

Editor's Note

In EAGT we see a number of "fiery spirits" that continuously work for the knowledge and acknowledgement of Gestalt therapy throughout Europe and beyond. Much of this work is maintained in silence and there is often a long way from the tasks done until its effects become known.

This kind of work is called for longterm patience, collaboration and a strong conviction that the impact of Gestalt therapy in psychotherapy, treatment, consulting etc, has something essential to offer.

You now hold the 6th issue of EAGT Newsletter in your hands and it is an expression of the board's willingness to make contact with, and get response from, you as a member.

The newsletter is also an attempt to make the work of the board and other members a bit less "silent" – and more visible – where your feedback is an important part of the ground from which the board members direct their work.

Of course, the coming EAGT Conference in Prague is also a forum for contact and dialogue, where you may give a voice to what you think about the organisation.

Welcome to issue #6!

Lars Berg
Editor

The President's Column

An Exploration of Human Conflict

Today is March 15th 2004, just four days after the terrible bombing in Madrid on March 11th, which so far has cost the lives of 200 human beings with over a further 1,000 injured. While each one of us suffers and is diminished by this horrific act of malicious violence, I imagine I speak for us all in offering our deepest sympathy and profound sadness to the friends and families of all those who have died or been maimed in body and soul, by this awful event.

Sadly I recall that the previous issue of the Newsletter was written against the backdrop of my country being engaged in a war in Iraq that continues still and is provoking deep division within the UK and has torn some families apart.

Those of us who participated in the previous gestalt conference in Stockholm will all too painfully recall September 11th. The bombing of the twin towers in New York deeply impacted the conference, leaving us shocked and bewildered and angry and frightened. September 11th continues to resonate in our minds and hearts as we struggle to make sense of such dreadful and barbaric action.

What sense, if any, can we make of the human capacity to such appalling behaviour? What can we, as individuals and as a professional community, contribute to the contemporary 'bankruptcy' of ideas in terms of resolving human conflict through peaceful means? Indeed is talk of peaceful resolution simply romantic nonsense or do we fail to commit to peace because it is too demanding and costly?

And what of the myriad forms of violence, intentional and unintentional, that are committed each day in the 'war zone'

of the home? Domestic violence between partners, toward children, the sick and elderly? Violence toward ethnic minorities, toward those of a different sexual orientation and seemingly toward any person or group who are seen to be 'different'?

The community of psychotherapy, which one might hope could offer a model of healing has instead a tragic history of splits and divisions with subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, violence in the form of elitism and restrictive practice that many experience as oppressive and diminishing.

In my opinion it is a valid criticism of psychotherapy that it pursues too narrow a focus on the therapy room, with consequent blindness to the cultural context within which therapists and clients live and work, love and despair, struggle and dream.

How does gestalt conceptualise the existence and nature of evil? Does gestalt offer any way(s) to progress peace? Is there a vision, explicit or implicit, somewhere within our philosophical and value bases that has something useful to offer?

I suggest that for the gestalt conference in 2007 we grapple with such issues within a conference title '*Exploring Human Conflict*' – *What can gestalt offer?*

And in doing so we will support a process of critical reflection on the role of the therapist and the contribution of gestalt in relation to human conflict.

I further suggest that we try and bring together to such a conference colleagues from countries that have been, or are currently, engaged in armed conflict?

I welcome your response to my suggestion at the conference in Prague or email me at: ken@kenevans.fsnet.co.uk

European Union to Regulate Psychotherapy

There is an old proverb which goes something like this, “Be sure to fix the posts firmly in the ground before raising the walls of your tent”.

Over the Past two years the EAGT Board has been busy implementing policy decisions made collaboratively by the board and members during the annual General Meetings of Italy, Sweden, Austria and the Czech Republic. The wisdom of the members in supporting the consolidation of the infrastructure of EAGT (training standards, accreditation of institutes, revision of the ethics code and complaints procedures) as well as encouraging new areas of growth and development is bringing forth good results. EAGT is in good shape to remain at the leading edge of developments in psychotherapy in Europe, including responding positively to the excellent news from Brussels.

On February 14th 2004 the European Parliament in Brussels voted for the implementation of the profession of psychotherapy to become a harmonised profession within the European Union. The training basis shall be the guidelines of the European Certificate of Psychotherapy of the European Association for Psychotherapy, of which EAGT is a member. The training standards voted in during the General Meeting in Prague are in accord with those of the EAP. So are the procedures for the accreditation of EAGT training institutes.

