Dunja

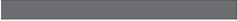
Research findings point out increasing percent of people who suffer of panic attacks in last few years. At the same time we are living today often as “unrooted” individuals with more mobility than earlier.

This research has tendency to reach lived experiences of loneliness in person who also has experienced panic attacks, and to understand quality of support from background. Three participants with this symptom described their experience of loneliness through depth - interview.

Aim is to describe life-world of individuals using existential-phenomenological analysis in attempt to reveal subjective experience. We used interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), because it helps us in the best way to understand and get the best quality of subjective experiences of loneliness.

In the end of analysis, we identified topics that may connect experience of loneliness and panic attacks. As a background of this issue, emerged several topics as separation anxiety, lack of feeling of belonging, and shame.

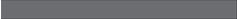
Better understanding this loneliness phenomenon in correlation with panic attacks may enable therapist to be more present and aware in work with this increasing symptom.



Emerging Adulthood: A Millennial perspective

Mićović Nina

Emerging adulthood is a developmental period between ages 18 and 25, distinct from both adolescence and young adulthood and marked by significant markers (like as: identity exploration, instability, self-focused period, feeling in between, period of possibilities). Many developmental markers of emerging adulthood are identified in individuals in their early 30s. It seems that younger generations are experiencing delayed progressions into adulthood. As the transitional period to adulthood differs demographically and it is associated with the cultural and social environment where young people live, one of the aims of this qualitative research is to explore how Millennials in Serbia understand what it means to be an adult and how much adult they feel. Interviews lasting around 60 minutes were conducted with 3 participants (age 30 and 31years old). The interviews were transcribed and narrative analysis was performed. One of the most significant overarching theme that emerged was a construction of self (identity exploration and formation process) and it was discussed through three subthemes - who I was 5 years before, who I am now and who I want to be (what I still need to develop) in order to feel completely as an adult



Emerging Adulthood of Millennials from the Therapist Perspective

Mićović Tijana

Millennials are young people born between 1981 and 1996 (Pew Research Center, 2014) and are faced with many challenges of contemporary society. That is a generation that connects generations before and after the emergence of Internet. One of their challenges today is postponing entry into the adulthood. The main research question that this study seeks to explore is how Gestalt psychotherapists see, understand and describe the life stage of emerging adulthood. In order to describe this phenomenon better, the research included two groups of participants. The first group consisted of a generation of older and very experienced therapists, while the second group consisted of therapists that belong to the generation of Millennials. These groups made two focus groups within which the facilitator led the interaction of the participants using pre-formulated research questions. As a method of data analysis, we used a thematic analysis. Results showed three main themes that emerged from the analyzed data: the feeling in-between, identity exploration, from limitless freedom to nonsense. These findings were then discussed within Gestalt psychotherapy framework with the goal to contribute to Gestalt psychotherapy practitioners who work with this population of young people.



Gestalt therapist in an online and face to face session

Stojanovic Mira

This work is a short presentation of a qualitative research which is an attempt to answer the question what are the resemblances and differences in work of a gestalt psychotherapist who works face to face or by the internet connection.

The research is conducted at the sample which is suitable and becoming and consists of three experienced gestalt therapists with perennial practice in working with clients. By working on themselves and during the education they are capacitated for introspection, consciousness of themselves and the analysis of their own phenomenological experiences. Data are collected by the method of semi-structured interview, and the analysis was directed towards seclusion of specifics, similarities and differences in therapeutic session by the way of internet connection and at the face to face therapeutic session. Analysis of obtained data is done by interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Ethical context of such way of work is something that has to be taken care of in further research, as well as individual analysis of all the aspects of a gestalt approach in working by the way of internet connection: the experience of a field, the quality of a contact, the experience of a client, diagnostics and the experience of a role of a therapist. The results of this research in the experience of a therapist out of the sample show that we cannot talk about original gestalt therapy in working by the internet connection, but of gestalt orientation and the direction in working which is adapted to aspects of different kind of field in virtual reality.



Demystification of infidelity in partnership relationships

Krivacic Marija

One of the serious crises of a partnership relationship causes an infidelity, which brings a lot of pain, suffering, despair, disappointment, and feelings of betrayal. The definition of infidelity is not operationalized. In the function of this paper, it is determined through the following 3 constituent elements: 1) sustainability; 2) sexual alchemy; 3) emotional engagement.

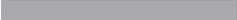
Once when marriage was an economic union, infidelity jeopardized material security, while today, when marriage is a romantic affiliation, it endangers emotional security. A modern individualistic society creates an unusual paradox: the stronger the need for faithfulness, the stronger the magnetism of infidelity.

Work on accepting the experience of infidelity implies the completion of unfinished business at the individual level of the partner, as well as at the level of new ways of being in a partnership relationship. Releasing the long-lasting pain during this process can lead to healing. Through this process, new transformative ways of being occur in a partnership.

During the therapeutic process, every member of the couple needs to go through his process: the one who has deceived to understand the meaning of leaving the relationship and accept responsibility and guilt, and the partner who is deceived to understand how he/she participated in creating that experience, to accept the loss of the illusion of unconditional loyalty of the partner, in order to be ready for forgiveness and acceptance. This establishes the balance of mutual suffering, i.e. there is a so called alignment in the relationship.

WORKSHOPS





Permission to be creative

Adili Selimi Valjdeti

This workshop is about the important place of the creativity in the psychotherapy process. Gestalt therapy's goal, similar to creativity is to bring the novel into the foreground so that a new figure can be formed out of transformation of the elements. A creative therapists helps the clients to reorganize and explore the field engaging them playfully, facilitating their experiences and supports transferring them in their life and relations.

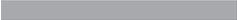
Founders of gestalt therapy believed in art and creativity, bringing in therapy not only artistic language for describing the phenomena but also a range of experiments that involve all of our senses. Laura Perls stated that psychotherapy is as much an art as it is a science, the intuition and immediacy of the artist are as necessary for the good therapist as a scientific education, Miller also describes contact as an aesthetic activity, as a person's ability to meet and interpenetrate his or her surrounding world and to gain something new from it. Activities and exercises of this workshop follow Zinker's philosophy who considered gestalt therapy itself to be a creative process, encouraging psychotherapists to develop their originality instead of using stereotyped, repetitive exercises with their clients.



