

# AAGT

Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy

## **AAGT in Amsterdam – 2005**

**Theme: CO-CREATING GESTALT RELATIONSHIPS**

**Dates:**

**4-7 August 2005**

**AND**

**Annual AAGT Business Meeting 7-9 August 2005**

## **AAGT'S EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2006**

**AUGUST 9 - 13, 2006**

**DREAMING THE FUTURE: Expanding our consciousness  
through Gestalt Therapy.**

**Vancouver, British Columbia  
Canada**

### ♦ **Our Board:**

- ♦ Brian O'Neill, President
- ♦ Bud Feder, VP Past-President
- ♦ Peter Philippon, VP President-Elect
- ♦ Ann Bowman, Secretary
- ♦ Bruce Aaron, Treasurer,
- ♦ Chuck Kanner, Treasurer-Elect
- ♦ Peter Cole, Membership Chair
- ♦ Ansel Woldt, Archivist & Continuing Education Officer
- ♦ Marcy Stern, Publications Director
- ♦ Jack Aylward, Interest Groups' Coordinator
- ♦ Morgan Goodlander, Organization Members' Representative
- ♦ Marilyn Myles, RCP Representative



## *The Publisher's 2-sense by Marcy Stern*



So, there was no Spring newsletter—this will have to serve as both the spring and summer newsletter. There is just so much happening with AAGT and it is so exciting to read/feel/hear the energy toward our growth. I am amazed at the emails, the gusto, the passion, the assertion.....I just cannot remember ever feeling such enthusiasm put forth toward an annual meeting with such GREAT planning (thank you Tine!!)! We even have the next conference planned (thank you Bea & Warren!!). I don't mean to omit others who have pushed, shoved, and elbowed these events into existence, but the *reason* we're going to Amsterdam and to BC is because of these particular individuals. You see, some of the behind-the-scenes shenanigans through email and phone conferences points right to those who have made our dreams that we put forth at our St. Pete conference come to fruition. Yes, it takes a village, but, let me tell you how much an individual can effect change. Oh, right, I don't need to tell *you*! What was I thinking anyway? Isn't that the point? Kind of makes me think about what holds me back in my own life from manifesting, by making things happen, from raising my hand and stepping up to the plate more often. I share a story with patients about the guy who yells and screams at God every Sunday morning when he checks the lottery numbers only to find that he didn't win (again). God finally comes down & says "buy a ticket." Right. So, not only are we going outside of the United States for an Annual Meeting, but also for our 8th Annual Conference! p.s. — we have an Australian president and a British president-elect. I think we're catching on!

### President's Message by **Brian O'Neill** "Minding Our Own Business"

I imagine that as you read this Newsletter, each of you will experience different reactions when AAGT is mentioned. For those of you who attend our conferences, the main contact with AAGT has been an experience of meeting others and sharing the excitement that a conference brings. To others who attend the various salons run across the country, you will also have a sense of AAGT as being the contact with your local group. For many, along with this Newsletter, this is and has been the main business of AAGT - conferencing.

So I wonder if we are only a conference provider, supported by several local meetings and the connectivity of the Newsletter. Is this our "business?". (*By the way, we announce our 2006 Vancouver Conference in this edition of the Newsletter.*)

#### **Service Exchange Program**

Some of you may not know that there has been another figure that has emerged, namely the Service Exchange Program (SEP) with the able leadership of Dori Middleman, Bud Feder, Joel Latner and Susan Gregory. The idea of this has been to offer a free service from and for AAGT members such as supervision, group work, therapy etc. This adds to the business and life of AAGT and is to be commended and supported. The available people who participate in this are listed in the AAGT Directory of Members, -- a very handy contact booklet to have.

#### **Interest Groups**

We have also tried to develop and maintain Interest Groups. These have been as much for the "advancing" side of AAGT business as for the "associating." Yet these have had a rather checkered career, and at the last conference in Florida there was a wavering of interest in Interest Groups. However, the flame is still alight, and a number of Interest Groups held lunch and breakfast meetings and seemed to arise spontaneously in the field of the conference.

This is particularly true of the Meta-Interest group that straddles the Globe, the Irish Interest Group, which has had meetings of over 50 -100 per time in places such as Christchurch, New Zealand, Stockholm, Sweden; Palermo, Italy; St. Pete, Florida; Cleveland, Ohio; New York City; and Dallas, Texas -- and one can only hope, Amsterdam and Vancouver.

So I am keen to hear more about the interest groups and support them in whatever way we can as a Board.

#### **Regional Contact People - RCPs**

A strong figure which has been maintained has been that of the Regional Contact Person, which was developed to provide a regional person who could be a focus for AAGT activity in their region and develop AAGT locally. This has been well maintained under the chair of Nancy Woldt and is now ably taken up by Marilyn

Myles. We now have members on the RCP meeting from the Philippines and Ottawa, Canada (*a recent immigrant from Iran*).

