Dear Gianni,

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the decision in Poland not to regulate gestalt psychotherapy allegedly on the grounds that it has no basis in evidence based research. I understand this to be the perspective of a single scholar who is from a specific school of therapy, outside the humanistic and integrative tradition.

**Academic Background**

I have a doctorate in psychotherapy from Middlesex University, London.

I have published several books on psychotherapy, psychotherapy supervision and psychotherapy research, all of which have been translated into several languages. I am Senior Editor of the European Journal for Qualitative research in Psychotherapy.

I am a visiting professor of psychotherapy, a psychotherapist trainer and supervisor with different training institutes/ university validated psychotherapy programmes across Europe. I supervise doctoral students at Metanoia/Middlesex University and Regents College/University of Wales. I have authored 8 Masters programmes in psychotherapy over the last 20 years ( including Person Centred, Gestalt, Transactional Analysis, Psychodrama and Family & Systemic). I have written university validated Doctoral programmes at two universities since 2000 and have recently been invited to write a doctoral programme for a third university. I am currently an Academic Adviser and Academic Consultant to three European university programmes.

I have read and fully support the contents of the letter written by Dr. Philip Brownell.

I would further add that while acknowledging the considerable benefits of evidence based practice in recent years I am also familiar with the wide range of scholarly critique of evidence based practice and the contemporary interest in practice based evidence of which there is a substantial evidence of investment not only from Gestalt
psychotherapy but also psychoanalysis, and a range of other relational oriented psychotherapies.

To disenfranchise Gestalt psychotherapy in Poland from such a narrow and one-sided perspective will not enhance the credibility of the psychotherapy profession in Poland to the outside world. Rather it will convey the impression that psychotherapy in Poland is rather dated and out of step with developments in the wider field.

**Psychotherapy Regulatory Background**

I was President of the European Association for Psychotherapy 1993-94; founding President of the European Association for Integrative Psychotherapy 1996-99, President of the European Association for Gestalt Psychotherapy 2002-2008 and currently Vice President of the European Interdisciplinary Association for Therapy with Children & Young People 2010 +. My doctoral dissertation was on the development of the profession of psychotherapy in Europe 1987 to 2008. I am in the process of writing a book on evolution and development of European psychotherapy.

I was Training Standards Officer for the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (hereafter UKCP) 1998-2001. The UKCP is an umbrella body that offers ‘a level playing field’ for all the psychotherapy modalities in the UK. It does not include or exclude modalities on the basis of psychotherapy ‘denomination’ but rather on the standards of training within a modality, which are always externally scrutinised.

Instead of regulating modality labels the UK government is to regulate the UKCP itself by scrutinising all its quality assurance mechanisms and thereby avoiding disputes and denominational conflicts over specific labels. I have made, and continue to make, a substantial contribution to the development of the profession in the UK where Gestalt psychotherapy training standards and scientific credibility has been acknowledged for over 25 years. Partly on the basis of my experience in the UK, I was invited to form a panel of three international experts to assess the professional competencies of a psychotherapist that are being developed by the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP).

Within the European Association for Psychotherapy some 20 modalities are accredited and indeed Gestalt psychotherapy was the second modality to be scientifically validated by the EAP in Berlin in 1996, since when the European Association for Gestalt Therapy (EAGT) has played a leading role in the continued growth of the EAP. The EAGT has already completed its lengthy set of professional competencies and even before their publication the Italian regulatory authority has accepted these competencies. It is clear that several other national bodies will follow within the year.
The polish national psychotherapy association is a member of the EAP and there are at least 30 Gestalt psychotherapists from Poland who have been awarded the European Certificate of Psychotherapy of EAP.

The position taken by Poland is out of step with and contradicts developments in most all European nations and furthermore undermines the position of its 30 +ECP holders within EAP. To disenfranchise a school of psychotherapy on the basis of modality is biased and unjust and a phenomenon that is now virtually extinct in the rest of Europe.

As a former President of EAP I am of the opinion that the current Polish exclusion of Gestalt psychotherapy is in direct contradiction of the vision and statutes of the EAP. This being so the position of the Polish authorities forces upon us the question as to whether it can or should remain a member of the EAP.

It is disappointing that in the 21st century the profession in Poland cannot find a way to move beyond ‘schoolism’ and embrace an inclusive and cooperative vision.

Professor Dr. Ken Evans

March 22, 2012