Narcissism and shame of the therapist in couple's therapy

*Ilic Dragana
Stefanovic Marija*

The complexity of the field in couple's therapy easily leads us to the subject of narcissism. The issues that the couples address, which come from their inability to meet and make contact, are very tempting for the narcissistic aspect of the therapist because they usually call for an urgent and immediate conflict resolution, pain management, coping skills in order to deal with suffering, management of strong fears, overwhelming emotions etc. The therapist in this position is very tempted to solve problems, strive toward change, and in that way manifests his own power and weakens the couple. It is the couple that introduces the "here and now relation" in the therapy setting, instead of just the content of the story. Therefore the need to solve replaces the need to experience. In the need to solve the problem the therapist encounters the other polarity of narcissism, feeling insecure, inadequate, helpless and shamed. Shame limits his professional identity, depriving him of authenticity, spontaneity and presence in the process of the complex couples dynamics of relation that takes place in couple's therapy. Short video will be played, so the participants of this workshop can be introduced to an illustration of this phenomena, have a short discussion on the subject and exchange experiences with colleagues. Also, the participants will have an immediate experience and exploration of this phenomena.



I am a Psychotherapist – I want to be a Psychotherapist

Jovanovska Stojanovska Mirjana

I am a Psychotherapist - I want to be a Psychotherapist Goal - The purpose of this workshop is to increase the awareness of the internal processes - the experience of yourself as a psychotherapist Learning outcomes - Increasing awareness of their own processes will increase the sensitivity of the client's processes and processes during therapy, the awareness of the way in which the therapeutic field is built, will influence acceptance of the responsibility of the therapist in building a therapeutic relationship with the client, the process and the success of psychotherapy. Workshop content - Sociometry, theoretical introduction, specially designed supervisory exercises, feedback Course of the workshop- 15 min. The workshop will start with sociometry -To encourage group cohesion and 10 min. followed by a short theoretical introduction that will activate cognitive functions and give them theoretical framework and information about what happens in the exercise. 1 hour.
Emotional activation - will include internal experiences that will be a good requirement for learning the goals of the workshop. The exercises will bring them into contact with their own ideas "What does it mean to be a psychotherapist?"



Understanding the beliefs and delusions of love in a partner's dynamics

Jovanović Dušanka
Krivacic Marija

Understanding the beliefs and delusions of love in a partner's dynamics Working with a couple, the therapist encounters various beliefs about love and loyalty. These beliefs are a powerful, deep and often unconscious search of a being for the kindred spirit. They are supported by early experience and the dynamics of primary relationships in the family. In partner crises, these beliefs often become painful illusions that need to be redefined or abandoned, thus enabling personal and partner growth. The aim of the workshop is to assist therapists in understanding the background of beliefs and delusions about love, how they arise and how they affect both connectedness and crises in partner relationships. Through experiential exercises we reach the context in which early beliefs are created, i.e. introjects and projections that are brought into a partner relationship. Also, exercises will enable participants to understand how these mechanisms build transfer processes and participate in deepening the partner relationship crisis. Our expectation is that experience gained at this workshop will support therapists to further explore the background of personal experiences of partners in which beliefs and mistakes about love have been created.



Role play as a method in Gestalt therapy with children

Madzevska Natasa

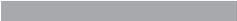
Children are much better at expressing thoughts and feelings through play, than verbally. Through play the children are revealing the unconscious conflicts through projection and symbolization. The therapist uses toys (dolls, animals, etc.) and role play in order for the children to learn new coping skills. The therapist has direct and indirect methods he can use. In work with children, play therapy can be used in addressing traumatic events in the past or addressing anticipation of future stressful events like hospitalization for example, so the anxiety level can be reduced. There are different methods and techniques for emotional relief like blowing and destroying soap bubbles or balloons for example. The fun in engaging in play therapy helps to lift up the spirit and enhance the feeling of wellbeing. Socially unacceptable manifestations of feelings of aggression are channeled into socially acceptable play like sports, football, tennis, etc. It is a known fact that interaction through play supports the bond and positive emotional relation between parent and child. Through play the child builds his capacity for empathy and gains new perspectives for insights of the events. Play therapy gives the children unlimited possibilities for creation, which in turn gives them a sense of competence and efficiency, and a unique feeling of power and being in control. In play therapy children are stimulated to function on an advanced level of creative thinking, giving them the opportunity to correct through fantasy what they are missing in real life, so the sick child can be healthy in play, the poor one rich, and the weak one strong. In this process they get instant gratification of their wishes. In play therapy they often shift between roles and so they build their capacity for reality testing. Through using toys and role play the children are acquiring adaptive behaviors. It is very important for adults to learn how to play with their children, because it facilitates their communication and creates a relational bond.



On becoming a good psychotherapist; how good do we have to be?

*Mesic Margareta
Medic Alan*

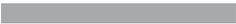
Carl Rogers said: „There is something I do before we start the session. I let myself know that I am enough. Not perfect. But that I am a human, and that is enough. There is nothing this man can say or do or feel that I can't feel inside myself. I can be with him.“ During the education for psychotherapist and afterwards, there are so many things that psychotherapists need to be able, need to handle, need to master. And throughout this professional development, one can hear very often doubts among students and psychotherapists about their goodness. We intend to focus on exploring goodness among participants and our expectations regarding being a good therapist. We intend to focus on our own good experiences in psychotherapy and how we interpret them. We intend to explore shame as a sense of being judged by someone else. We intend to (re)examine meanings about these issues that we have created and share them with our peers during the workshop. We intend to heighten our awareness about our own goodness and heighten our capacity to distinguish being good and being perfect. We intend to reflect how this issues influence our practicing in gestalt therapy. This workshop includes an experiment, dialogue, working in group and pairs that raises an awareness about being good and being perfect psychotherapist.



Becoming a group psychotherapist – The benefits of being a part of a psychotherapy group

*Mihajlovska Pavlina
Stojkoska Vasilevska Marija*

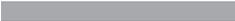
Gestalt theory teaches us that the group as a whole is greater than the sum of its parts, it is a new quality that can enrich the personal growth of every member individually. What happens when we work in group? How does the group process effect the individual process? What is the dynamics when having two therapists in one group? We will try to explore these questions through theory and practice in this workshop. We will look for answers in the figure/ground formation of the group, and try to become aware of the richness of the context of the group. Every psychotherapy is a process of drawing out information from the unconscious into consciousness. When a group is present it has its own context and background of unconscious information that can be relevant to the individual process. This background is consisted of the individual backgrounds of every member, but also of the collective background of the group, so there are many layers of potentially relevant information that can be explored when working individually in a group.