The Work of harmonisation of the profession of psychotherapy by the EU is expected to be complete within two years, so it is important that training institutes seek accreditation soon. The EAGT training standards and the accreditation procedures are now on the EAGT website.

These are exciting and challenging developments because most all training institutes will need to revise their existing procedures and curriculum to meet the requirements for accreditation. We now have the opportunity to

establish the credibility of gestalt psychotherapy among the range of ‘helping’ professions and we can be greatly encouraged by the overwhelming vote of support for the new standards at the General Meeting in Prague.

Actually a comparison of the ‘new’ standards with those that previously existed shows there was substantial comparability between the two, not much difference in fact. The challenge is to demonstrate these standards to the accrediting committee, which is the really new development. The Board appreciates the wisdom of the members in acknowledging and supporting the need for accessible and transparent procedures for accrediting institutes. Together with the revised ethics code and complaints procedures we can be justly proud of EAGT and it’s position at the leading edge of developments within the EAP.

To support our growing workload the EAGT board took the decision in February 2004 to open a permanent office in Amsterdam. After very careful scrutiny of our finances we initiated a 12 month pilot project, during which time we would appoint a part time Administrative Secretary to work 6 hours a week, with the possibility of increasing this to 8 hours after 6 months. Our Secretary, Joppie Bakker has done a magnificent job over the past two years under difficult conditions. Clearly the work that has been, and will be generated, by the EAGT certificate and now by the accreditation of institutes requires administrative back up. In September we will ask members at the General Meeting to agree a 10% increase in fees across all categories of membership, 5% for members from eastern Europe. This is a very moderate increase in view of the amount of work undertaken on members behalf and the Board believes that a professional association the size of EAGT must now ‘bite the bullet’ and not rely entirely on voluntary commitment. To do so may unwittingly be exploitative!

Some years ago the EAGT mem-

bers decided to encourage the creation of National Gestalt Associations in all European countries. This work is now in urgent need of progress because such NGO’s will play an important role in certification of EAGT members and the accreditation of institutes. However the vision was, and remains, that divisions within the gestalt communities within nations might be resolved sufficiently within NGO’s so that the further growth of gestalt can be encouraged. The existence of NGO’s will provide a frame whereby people can engage in contact and work to resolve and/or respect difference. Of course the mere existence of NGO’s will not guarantee contact for this will also require courageous acts of will. My letter above about exploring human conflict is surely justification to go forward with this vision?

The Board realise that the creation of NGO’s will take time and the revised accrediting procedures for institutes therefore allow for the creation of Interim Gestalt Accrediting Committees. Such committees can get on with the practical task of scrutinising procedures for certification in their country, on behalf of EAGT, while at the same time beginning the process of moving toward NGO status. Nancy Amendt Lyon and the Extended Board have worked very hard to support this process and advance it along.

In addition to this work of consolidation, which itself strengthens and supports current and future growth of the EAGT, there are new developments in the form of three task groups:

- *Gestalt in Education*
- *Gestalt in Organisations*
- *Human Rights & Social Responsibility*

During the conference in Prague time and space will be set aside for anyone who may be attracted to work in any of these groups to go along to the meetings and register your interest.

I end this letter by confirming that to date (March 2004) we have some 200 members attending the conference in the city of Prague, so hurry and send in your registration to secure

a place. I look forward to meeting you at the conference and sharing the adventure of growing gestalt in the clinical room and in the world.

Warm regards

Ken Evans, President EAGT



I have been asked to introduce myself as well by photo as by words. My photo speaks for itself; the words: well read me.

Brief introduction:

My name is *Marga Berends*, née Euv-ing on September 11, 1960, married to Geert Berends since 1981. We don't have any children, but we do have a dog, a golden retriever, named Thomas. We live in Nieuw Buinen, in the province Drenthe north easterly bordered on the province Groningen, in the Netherlands. Drenthe is well known for its woods and Groningen for its panoramic views. The joys of life are represented in both provinces for all of us.

I have several hobbies and my dog is one of them. On an average day we walk about 12 kilometres. Another hobby of mine is reading books. I like to read as well as a novel, literature as esoteric books.

My education in a nutshell:

Intermediate business education and several courses for example: insurances, technical trainings for bank employees, but also Word, PowerPoint and Excel.