### ***So what is our business?***

My own personal experience of AAGT since becoming president is the weekly emails between the board members and conference coordinators and the sound of 14 voices each month as we link for a teleconference -- with a similar parallel process happening for the RCPs as they also email and teleconference with each other.

We hear about the plans afoot for the Amsterdam and Vancouver conferences, the Newsletter and organizational matters. Yet it is this direct verbal and written contact that lets me know that AAGT is alive and well and going about its "business". I am connected and delighted each month as I hear these well loved voices ringing in from across the globe from 6am in Australia to 5pm in New York and 10pm in London.

And yet I realize this aspect of our business is shared by only a few, and is perhaps replicated somewhat in other ways at local meetings and salons

### ***Announcing an AAGT email discussion list - Worldwide!***

In a conversation with our Treasurer-Elect, Chuck Kanner, last week, he suggested we could also form up an AAGT email list similar to that of Gestalt-L but specifically for AAGT people to meet and associate and develop around the globe. It is timely to consider connecting through the Web to develop and build upon the regular contact that exists between a smaller group of Board and RCP committees and local regional meetings.

To that end I will now work with Chuck and others who are interested to re-ignite an AAGT list with the purpose of serving AAGT members and providing an ongoing forum for the "Associating" and "Advancing" that has been and continues to be so much a part of our formation since we began. If you are interested in joining me, feel free to write to me with any ideas you have of what form and focus such a discussion list might take. I'd also be interested in hearing what business you think we can be involved in.

**My email is [boneill@uow.edu.au](mailto:boneill@uow.edu.au)**

### **Minding our own business.**

**On behalf of the board.**

Brian

**Post Script -**

### ***Amsterdam Meeting and Conference***

**The first marathon group on Wednesday prior to the Amsterdam Conference filled quickly. There will be a second group offered and I (Brian O'Neill) will be facilitating it (perhaps with a co-facilitator – is anyone interested?).**

## **AAGT in Amsterdam – 2005—Annual Meeting**

**Theme:     CO-CREATING GESTALT RELATIONSHIPS**

**Dates:     Regional European AAGT Conference 4-7 August 2005**  
**Annual AAGT Business Meeting 7-9 August 2005**

The Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy is a community building association, which means that everybody present at the conference or otherwise involved is invited to co-create this international and even intercontinental event. Co-creating our Gestalt community is an opportunity, not a requirement!

**Place:     De Ruimte (The Space), Weesperzijde 79a, 1091 EV Amsterdam**

De Ruimte can accommodate around 100 conference participants. For an impression of this meeting place go to [www.deruimteamsterdam.nl](http://www.deruimteamsterdam.nl) and click on ruimteverhuur - foto's. It is a two story renovated grain silo on the embankment of the River Amstel with mattresses and showers making it possible for about 30 people to stay there without further cost, with some services being expected (e.g., rooms to be cleared of luggage, towels, etc. by 8.15 AM; make tea and coffee to welcome the other conference participants) Access: To enter the top floor necessitates climbing an iron staircase. We will hold community sessions on the street level, and there will always be workshops and process groups on that level as well.

**Program: 24 Peer-Reviewed Workshops, 4 Process Group Sessions, Daily Orientations, Early Morning Activities and Gestalt Community Sessions will be the heart and soul of the conference.**

A pre-conference Gestalt Marathon Group will also be offered on Wednesday. While new program proposals are invited, we are making special appeal to invite presentations from previous AAGT, EAGT and other “peered” Gestalt conferences. Look for the Amsterdam Call for Program Presentations on our Web site (AAGT.org). Selection for this conference will be based in part on the workshop’s proposal’s proximity to the Conference Theme – “Co-Creating Gestalt Relationships.”

**Co-Created Conference: Several people who attended the AAGT conference last November are participating in co-creating this conference.**

If you were not in attendance at the 2004 AAGT Conference in St. Pete, Florida and want to volunteer to help co-create this conference, please contact the Conference Coordinator, Tine van Wijk ([dewalvis@xs4all.nl](mailto:dewalvis@xs4all.nl)) and send an Email to Gail Zinberg ([yes@taconic.net](mailto:yes@taconic.net)) who will advise you on joining the Amsterdam Conference List Serve ([AAGTAmsterdamConference@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AAGTAmsterdamConference@yahoogroups.com))

**Fees:     100 Euros (c. \$130.00 USD) for Early Registration**  
**150 Euros (c. \$195.00 USD) Registration after April 30, 2005**  
**75 Euros (c. \$100.00 USD) for the Marathon Group**  
**25 Euros (c. \$30.00 USD) for Continuing Education Credit**

**Meals:** Everybody is responsible for their own meals.

There are no cooking facilities in De Ruimte except for making coffee and tea. There is a supermarket close by where anything for breakfast and lunch can be obtained. Within 5 minutes walking distance there are a good Pizzeria, Greek, Italian, African, Portuguese and Dutch restaurants. Fifteen minutes away there are numerous other possibilities. Some of the restaurants have a terrace on the bank of River Amstel where we can lunch and dine. If we decide to use a catering service we have a choice of many international kitchens.