Working with Anger in Gestalt Therapy

Savic Zvijezdana
Savic Slavisa

Working with Anger in Gestalt Therapy Anger is one of basic and most powerful Human feelings. Most of people don't like to feel anger and sometimes don't know how to handle with this feeling. This natural part of Human experiences is very powerful, but can be very useful also. If we want to be complete (Gestalt) Human Beings it is important to limit all our feelings in some moments. We can say that is time for every feeling: 1. Time for Anger 2. Time for Sadness 3. Time to be Scared 4. Time to feel Love and Happiness Like every other natural feeling, Anger is also important and can be useful for us. We can't heal other person if we don't give space and be in contact with every emotion. During this workshop participants will meet with other side of Anger (through Gestalt Techniques) and how they can benefit from this emotional energy in everyday life.

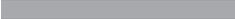


Self-care practices in becoming resilient psychotherapist

Zivanovic Radmila

When we work with our clients, even we often borrow our self to them as a safe-guarding west, we tend to forget the true value and health of our Self and our therapeutic Self. We give ourselves, but often we do not get ourselves back. In a time of expansion of mental health care and service, our carrying and nurturing profession is in great need of self-care practices so it can thrive and even develop to its fullest. This workshop is about becoming aware, sensitized, trying out and performing our self-care rituals, sometimes hidden in the unknown of our therapeutic self-quest. The process of this workshop will bring you the possibility for exploration and revival of self-care practices in relation to Self and to Others. Through an active and engaging experimentation, from embodied sensations to outward movements and from visual metaphors to embodied ones we will try to awaken our feeling of our own Self. I invite your curiosity as well as your desire to explore, contact and connect in this process, because we are all aboard on this burdened boat of responsibilities driving in an open sea, and at times, under very unsecured weather conditions.

This workshop will be realized with max. 25 participants. It will involve body work and embodied practices.



Gestalt psychotherapist should take place as significant support to regular medical procedures

Ćirković Olivera

There are numerous studies, published all over the world, that support the importance of applying psychotherapeutic support in process of medical treatment of cancer patients. Nevertheless, we might find just a few researches or papers that recommend or describe the most appropriate psychotherapeutic style, and even more rare recommend or describe techniques and methods that are most appropriate as support to cancer patients (regardless the stage of the disease). Similar situation is with gestalt therapy as measure of support to medical treatments. As gestalt therapy does not provide (describe) a series of set goals for the therapeutic application, this workshop would provide therapists support to stay in the created field therapist-patients, strengthen patient's awareness and promote unique way for every single patient for establishing personal balance (psycho, spiritual and body). The methods of gestalt implementation in psychotherapeutic work might (roughly) be divided into four main stages, according to the patient's phase of disease that would be presented through this workshop. Gestalt therapy significantly supports regular medical procedures and should be practiced in all stages of the disease and implemented in regular medical activities with the indicated patients at certain stages of the disease, either individually or in a group.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

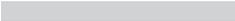




Resilience under focus: developing a conceptual map to aid strength-based clinical interventions

Agius Audrey

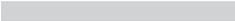
The topic of human beings' potential for resilience is one of the most important themes in the field of clinical practice, where we need some maps to guide us support clients to reorient their priorities in order to lead fuller and more meaningful lives. It is never too late for transformation and growth, and the good news is that this process can be supported and learnt. With this paper, we are pointing on resilience as the ability of individuals and communities to 'bounce forward' and transform despite significant stress and adversity. Resilience however is a complex and multifaceted concept that is as useful as it is paradoxical. By understanding the factors that promote resilience and creative adjustment we can 'operationalize' resilience into psychotherapeutic principles and specific techniques, thus developing a framework for clinical intervention that is strength-based. In order to use this concept therapeutically it is important to identify specific global and local risk factors and how these interact with protective factors over time. The latter can be grouped as constituting of individual, family and community factors that are also field dependent. The challenge for epidemiological research remains on how to 'quantify' and 'measure' resilience and to discover how the risk and protective factors work at the proximal level. Both quantitative and qualitative research in the area are needed to build bridges between clinicians, researchers and policy makers, creating opportunities for a variety of potential applications.



Look like a Lamb, Fight like a Wolf

Axiak Rosalba Maria

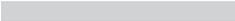
Gestalt therapy has always seen aggression in a positive light and as a necessary part of the individual interaction with the environment. The theme was developed by Fritz and Laura Perls wherein they saw aggression as an instinctual force necessary for active assimilation of the external world, in order to avoid introjections. The aim of this paper is to review literature and research on the phenomenon of aggression. It will link the process of biting, chewing and digesting foods, to the ability to do the same with intellectual foods to deconstruct and reconstruct reality. This paper also puts forward the idea how this positive and aggressive force is important for survival and for social interaction, allowing the individual to actively reach out for what, in the environment, can satisfy its needs. Throughout life, the individual can live like a lamb peacefully but when necessary it has to go for what it needs with the force and direction of a wolf. Finally, this paper concludes by explaining that if the destructive tendency remains unaddressed, it is sublimated and would emerge in other dysfunctional ways developing an unfinished Gestalt. This, together with other unmet needs and expectations, might turn the aggression into self-destructive impulses or violence towards others.



What the Axe Forgets, the Tree Remembers – The Manifestation of Trauma through the Experience of Aggression from the Psychotherapeutic Paradigm

Baldwin Romina

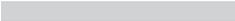
This paper is researching aggression and trauma from an Integrative and Gestalt psychotherapeutic paradigm. The question being put forward is the idea that trauma may manifest itself through aggressive behavior towards self or others. The literature review reveals that the traumatic experience, especially adverse childhood experience may be manifested through aggression and violence towards the self and others. Trauma occurs when both internal and external resources are inadequate to cope with an external threat, so as a result the brain is unable to process the traumatic event. To a great extent, trauma responses can be understood as normal reactions to abnormal stress. The research would look at the total context, especially the interpersonal relations and how the participant's process has developed over time. These people have developed frictions at the contact boundary, with resulting frustration, tensions and ensuing aggression. Through Integrative and Gestalt perspective the client can be invited to explore emotions and to give insight and understanding. In particular, the Gestalt perspective's field-sensitive, dialogic, phenomenological and experiential practice is found to be a highly suitable approach to comprehend traumatized individuals and aggression.