Sum up of my employment history:

During 23 years I have worked for the *Rabobank*; a well-known bank in the Netherlands. I fulfilled several positions for instance: an administrative and a commercial position, checking out rules and I was mentor on a project.

At a certain moment I have come to the conclusion that I didn't fit any longer in the Rabobank culture and her policy.

Accreditation of institutes and national associations

The general meeting of EAGT has voted in November 2003 on new training standards for institutional members. This means a big step forward in developing EAGT-membership to a quality label. I want to give a big thank you to Daan van Praag who has done the biggest part of the work to formulate these standards.

The standards are oriented toward the standards that the EAP (European Association for Psychotherapy) has established. EAGT is a member of EAP. In the past, institutes could become a member of EAGT without any procedure of checking their standards. That's why the EAGT meeting of members in 2001 in Stockholm decided to develop training standards. It also decided that no new institutes will be accepted as full members before having passed this new accreditation procedure. All institutes that joined EAGT since then are associate members. The ones that had achieved regular full membership up till that date could keep it, but all of the institutes will now have to pass the new accreditation procedure before November 2007, otherwise they will lose their EAGT-membership.

The procedure will be in cooperation with the Training Standard Committee of EAGT (ETSC) and the National Organization for Gestalt therapy (NOGT) if there is one and if it has established a committee of certification/accreditation of institutes and training programs.

A visiting committee of two persons

(one appointed by the ETSC, one by the NOGT) will process the requests for accreditation. The decision will be in the hands of the ETSC, in case of conflicts the Executive Board of EAGT decides.

In countries where there is not yet a NOGT or where there are different competing organizations, the ETSC will help to establish a national committee with the purpose of establishing a national organization that can be accredited by EAGT. As a temporary solution such a committee can function maximally 4 years as a National Organization. There can only be one national organization (per country) recognized and accredited as a full member as the official national representative by EAGT. Other organizations can join EAGT as associated members. In countries where no NOGT and no committee preparing such an organization exist (because, i.e. there is nothing but one young institute), the ETSC will appoint both members of the visiting committee. Accreditations for National Organizations will be processed by the Executive Board of EAGT.

The training standards and the appendixes for processing can be downloaded from our homepage (www.eagt.com) or they can be requested from the head of the ETSC (pschulthess@goldnet.ch). If there arise any more questions about this accrediting procedure please do not hesitate to contact me.

Peter Schulthess

Therefore the bank and I decided that we had to go our own way. At April 1, 2003 I became unemployed. So I called in a firm of career consultancy. That firm belonged to Bas Lokerse who is also treasurer for the EAGT. That was the first time I ever heard about the EAGT.

Me and the EAGT

Since April 1, 2004 I work for the EAGT as an office manager and as of that date the office of the EAGT is established in Nieuw Buinen as well. Questions, comments or otherwise, just let me know and, if needed, I will take action a.s.a.p. Write, call or e-mail me at:

Office EAGT, Marga Berends

Adresse:

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9521 BL Nieuw Buinen
The Netherlands

Tel: +31 (0)599 614661 (on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Friday, between 12.00 and 14.00 hours p.m. local time or leave a message on my answering machine)

E-mail:

go_2_eagt@hotmail.com or
marber@tref.nl

To conclude:

I hope for a pleasant and joyful cooperation. Pleased to meet you!

Marga Berends

Letter to the Extended Board

Dear colleagues and friends,
Our last Extended Board meeting in Prague in November was productive and the atmosphere was constructive and cooperative. The delegates informed us of the recent developments in Gestalt therapy in their countries and there ensued a lively exchange. Moreover, it is with pleasure that I inform you that our Extended Board is growing – this time toward the West! We have a guest from Spain for the first time, Pedro de Casso, who actively participated in our last meeting in Prague, in November 2003. The main objective that the Extended Board must work on is the establishment of National Organisations for Gestalt Therapy in each country, which is quite a task. An advisory committee, comprised of delegates from Norway, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, and Russia, and chaired by Jan Lens (HYPERLINK <mailto:janlens@pandora.be>) from Belgium, has been set up. Representatives of different countries that are attempting to establish National Organisations can ask them for advice.

You will also have received a letter from Ken Evans and me specifying preliminary steps toward setting up accrediting committees which, in turn,

will work toward developing National Organisations.