**Extras:** Extra nights at the De Ruimte will cost approximately 10 Euros (c. \$13.00 USD) per day. Additional fee for the pre-conference Marathon Group is 75 Euros – limit 12 people, 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM Wednesday preceding the conference.

**Hotels:** Information about nearby hotels in different price classes will be available to those interested in attending.

Contact the Conference Coordinator, Tine van Wijk ([dewalvis@xs4all.nl](mailto:dewalvis@xs4all.nl))

**Transportation:** De Ruimte is five minutes walking distance from the metro that can take you anywhere in the City of Amsterdam.

**Touring Amsterdam:** The City is known to be popular with tourists.

AAGT Donna Cotzen has agreed to guide a tour along the Amsterdam musea. Arrangements will be made for other guided walks through old Amsterdam. Of course seeing Amsterdam on your own is not difficult as it is not so big (not even 800.000 people) and De Ruimte is close to the center. Not to be forgotten is that Amsterdam has a Museumboat that comes close to most musea. We will also try to arrange a Jazz Boat Trip through the canals at night. Several other popular tourist possibilities will also be presented.

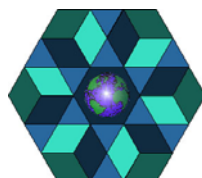
**Continuing Professional Education:** Continuing Education credit will be provided at an additional fee of 25 Euros (c. \$30.00 USD).

AAGT is an approved provider for Continuing Professional Education by the American Psychological Association (APA), National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), California Board of Registered Nurses, California Board of Behavioral Sciences for Licensed Marriage, Family, and Child Counselors and Licensed Social Workers. For further information contact AAGT's CE Officer, Ansel Woldt ([nanselw@aol.com](mailto:nanselw@aol.com)).

**Registration and Further Information:** Early registration is encouraged as the “early birds get the worms.” To register go the AAGT website ([AAGT.org](http://AAGT.org)).

To obtain additional information, to volunteer as a “co-creator,” to save a sleeping space in the De Ruimte, or to obtain a list of nearby hotels, Email the Conference Coordinator, Tine van Wijk ([dewalvis@xs4all.nl](mailto:dewalvis@xs4all.nl)), or contact AAGT's Administrative Assistant, Sylvie Falschlunger ([scfalschlunger@optonline.net](mailto:scfalschlunger@optonline.net))

# AAGT



## AAGT IN AMSTERDAM, 2005

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Regional European AAGT Conference, 4-7 August, 2005**

(Business Meeting, 7-9 August 2005)

**Theme: Co-Creating Gestalt Relationships**

**De Ruimte (The Space), Weesperzijde 79a, 1091 EV Amsterdam**

Presentations are two hours in length, including time for participant discussion. All proposals that have been peer reviewed and presented at previous Gestalt Conferences will not be reviewed again except in the sense of choosing those that seem most suitable for the conference if there are more submissions than the conference can accommodate. We are also encouraging new proposals. Selection will be made based on criteria such as: creativity, innovation, significant research or contribution to the field, and relevance to the conference theme. Presentations may be theoretical, clinical, experiential, demonstration, panel discussions, and video. Selections will be made by the conference planning committee following blind peer review of new proposals.

Please consider the overall theme when designing your proposed program. Proposals must be in accordance with the format below. The proposal form can also be downloaded from the AAGT website, <[www.aagt.org](http://www.aagt.org)>. Proposals that have been previously peer-reviewed and presented at a recent Gestalt conference (AAGT, EAGT, GANZ, ITA, etc.) may be submitted using their original forms and wording. In this case, please mention the conference at which the presentation was previously made. If you have made very minor changes, such as a change in the title but with the same material, please indicate this in your cover letter. Titles should be accurately descriptive and no more than 65 characters long due to formatting issues in the printing of the program.