The monster within all of us From Destruction to Creation: The Function of Anger in Adolescence

Borg Elena

Anger is multifaceted. It can serve as the basis for destruction, cruelty and revenge, as well as a catalyst for reform and to provide the needed change. Writing from a Gestalt psychotherapy paradigm, anger will be studied as a function of the organism-environment field phenomenon, serving as a creative adjustment to the individual's way to connect to the unmet needs that have triggered this reaction. The aim of this paper is to review literature and research about the phenomenon of anger with particular emphasis on its' function in adolescence. Emphasis is placed on the impact that this powerful emotion has during this developmental phase, and how such emotion is manifested in destruction and creation. This paper will also explain on how the angry adolescent can present various challenges in therapy and within other environments contextualized within Maltese society. Finally, the paper turns to the challenges posed in the treatment of these youngsters whilst going through this phase.



Experience of becoming a Gestalt Psychotherapist and developing psychotherapeutic competencies

Bratina Sanja

This study was designed to examine how gestalt therapists understand and experience the process of acquiring and developing psychotherapy competences and the persona of psychotherapist. It is a qualitative, phenomenological research, in line with this study goal. Fundamental questions were: "How familiar you are with the topic of psychotherapeutic competencies? How the journey towards persona of psychotherapist looks like from your personal experience? What is really essential in the process of acquiring and developing psychotherapeutic competencies considering your personal experiences?"

The sample was suitable. The research was carried out in three already existing supervision groups of between 8 and 11 members that were used as focus groups. There were a total of 27 respondents, 8 students of final, fourth year of education in psychotherapy and 19 graduated psychotherapist.

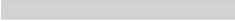
Data were analyzed by thematic analyses method. The initial results identified that participants experience and understand this process as a transforming one, with different phases of transformation. Group and individual psychotherapy were recognized as the main factor of change and precondition for the impact of supervision. Presence, inclusion, commitment to the dialogue and non-exploitation were found to be essential change generators. The results are in line with the spirit of humanistic, existential psychotherapies and with the results of existing researches.



The spiritual ground of Gestalt psychotherapy

Bugeja Therese

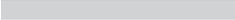
Over the years, there has been a renewed interest to integrate spirituality in therapeutic contexts. This paper provides an overview of the connections between a Gestalt approach and spirituality. The literature highlights the importance for gestalt therapy to take account for both western spirituality (relationship with a personal deity and disciplines that organize such a relationship) and eastern spirituality (processes of life that attend to the qualitative and subjective experiential aspects of one's living). Together, eastern thought and western spirituality provide an overall ground for a more complete spiritual gestalt. As therapists, we may be intrigued as how spirituality can be facilitated for clients to become aware of their own spirituality. Psychotherapy can be seen as a spiritual process in itself, that the two are intricately linked when seeing a person as a whole being; mind, body, heart and soul. Aspects of relating are not only intra-psychic and interpersonal, they are transcendent too. Spirituality is a valid dimension since it may be intricately connected to clients' issues and the reason they come to therapy.



Reflections on love from a Gestalt perspective

Camilleri Antony

In this paper, the author reflected upon 'love' as the co-created experience and phenomenon that transforms the individual at the contact boundary in 'between' the environment/organism field. The literature review discussed the phenomena of love from Gestalt Epistemology and pointed on important elements at the boundary in the formation of love and the awareness that may affect love. Love is key to identity formation and to the expansion of boundaries in the growth of 'self', where the original identity organizes the field for a newer identity to emerge, that of 'in love'. Through a phenomenological ground, the author reflected, on the ways Love is altered and how love is not an experience of the individual but of the relationship at the contact-boundary in between. At such 'loss of self,' the author reflects on 'fertile-void' and how the emerging 'figure', and phenomenological input can serve as information on the 'ground of love'. Furthermore, the relational aspect in a therapeutic setting is a 'reparative response' for the client to deal with love as love on itself is not enough.



Reflections of victims of crime in criminal justice: A holistic approach and Gestalt psychotherapy perspective

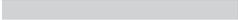
Caruana Katya

The provision of psychotherapeutic support offered to crime victims in criminal justice systems is of fundamental importance. As a support system, psychotherapeutic support not only facilitates the lives of victims in their journey along the criminal and judicial process as such but may also hopefully enable the client to work through the trauma suffered in the therapeutic relationship. That space could offer the client support needed in that respect whilst facilitating a transition from the identification with a victim towards a survivor's and a thriver's sense of self, wherein chances of getting stuck in the victim sense of self can become alleviated.

The paper highlights the importance of psychotherapeutic support in criminal justice and suggests ways forward in the system by continuing to shift the importance solely from legal and/or paralegal services into more holistic approaches with the inclusion of psychotherapy. In contemporary debates in conjoined aspects of justice and Gestalt Psychotherapy, restorative justice, as an example may become one such approach wherein there is a focus on the possible rehabilitation of offenders through reconciliation with victims, and where at the final stages of therapy, victim and perpetrator are able and feel empowered to meet each other with the purpose of reconciling.

The key role that the provision of psychotherapy has for crime victims is demonstrated by the hopeful transgression from identification with the victim sense of self, that is typically identified with at the first point of contact with authorities towards a newly identified with sense of self "much like a snake which sheds its skin only to reappear in an ever new Gestalt, skilfully adjusted to the new environment" (Grell, Scribner & Scribner, 2002).

The main ideas occurring in this paper shall be explained and delivered in Gestalt Psychotherapy concepts in a poster presentation.



The power of presence: experiences from therapy with a client suffering from a neurological condition

Falzon Rose

Having clients who are suffering from a chronic and/or progressive medical illness is a recurrent experience encountered in therapy. A chronic physiological condition may elude cure and is a complex and multi-faceted experience encompassing incessant, intense and pervasive symptoms. The extensive impact on the day to day functioning of a client's life undergoing such an experience underscores the important role of a psychotherapist whose relational presence is powerful in the therapeutic process. This reflexive article encompasses aspects from Gary's (pseudonym) three-year therapeutic journey, considering interventions and ways of being that helped and hindered. Within the medical model mostly the behavioural and cognitive behavioural approaches are mentioned. In this article, the author considers the benefits of Gestalt therapy, where the focus is not to eliminate the problematic multi-layered facets emerging from the illness, but in staying in steadfast contact, be present in the here and now of the figure emerging and process the existential repositioning in one's life. The author envisages that though this is an idiosyncratic case, the effectiveness of psychotherapeutic interventions specifically applied to this client may be extrapolated and applied to other clients with other physiological conditions.