There are several reminders to the Extended Board in my column this time! Only delegates to the Extended Board from Austria, Germany, UK, France, Netherlands, Greece, Belgium, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Israel, Norway and Macedonia are eligible for reimbursement for travel costs and hotel costs (one overnight per year) for our annual Extended Board meetings. At the Executive Board's discretion, finances allowing, we may be in a position to give partial reimbursement to guests of the Extended Board at our next meeting in Prague, September 2004.

Another reminder to Extended Board concerns the deadline for the EAGT's new Training Standards: November 2007 is the deadline for the applications of institutes, whereas grandparenting for individual members ends 2008.

A third reminder concerns the EAGT on-line archives: We are continuously updating our compilation of a European bibliography of Gestalt therapy publications (see EAGT website: www.eagt.org). The delegates to the Extended Board are reminded to collect the Gestalt therapy publica-

tions in their respective countries every year and send them as word.doc files to the Chair of the Extended Board by e-mail – amendtlyon@aon.at – so that our archives can grow! The form for the list of publications must be the following: Author, Title (in the original language), Place of Publication, Publisher, Date of Publication, Title translated into English, 4 Keywords in English. This will make publications not originally written in English more public, could stimulate translations into English or other languages, book reviews, and trigger a fruitful exchange of ideas.

My last reminder concerns the date of the next Extended Board meeting, just before the next conference of the EAGT in Prague begins: We shall convene on Thursday, September 9th, from 9-12 in the morning at Hotel Pyramida in Prague, Czech Republic. Please send me any suggestions you have for our agenda by June 30th, 2004, so that I can incorporate them.

Looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible in Prague, I am

Yours truly,

Nancy Amendt-Lyon

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Kundmangasse 13/23
A-1030 Vienna

AGENDA

for the Annual General Meeting in Prague, September 9th 13.00.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome 2. Names of those present 3. Minutes of AGM in Prague 4. Matters Arising 5. Report of President 6. Report of Secretary 7. Report of Chair of Extended Board 8. Officers Reports 9. Election of officers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10.i. Election of Chair of Extended Board 10.ii. Do we have any member of her Board who is due for re-election? 11. Proposals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11.i. Membership Fees 11.ii Do we have any other things that need to be voted on? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Report of progress on the creation of National Gestalt Organisations from representaives of different countries. 13. An Exploration of Human Conflict -discussion of suggested title for 2007 EAGT conference 14. AOB 15. Date and Location of AGM 2005. |
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8th EAGT Conference, Prague

9-12 September 2004

Tradition and Renewal

Dear colleagues,
I would like to inform you about the progress we are making with the upcoming 8th EAGT Conference in Czech republic, Prague, on 9-12 September 2004.

First I would like to thank you for your registering and supporting the conference.

I want to remind you that the end of May is another deadline for registration and getting lower registration fee. There is still a possibility of group registration that enables you to get group discount.

I also would like to thank you for submitting very interesting abstracts for panels, workshops and minilectures. I enjoyed the communication with colleagues during the process of submitting abstract and I appreciate their special care given to each part of program.

I believe that our mutual effort will be rewarded with a very interesting scientific program of the conference.

The alphabetical list of all presentations will be pub-

lished on our web <http://www.gestalt-terapie.cz> at the beginning of May.

The schedule of the conference will also provide us with many opportunities how to spend time with friends and colleagues during social activities including coffee breaks, lunches, gala evening and other accompanying programs within three days. The location of the conference hotel Pyramida that is situated nearby Prague castle and Lesser Old town will enable you to enjoy the unique atmosphere of Prague.

Please, follow our web site to get all new information about schedule, program and accompanying activities.

Dear colleagues, I am looking forward to welcoming you in September

Ester Neumanova

ester.franta@volny.cz

www.gestalt-terapie.cz

Conference Programme

| Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 9.00–9.30 Opening | 9.30–10.00 Keynote speech | 9.30–10.00 Keynote speech |
| 9.30–10.00 Key note speech | 10.00–11.00 Discussion | 10.00–11.00 Discussion |
| 10.00–11.00 Discussion | 11.00–11.30 Coffee | 11.00–11.30 Coffee |
| 11.00–11.30 Coffee | 11.30–13.30 W, M-L, Panel | |
| 11.30–13.30 Workshop, Mini-Lectures | 13.30–15.30 Lunch | |
| 13.30–15.30 Lunch | 15.30–17.00 W, M-L, Panel 15.30-17.30 | |
| 15.30–17.00 W, M-L, Panel 15.30-18.30, connected with Process group | 17.00–17.30 Coffee | |
| 17.00–17.30 Coffee | 17.30–18.30 Process group | |
| 17.30–18.30 Process group | <i>Break</i> | |
| 19.00–23.30 Dinner, party | 19.30–24.00 Gala evening | |

