

A proposal for changing the training standards by Daan van Baalen - to be discussed at the AGM in Berlin, September 2010

The introduction of the training standards for the EAGT reads as follows:

“The creation of minimum Training Standards for Gestalt therapy must be seen against the background of the professionalization of psychotherapy across Europe, specifically the recent dramatic increase in the number of local, national, and European organizations for psychotherapy concerned with establishing standards of training and ethical practice.

The credibility of Gestalt therapy as a competent and ethical approach to the healing of human suffering and to personality development requires similar attention to be given to the establishment of high standards of training and ethical practice.

The EAGT after intensive research and consultation has consented to minimal criteria for training in Gestalt therapy in order to accommodate the wide diversity of social and cultural conditions in Europe in which Gestalt therapy is being developed.”

The standards mentioned above were formulated by our late colleague Daan van Praag and were approved at the AGM in Prague 2003. Daan’s intention was to formulate standards in terms of study-outcome and assessment.

He saw the standards formulated in hours, as a step in a developmental process, not as something final. Experience with the new standards could lead to more accurate ones, which in the future could measure quality not in training hours, but in assessment and study-outcome.

Because of his untimely death he could not fulfill his plan for the further development of standards.

In his excellent *“provisional”* (my italics) standards, left the length of a training hour open. The AGM in Prague 2003, however, voted for 60-minute hours. At the time of the AGM in 2003, when I was a board member, I admit, I was not aware of that we voted for 60-minute hours, taking for granted the tradition of 45-minute hours. I refer to the traditions in psychoanalysis where a therapy hour is 50 minutes and the standards of the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP) where an hour is 45 minutes, and at last the University tradition in Europe, a teaching hour is counted as 45 minutes.

The issue of 45/60 minutes was again indirectly brought up at the Belgrade AGM where group and individual supervision hours were agreed upon as equal. It was also agreed that the training institutes themselves decide what to choose. However, in the standards published afterwards on EAGT’s website, individual supervision hours are measured in 45 minutes and group supervision hours in 60 minutes.

I want the issue of 45/60 minutes to be discussed at the AGM meeting of EAGT in Berlin, and therefore suggest the following:

1. The EAGT temporarily follows the tradition for standards measured in hours such as the standards of EAP and universities, and count one hour as 45 minutes both in training, supervision and therapy.
2. The standards will in the future be as in other higher educations - not measured in hours but in outcome. Assessment of the outcome and goal - will be assessed by clinical exams.

This is already in practice for Gestalt Practitioners in Organizations (GPO), decided upon at the AGM in London, 2005, and also at the Norwegian Gestalt Institute.
The training given by NGI is accredited by the University and College system in Norway with credit points, besides that of the EAGT, EAP as EAP Training Institute (TI).