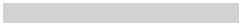


Two Forms of Presence: A Comparative Study of Gestalt and Salesian Models

Formosa Paul

Presence has a healing, restorative and formative significance both in a therapeutic and in an educational relationship. However, there are various types of presence. While respecting the elements that are specific to psychotherapy and to education, yet there is also common ground. An educator can be a therapist in his own right through the type of presence he or she brings in relationships in the field. In my experience as a Gestalt therapist and a Salesian educator, I have experienced both the complementarity as well as the dichotomy between the two approaches. This work seeks a better understanding of the relationship that exists between the Gestalt and the Salesian methods and proposes new insights into how a Gestalt-Salesian synthesis can emerge through the engagement of therapeutic and educative modes of presence.

This study will adopt a qualitative research design. The two contexts of Gestalt Psychotherapy and the Salesian Educational Experience will be explored through a literature review and focus groups. Following a phenomenological approach, this study will seek to understand meaning in events and in human interactions within a context that is important to the interpretation of data. Authors from different modalities of psychotherapy, with particular emphasis on Gestalt, have written about relationships bringing to the foreground different approaches to the idea of presence. Authors from the Salesian perspective have also written how Saint John Bosco in the 19th Century lived an experience of education and mentorship where traces of these concepts can be observed as a pre-echo.



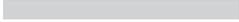
Aesthetic relational contact, intersubjectivity, sensing the soul

Galea Rose

Aesthetic contact is a concept which describes 'what is sensed, felt, perceived and experienced' as emerging at the contact boundary during the session. The aim of this paper is to explore the concept of aesthetic contact in Gestalt Relational Psychotherapy. It will attempt to describe the concepts related to aesthetic contact through what is felt, sensed and perceived at the contact boundary.

Gestalt therapy has been described as a psychotherapy that focuses carefully on what happens in the here-and-now of the process, which includes the sensing, feeling and perceiving. Through the exploration of the aesthetic concepts, the paper will try to explore recent trends in Gestalt therapy that focus on the aesthetic contact. Additionally, the paper will try to attempt to bring forth understandings from the scientific perspective of neurobiology and mirror neurones, and how these can inform us on the similarities between the concepts of aesthetic contact and intersubjectivity.

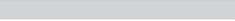
Being present at the contact boundary through aesthetic contact has also been described as working with the soul, which was defined by several authors as an actual sensory experience that almost everyone can identify with, without difficulty. The paper, will highlight similarities between aesthetic relational concepts as understood through Gestalt therapy theory, Intersubjectivity theory, and sensing the soul in psychotherapy.



The socio-cultural evolution of Gestalt psychotherapy with a particular focus on Malta

Gonzi Mikela

This literature review seeks to present the complex evolution of gestalt psychotherapy throughout the twentieth century. The paper aims to identify socio-historical factors that deeply contributed to whom we have become today as gestalt psychotherapists and to what gestalt psychotherapy has evolved into, with a particular focus on the Maltese context. From a social-constructivist epistemological positioning and a phenomenological conceptual framework, this study triangulates an analysis of existing literature about the history and development of gestalt psychotherapy with ethnographic fieldwork from my positioning as a research practitioner in the field. Several pioneers in the field are acknowledged, gestalt psychotherapy training institutions are mentioned and elicited themes are presented and discussed in relation to our wider macro processes of becoming a psychotherapist. Gaps in available literature are highlighted. Findings are tied together, generating questions that place this research as a fertile ground for further studies that may be explored through the use of other methodologies.



Recognition of shame in partner relationship

Ilic Dragana

The aim of the research was to investigate recognition of experience and dynamic of shame in couple relationship. How present is shame, do partners recognize it in their relationship, what can be trigger for shame, experience of shame, which strategies can be used as defense from shame, which consequences it can leave in a partnership. Also, the aim of the work is to develop the capacity of therapists working with couples to increase the sensitivity and awareness of the topic of shame and its relational dynamics in the functioning of the couple. The sample consisted of 2 respondents, a married couple, about 50 years old, who had experience of working in couple therapy. Data were collected through an in-depth semi-structured interview. An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) method was used to provide an understanding of the individual experience of the phenomenon of shame. The analysis identifies potential reasons for not recognizing the shame we single out in the case of this couple: the complexity and hiddenness of this phenomenon, the intense experience of shame/shame attacks that make it impossible to identify the partner's shame, the presence of different shame defence which mask shame, the activated cycle of shame, presence of internalized shame, strong transgenerational introjects.



Experience of conflict in love relationships

Jovanović Dušanka

We know that the vitality of a couple arises from the energy of the conflict, and that the contact develops and supports growth and development of both the individuals and the couple through the conflict. The ability to shape and sustain the conflict's capacity and energy through a dialogic relationship enables the mutual comprehension of partners' diversity.

This is the reason why the process of raising partners' awareness of their co-creation in the conflict is one of the most complex and dynamic processes in couples' psychotherapy.

This paper presents a qualitative research "The experience of conflict in partnership" in which the Interpretative Phenomenological Method of Analysis was applied.

The sample comprised two heterosexual couples, aged between 28 and 31, who lived together for two years. The survey was realized through semi-structured interview. The aim of this research was to phenomenologically view and understand the personal and relational aspect of the experience of conflict in a partnership. The results of the research show how the process of self-organization manifests itself in supporting or not supporting the I-Thou position, how much the partner's awareness of the relational, co-created field is present, and the manifestation of the assimilation process of experience after the conflict. In addition, the survey revealed the beliefs and meanings by which respondents define the phenomenon of conflict, especially in relation to strife/argument and dialogue. The characteristics of the conflict that make up its positive and negative capacities are also considered. The results thus obtained are considered and recognized within the scope of contemporary theoretical considerations of the dynamics of a couple in conflict.



