

A bridge between 'Being' and 'Doing'
in the practice of
Gestalt in Organisations:
a cultural perspective

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- Keynote speech as a **celebration** of the growth of GPO within EAGT
- Keynote speech as a **dialogue** : our commonalities and differences

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Emerging theme in our dialogue :

- Tension between « doing » and « being »
 - The ART of a Gestalt-practitioner

Two lenses :

- From an organisational perspective
 - From an individual perspective

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- Knowledge and short-term

versus

- Co-creation, phenomenological enquiry,
authentic presence, situation

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- From an organisational perspective :

grounding our discussion
in a model of organisational functioning

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A model emerging from Gestalt's view of Self:

- Self/Change is not a 'thing' but a process
- Self in Gestalt is fluid and constantly changing according to the situation in which it finds itself - the 'field' conditions.
- Theory of Self (id, ego and personality functions) can apply to groups and organisations.

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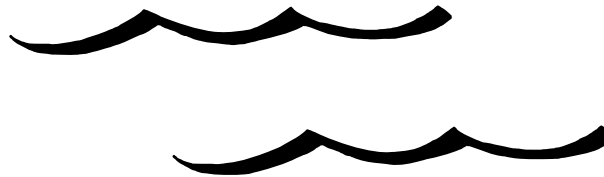
The Wave Metaphor, a model of organisational functioning *

Above the surface,
visible, what we say
we do - The Resulting
Action



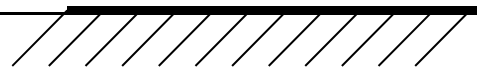
Wave as Ego

Less visible,
unacknowledged
dynamics, connected to
local currents and flows



Sea depth as Id

Sedimented but changing
slowly with time,
The culture and narrative



Seabed as Personality

* Chidiac, M-A. (2013), "An organisational change approach based on Gestalt psychotherapy theory and practice".
Journal of Organizational Change Management, Vol. 26 No.2, pp.458-474

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- From an individual perspective :
Apparent **dichotomy** for a practitioner
 - Dynamics in therapy : « being »
 - Dynamics in organisations : « doing »

« *or* » versus « *and* »

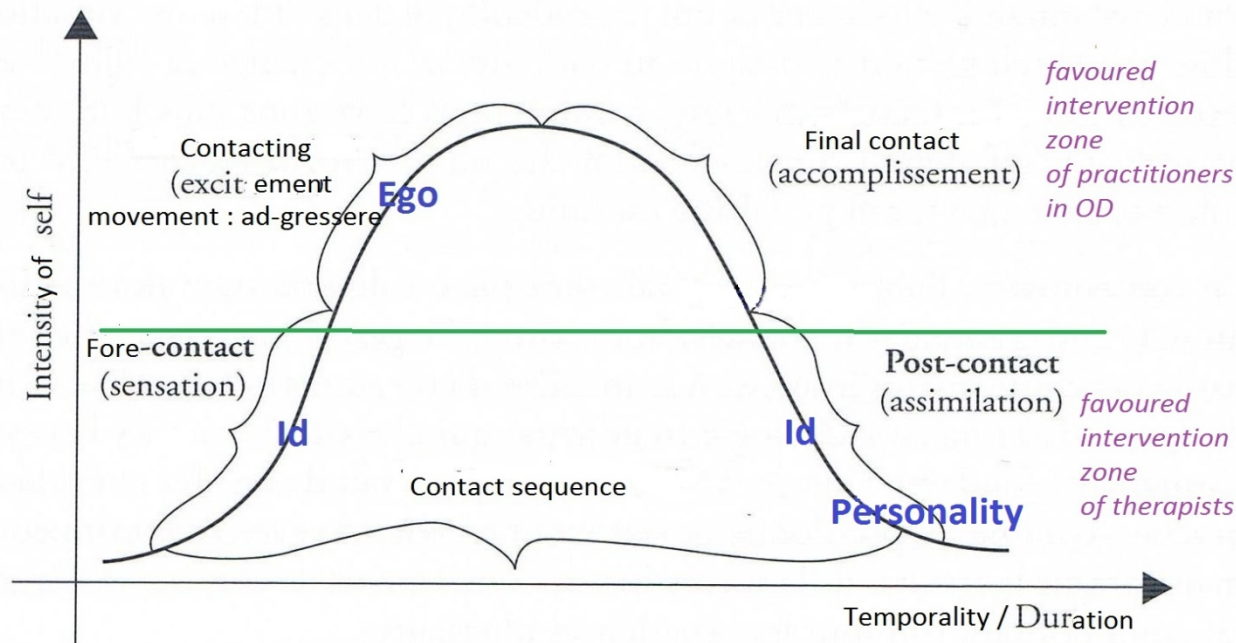
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- From an individual perspective :

the « and » route :
contribution and power of Gestalt
as theory, method and ethic

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The contact sequence, theory and method



The four phases of the contact sequence

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The contribution and power of Gestalt
as an **ethical** stance :

- Engagement at the contact boundary
- Liberty, consciousness, choice, « co- »
- A methodology to support thought / thinking

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“ (But) is excitement life? Might the overemphasis that our culture places on excitement be a flight from some form of cultural deadness? What is real life? What sustains genuine vitality in the soul? (...)”

“ I think the life of the soul, therefore, does require that the ideals that sustain us in mature life have some ethical component in them, (...) some way of recognizing that we are social beings, rational beings, and, as Marx says, species beings. **The most alive soul is an ethical soul.** (...)”

John H.Riker, “The Life of the Soul: An Essay in Ecological Thinking”

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Experiential Exercise

Groups of 4/5 ; 10 minutes total

1. what is your felt sense of the **internal** dynamics of this community... and what are the **external** influences you are aware of? [Id function]
2. what is the **ground**: history, culture, myths, values... of the organisation? [Personality function]
3. How do the two former **mobilise** within you in terms of movement, in terms of action-taking ? [Ego function]