A Reminiscence of Amstelkade 61

Daan van Praag visited the last EAGT Executive Committee (EC) meeting in Amsterdam February 2004 and said goodbye to his colleagues and friends there.

On this occasion Daan reminded us, the EC, that Frits Perls had lived in Amsterdam from April 1933 ‘til December 1933.

Laura Perls:

“We were twelve people living in a four or five room apartment on the Amstelkade along the canal, it was a fairly nice neighbourhood then.

Those months were the hardest we ever had. We really didn’t know what was going to happen and we lived from day to day”. (Laura Perls in “Fritz Perls Here and Now” by Jack Gaines, p 16).

Daan not only reminded us he knew also the address! So Nancy Amendt-Lyon, Ken Evans, Daan van Praag and myself (Daan van Baalen) went to the place and made pictures outside the house.

I want to show those pictures for two reasons:

First, to honour Daan for his work done for the Gestalt community, in the Netherlands and in Europe.

Second, to share with the Gestalt community some of our history.

Daan van Baalen



Daan van Baalen, Ken Evans and Daan van Praag photographed by Nancy Amendt-Lyon, who later handed the camera to Daan van Baalen.



Updated List of Executive and Extended Boards, March 2004

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JP Garrivet *and* Manon Sarda van Woensel *share the position of the French delegate.*

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J. Lens *and* D. Collet-Cassart *will share the position of the Belgian delegate.*

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The Greek National Organisation will appoint a new delegate to replace Despina Koweou.

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EAGT Newsletter

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The Fourth European Writer's Conference in Thessaloniki, April 21-25

The tradition of *European Writer's Conferences* continued also this year. The group of 10 members, made a wonderful size for having enough time to discuss the presented drafts of works in progress. Members came from England, Greece, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden and even USA. It was again a good and enriching experience to exchange and get new ideas and a feel for the development of Gestalt therapy. This year we invited some students of the Greek institute who presented a report on two projects that they will present at the forthcoming congress in Prague.

This element was enriching for all participants and can be built in at future conferences to encourage young writers. And of course there was time for a cultural excursion to the grave of the father of Alexander the great. The next writers conference will be held in Belfast (Northern Ireland) in May 5-8, 2005.

Peter Schulthess

CORRECTION:

In issue #5 of EAGT Newsletter the *Nordisk Gestaltinstitut*, a new organizational member at the time, was erroneously said to be situated in Norway. The correct address is:

Nordisk Gestaltinstitut
Harreshoejvej 15
DK-3080 Tikoeb
Denmark

Proposals to be voted by the Meeting of Members, Prague September 2004.

• **Membership fees:**

The current membership fee for all categories of members shall be increased by approximately 10%, except for members of eastern European countries which increase shall be approximately 5%.

Proposed by EAGT Treasurer

Seconded by EAGT President

Human Rights and Social Responsibility

A task group with this issue has been started at the meeting of members 2003. Gestalt colleagues interested in the question of *what efforts from the side of our profession could come to influence the wider social, ecological and political field in dealing with bigger conflicts and to support the respect for human rights*, are invited to contact the chair of the task group, **Peter Schulthess**.

E-mail: pschulthess@goldnet.ch

The Seventh International Gestalt Therapy Conference,
Produced by the Association for the Advancement
of Gestalt Therapy (AAGT) announces



AAGT CONFERENCE 2004

We will explore the phenomena of re-creation, of new beginnings, and more specifically, we will investigate how re-creation takes place, about its transforming affect in the field, and how the processes of Gestalt therapy might be purposefully employed in each.

November 10-14, 2004

Tradewinds Sirata Beach Resort Plan now to attend. Put it on your calendars!

St. Petersburg Beach, Florida

A formal call for proposals, including registration information for the conference itself and appropriate procedures for reserving rooms at the hotel, will follow our June annual meetings.



Please keep watching the AAGT web page for these things www.aagt.org