Infidelity in partner relationship From awareness to unravelling A female perspective

Krivacic Marija

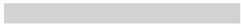
The object of this qualitative research was to obtain a phenomenological description of the individual experience of a person (female) who faced their partner's infidelity, with the recognition of periods / stages that can help in the understanding of the dynamics of the individual and of the couple, as well as in the structuring the therapeutic process. The sample consisted of one respondent, around 50 years old, a Gestalt therapist who underwent a complete process from facing to resolving the experience of infidelity by a spouse. The data were collected through a semi-structured interview enquiring the respondent to identify periods, i.e. steps that the process went through. The study also used data obtained during the zero phase of the research, performed in collaboration with a Gestalt therapist colleague. The method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) provided an understanding of the individual experience of the infidelity phenomenon. Using the method of grounded analysis a sequence of 5-7 periods of confrontation and coping with infidelity were identified: awareness and confrontation; fighting for a partner / family; "calm"; "storm"; "loss of romantic illusions"; solution; final unravelling. In addition, it has been observed that the dynamics of the process of confronting and dealing with infidelity has an unusual twist – consisting of periods of calm, storm, and loss of romantic illusions – which may be helpful in structuring the therapeutic process.



On Becoming an Adult

Nina Micovic

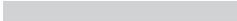
Every life phase and transition opens new questions and developmental changes on the biological, psychological, and social level. The early adult years are a complex and very intense phase of the life course that involve many role transitions and responsibilities. Today in many cultures are very noticeable changes in the phase that comes after adolescence and it seems that later young generations are taking longer time to develop identity of an adult. Many young adult feel that they are in a period of being in process of reaching adulthood but not there yet. In order to gain better understanding of these changes, Arnett (2000) proposed concept related to the transition to adulthood known as emerging adulthood that is defined and phenomenologically explained in this paper. Additionally, as transition markers to adulthood are no longer as clear and do not have constitutive power as they once had, through this paper is given an overview what emerging adults today believe makes a person an adult. There has been a profound change in how young people view meaning and value of becoming an adult.



When virtual invades reality: desensitized clients and the role of therapist

Micovic Tijana

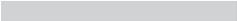
We live in the time where the virtual reality is all present and where we are immersed in our portable devices for the most part of the day. Recent data shows that the high school senior spends an average of more than two hours a day texting on their cell phones, about two hours a day on the Internet, around hour and a half on electronic gaming and about a half an hour on video chat (Twenge, 2017). Parents work long hours and have less time to commit to the relationship with their children, and even when they are at home they are immersed in their own devices and online applications. In such a trend, what is absent is the real embodied relationship between the child and the caregiver which is the basic support for the healthy development and growth. Often in our private practice we would see children, adolescents or adults who are incapable of having a meaningful relationship, who suffer of the affect dysregulation, anxiety and depression. The consequences of contentedness to flat screens and two-dimensional world of virtual reality are presented as well as the importance of the role and responsibility of the therapist in such a field.



Shame in training for Gestalt therapists – Trainer’s experience

Opacic Snezana

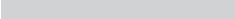
Shame is an inevitable companion to the learning process in training for Gestalt psychotherapists because the specific modes of experiential learning, as well as the demands for quality and excellence, make a suitable ground for generating shame among participants in this process. The purpose of this qualitative research is to contribute to a better understanding of how teachers recognize and deal with the experience of shame when it is being co-created in here and now relations with students. The convenience sampling was used in the research. Sample consisted of four graduated Gestalt therapists, aged between 46 and 63, who have years of experience working with students in training for Gestalt therapists and who participate in all educational segments. The data were collected through an in-depth semi-structured interview and processed through an interpretative phenomenological analysis method (IPA). The results of the research show that all four respondents know a lot about shame, have experienced it many times in relations during their work with students, and often recognize it in students when it appears, both explicitly and through defenses. However, they are often unaware of its presence in a moment of appearance in here and now in relation to students, but realize it subsequently, through their own defenses or through reactions and statements of others. The analysis identified two ways to handle co-created shame, which we called “functional” and “non-functional” handling, in relation to the implications they have on the relationship. The results obtained are consistent with existing theories on the phenomenon and dynamics of shame. Given that there is not enough research data on the subject of coping with shame in psychotherapy education, it would be useful to continue research on this topic.



Approaching trans-generational trauma in Gestalt psychotherapy

Parnis David

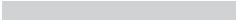
The project will discuss how specific people are gifted with 'feeling the field' and how through gestalt psychotherapy, they may 'restore the fullness of available contact, so a person can engage in his/her fullest way with what the world gives him.' This premise is based on the notion of Fritz Perls that human personality is 'embedded in, and related to, an environmental personal and social field'. It is indeed a Gestalt premise that every living person does not exist in isolation but 'situated in an environmental field ... [and] we consider the relatedness of the organism to its field the essence of psychology'. As Perls states, 'Foreground is in dynamic relationship to background [and] Background shapes foreground'.



What is the Gestalt Perspective on Resilience?

Peric Cathy

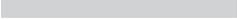
The concept of resilience has attracted considerable interest since the 1960's wherein researchers have sought to understand what resilience is, how it develops and functions within people and why some of us are more resilient than others. This interest has produced a plethora of articles within the social sciences and whilst it was possible to access research regarding the exploration of the various aspects of resilience and also in relation to other psychotherapeutic modalities, it proved to be a challenge to find research that directly linked Gestalt theory and practice to resilience. Within existing Gestalt literature there are some authors who describe elements that would appear to be related to resilience, however no direct connection is made to the concept. A review of the literature thus indicates that the Gestalt perspective on resilience has not yet been articulated and that this would be a useful future research endeavor.



Transpersonal relationship in Gestalt psychotherapy as a place of contact with one's own soul

Petrovic Jelena

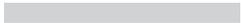
The concept of the soul has scarcely been written about, if at all, in professional literature. The word soul is in the very root of words psychology and psychotherapy. Although this signifies that we will be dealing with soul in both of these sciences, this term has been unduly left out in further development of both of them. Defining the soul itself has been demonstrated solely through religious aspects. What characterizes all endeavors to explain the concept of soul is that it is possible only through description of experience. It is impossible for it to be perceived sensually and therefore impossible to be measured or examined. The aim of the paper is to recognize similarities between the experience of contact in a transpersonal relationship and the experience of contact defined as the contact with the soul, by analyzing literature. By analyzing both experiences we have tried to connect them and to assume that transpersonal relationship represents the base for allowing contact with one's own soul. The method we are using in this paper is analyzing academic and professional literature, on the one hand, as well as literature that deals with examining spirituality and the concept of soul in a non-religious context, on the other hand. It is important for us to try to give our contribution to bringing back the concept of soul into the realm of science. The place that we recognize as the opportunity to do this is the transpersonal relationship of the carrier of a spiritual dimension in Gestalt psychotherapy. He represents the co-creation between a therapist and a client. It is described as a feeling of acceptance without fear. The place where the client is encouraged to be who he is, the place of healing.



One generation plants the trees another gets the shade

Pillow Gillian

The article, *One Generation Plants the Trees Another Gets the Shade*, explores the Gestalt psychotherapeutic theory of the self as an outcome of socio-cognitive and emotional development, at the contact boundary. Perls postulated that the 'self is contact.' Based on this premise, the quality of the primary attachment has a life-long impact on the child's developing sense of self. The aim of the research is to reveal the patterns through which the caregiver relates to the child, and how they are internalized by this child, influencing his sense of self and his perceived sense of others. This literature review explores the importance of creating a supportive and nurturing bond with the child, resulting in a child's strong emerging sense of self. If on the other hand, the caretaker establishes contact with the child in a dysfunctional way, the child will be more vulnerable to developing maladaptive personality pathologies and contact disturbances in adulthood. The literature review goes beyond linking adult psychopathology to early attachment difficulties. It provides a theoretical framework for understanding attachment from a Gestalt psychotherapy perspective and then uses this theoretical framework to discuss the etiology and treatment of adult disorders. It is only through the reparative aspect of therapy that the wounded self may be healed. Besser Van Der Kolk, claims that "indeed the parent-child connection is the most powerful mental health intervention known to mankind."



The influence of humor on the psychotherapeutic relationship from the perspective of the psychotherapist

Saljic Milenkovic Brankica

The literature and research from the past ten years, relating to the topic of the use of humor in psychotherapy in general, focuses more on the client experience rather than the therapist experience. There was more interest in influencing the outcome of the therapy and how the client perceived the therapist using humor, than concerned with the impact on the relationship and the therapist's personal experience. This qualitative research was conducted to see how the use of humor affects the relationship between the psychotherapist and the client but from the perspective of the psychotherapist. A semi-structured interview was conducted with three therapists. The data were analyzed by interpretative phenomenological analysis because it examines the research participants' experience from their perspective, which is precisely the aim of this research. Seeing how therapists perceive and feel that humor influences the relationship between them and clients. After the data has been processed, the results show many similarities in their experience. Examinees find humor to be welcomed at first encounters with clients, as part of a relaxing atmosphere and later as something that gives a sense of closeness and comes from the depth of contact. As the relationship between the client and the therapist develops, it becomes clearer that humor is also an intervention and that one should also be careful not to be hurtful. Provides a sense of involvement, togetherness and intimacy in the relationship. The significance of this research may also be that in the Gestalt literature and through education, other than explaining the defense mechanism known as deflection, humor and its use in therapy are not addressed as a separate topic, and it is very significant from both the client's and therapist's perspectives. The research leaves room to examine the experiences of male therapists as well as therapists of different modalities.



Influence of mother's psycho-physical condition on son with bipolar disorder

Stefanovic Filip

Aims: According to the new age, new life styles, mental health disorders, we, as a therapists with holistic approach, should to questioning ourselves on a daily basis how well we work with children and how much and proper we engage their parents as main support in children's recovery. Questions like "how well I did it" or "how much I did in name of good parenthood at all" or "could I have been better parent than" are the questions that appeared very often in psychotherapeutic work with mother of son with bipolar disorder. Due to the written above this report present qualitative research work with mother of 27 years old son with diagnose - bipolar disorder. The study focused to explore the following: How did mother explain her relationship with son; how a mother saw her place in her son's recovery; why did she blame herself for her son failures and what did look like her psycho-physical condition during this period.

Method: Semi-structured interview was carried out with mother whose son had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder in different periods of son's illness. Transcripts of the interviews were then analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Results: The analysis underlines three master themes. Themes were: "As I did more he became worse"; "What I did wrong?"; "Just made me sicker".

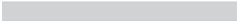
Conclusion: The results of the analysis are considered in light of existing theories and emotional and physical conditions of the mother through different phases of son's illness.



Gestalt therapist as cyber therapist

Stojanovic Mira

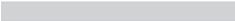
The aim of this work is to present the adequacy of the applicability of Gestalt therapy in a cyber-virtual relationship through a review of selected literature, which in contrast to the real setting, has its own specifics. The method used is the analysis of the reviewed literature published in the last 5 years. The analysis went the direction of answering questions of validity of therapy in cyber relations, as well as of the sustainability of diagnostics and theoretical concepts of Gestalt theory and practice, in this way, whether the application of Gestalt technique is possible and to what extent, as well as thoughts about the specificity of the relative relationship when the therapy is performed in this way. Based on the literature analysis, we conclude that the application of Gestalt psychotherapy in cyber relations is possible and that it can have the same quality and therapeutic effects as in a real setting, because basically it means meeting two human beings, even in these specific conditions, we believe has healing effect. A possible recommendation for further research is an attempt to respond to the ethical question that arises-whether by creative adaptation and by agreeing to this kind of work ,from the role of therapist, we participate in social alignment or ,adhering to our theories and methodologies in this adaptation ,we defend the humanitarian concept and the orientation of the Gestalt.



Subjective experience of the Relational field

Todorovic Bojana

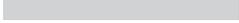
The client-therapist interaction takes place in a relational field. This field is consisted of the individual fields of the client and the therapist, but also of their co-creation. When a therapist understands and is aware of this field he can come up with an intervention and follow its outcomes. This co-created field has its own organization, characteristics and dynamics. These elements of the field are explored through the subjective experience of the participants in its creation. The aim of this research was a construction of an instrument for measuring this subjective experience of the relational field. Graduated gestalt therapists and therapists in supervision were volunteering to verbally associate on the experience of the relational field, and based on those associations semantic differential scales were created. This instrument will be used to measure, the changes in the experience of the relational field in pre-contact and post-contact in a group therapy setting.



On Becoming Gestalt psychotherapist from healing to self-actualization

Violetta van Vliet

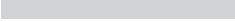
The greatest poets and writers of our civilization clearly pointed that we are perceiving through the mind mainly, that is far away for helping us as humans to be present in the here and now and enjoy the beauty of being who we are. Presence and living in the present support the process of “healing” and further the process of “being” first authentic human being and after that “becoming” psychotherapist. Through these processes we become able to be in contact with one’s inside and outside world, and to support development of the Creativity as the main human capacity of integration. The personal journey of the author is used as a line that connects the literature review with the real situation and the final product of that tuning. The founders of Gestalt Psychotherapy encouraged and inspired creative expression as developing awareness of one’s own process as well as one’s own potentiality-actualization (Perls et al., 1951; Perls 1982/1989).



The power of creativity in Gestalt therapy

Vassallo Caroline Maria

The focus of this paper was on the integration of artistic techniques within the field of Gestalt Therapy. From a humanistic and phenomenological framework, this paper focused on how these techniques can enhance mental well-being and therapeutic change. Through the exploration of past research, both from Gestalt Therapy and Art Therapy literature, art can be viewed either as a vehicle towards verbalization or as an entity on its own. During Art therapy, a piece of art is created however the focus and subsequent in depth exploration is on the creative process in itself, within the therapeutic relationship. During this exploration, art is used as the ground to facilitate and enhance the expression of individuals' feelings in therapy. Through this manner art can be used in Gestalt therapy to help an individual become aware of his unconscious processes in order to creatively adjust to the present moment. Whilst tapping on the emotional processes, the client can experience direct, reality-based and immediate responses. Despite these arguments, one can say that both Gestalt Therapy and Art therapy focus on the therapeutic process that is created in between the therapist and client.



Existential loneliness in online world – connection without contact

Vesic Dunja

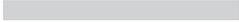
Postmodernism is mostly about online communication which has tendency to connect world and eliminate borders. Paradoxically, society today reflects dynamics of lonely people sitting together and looking in their smart phones.

This tendency leads us to the place of increasing need for contact, but in controlled conditions, without spontaneity and risk that contact contains. Increasing anxiety and panic attacks, with their unsupported background, are closely related to disconnection and loneliness in the world which has to be “connected” more than ever.

By all these changes, we are called to give answers which refer to quality of the contact in online world and disembodiment relations. We have to point out the message of postmodern society and their creative adaptation in order to give the best of us, as Gestalt psychotherapists.

Gestalt therapist experience shows that using online communication mediums supports lack of pre-contact and has huge impact on weak contact and post-contact, and we can see consequences very often today, through mentioned symptoms (anxiety and panic attacks).

My interest is to explore contemporary tendencies of lacking pre-contact in many aspects of postmodern world and their manifestations reflected in instant satisfactions without embodiment and background support.



Supervision role in the process of becoming Gestalt psychotherapist

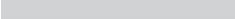
Tasevska Atina

The process of quality research is interesting and it's a moment of enjoyment that is filled with challenges. This engagement can be identified with the research of the unmarked territory whose way is unsecure and the terrain itself is unpredictable.

This research will find out the role of the supervision during the process of becoming a Gestalt psychotherapist. It's important to say that the supervision is not only needed in the process of becoming a Gestalt psychotherapist. It's also needed to preserve the psychotherapist's capacity, develop skills, motivation, and promote him / her as a basis for continuous professional and personal development, which this profession implies.

The purpose of this study is to see how supervision influences the process of becoming a Gestalt psychotherapist. The research is conducted on a sample that is convenient and consists of a graduate Gestalt psychotherapist and one Gestalt therapist under supervision in the process of education. For the purpose of this research, the research method semi-structured interview is used, and the data processing was done through the content analysis method used to study the content.

The results of this study show that supervision is very important in the process of becoming a psychotherapist. Supervision is the process of receiving invaluable support and acceptance with respect and understanding. This allows the psychotherapist to focus on the role of combating fear of error and better understanding of his or her position in working with clients.

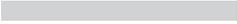


What do we mean when we talk about spirituality – Gestalt therapy discourse

Božović Ljiljana

Throughout Gestalt Therapy literature one can find different views of spirituality, sometimes accompanied by linguistic incongruities, or acknowledgment that it is something “difficult to comprehend” or “difficult to express”, especially in academic language. Inspired by that, this qualitative research was designed with the main goal of exploring what Gestalt psychotherapists mean by the term spirituality. What aspects of the Gestalt therapeutic relationship do they see as spiritual?

The study was conducted during July 2019, in a focus group consisted of seven Gestalt therapists. A semi-structured interview was used as a method of data collection, and the survey itself lasted for about two hours. Foucauldian discourse analysis(FDA) was used to analyze the data, with six stages in discourse analysis, recommended by Karla Willig (Willig, 2016). The initial findings of the study point to a number of discursive constructions, that is, various references to spirituality. Based on that, three major broader discourses are identified in understanding spirituality - “anti-dogmatic”, “relational” and “transpersonal”. Some of the implications that these constructs have on practice are recognized too. For example, the anti - dogmatic discourse that is embedded in foundations of philosophy of Gestalt therapy may at the same time influence on a therapist’s decreased interest in spiritual topics, if we associate spirituality solely with institutional religiosity. Discursive constructions that position spirituality as a special kind of relationship (I-Thou), or an appreciation for the existence of something greater than our human existences, increase the awareness and openness of Gestalt therapists for the importance of spirituality in their lives and the lives of their clients.



Sufism and Therapy Experiences

Selmanovic Podrug Sanela

There are many therapists explaining that therapy should take into consideration the effects of spirituality to individual. Researches or scientific works on connecting Sufism and Gestalt therapy are rare. Person who starts its psychological development by experiencing and respecting postulates from Sufism goes through significant and long-term process which ends among other results with awareness and change. Also, Gestalt therapy is comprehensive and requiring process which aims awareness and personal development, in general.

The purpose of this qualitative research is to understand phenomenological explanation of Sufism and Gestalt therapy experience of the person. Sample is consisted of 35year old female who has been involved in both processes, Sufism and Gestalt therapy for several years. Semi structured interview was used for data collection and grounded theory method was used for data analysing. Results show significance of relationship, contact, trust, confidence in relationships with educators and with spirituality in both approaches of personal development.