DEADLINE for receipt of the proposal is JUNE 15. Please include with your proposal a cover letter which states the title of your proposal and includes contact information: your name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and email address. Please e-mail your proposal in the body of your message, after the cover sheet. Do not send as an attachment (enclosure) since sometimes these cannot be opened due to formatting conflicts. If your submission was peer-reviewed and accepted at a previous Gestalt conference, e-mail it to:

[amsterdam-05@lycos.com](mailto:amsterdam-05@lycos.com) (This e-mail address is dedicated specifically for our review committee's work)

If your submission is a new one not presented at one of these conferences, please e-mail to: [peterhayscole@hotmail.com](mailto:peterhayscole@hotmail.com)

If you do not have the ability to send your submission electronically, please send IN TRIPLICATE (three copies) by regular (snail) mail to:

**Peter Cole; 2011 P St. Suite 201; Sacramento CA 95814, USA**

You will be notified of your proposal's receipt. Should your proposal be accepted for the Amsterdam program, you will be asked for further information for inclusion in the conference program and for Continuing Education requirements. Within two weeks following acceptance of your proposal, please be prepared to send your curriculum vita, a brief description of your presentation, learning objectives and questions, and a brief bio.

---

***Complete the following form if this is a new proposal***

---

**A. COVER LETTER, INCLUDING YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS**

**B. (AFTER PAGE BREAK ON E-SUBMISSIONS, OR ON A SEPARATE**

**PAGE ON HARDCOPY SUBMISSIONS):**

**PRESENTATION PROPOSAL FORM**

**AAGT in Amsterdam**

**4-7 August, 2005**

**ID NUMBER** \_\_\_\_\_ (please leave blank)

**Deadline for receipt of this proposal form is APRIL 30.**

Send in the body of an email to one of the two e-mail addresses above, as appropriate, or in hardcopy to the third address.

**DO NOT PUT ANY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION ON YOUR PRESENTATION PROPOSAL FORM.**

You will be notified when to send additional information.

Please type or print clearly. All sections must be completed in order to be considered. Expand sections as needed and/or use additional sheets as necessary.

**1. Title of Presentation** (Limit 65 characters, including spaces):

**2. Gestalt Experience Level Recommended for Participants:**

☐ Highly Experienced

☐ Moderately Experienced

☐ Novice

☐ All Ranges, No Limitations

**3. Description of Format** (Prioritize applicable categories and elements; 1=highest):

☐ Didactic

☐ Based on a formal paper (will have copies available)

☐ Based on a research project, completed or ongoing

☐ Based on work experience

☐ Based on theory

**4. Description of Experiential Components** (Check all that apply):

☐ Demonstration

☐ Panel

☐ Discussion

☐ Experimental participation

☐ Video/Multi-media/Powerpoint **(BRING YOUR OWN EQUIPMENT--THE CONFERENCE WILL NOT SUPPLY IT)**

**5. Description** (200-300 words describing what you intend to do, how you will do it, and how the presentation will relate to conference themes and/or sub-themes. Be specific.)

**6. A 5- to 10-point outline** of proposed presentation content.

**7. Assessment test items** (Please list 4 to 7 assessment questions and include answers.)

**8. List 4 or more references to support your presentation.** Please include at least two publications that are more recent than 1990.

**NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE: JUNE 15, 2005.**





Queens birthday festivities at the  
"Prinsengracht" (Princes canal)



The "Singel" canal

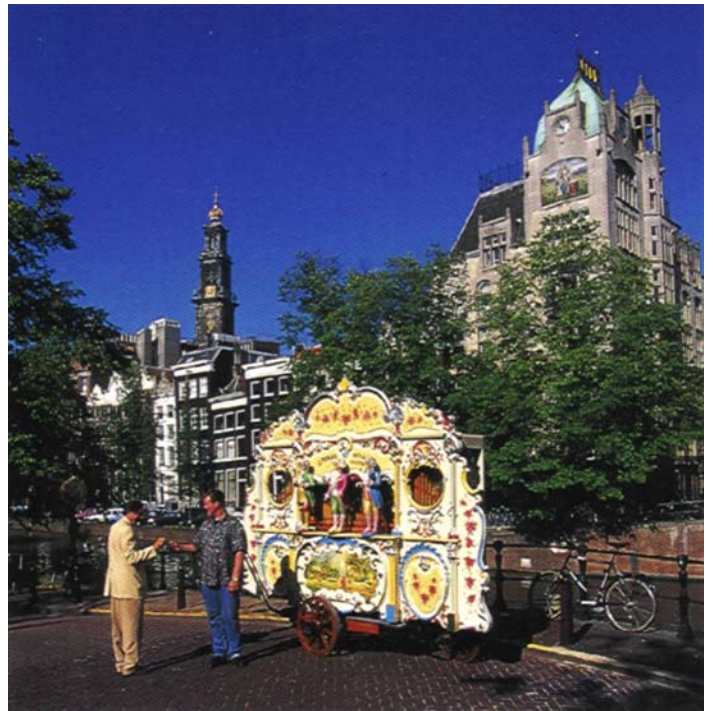


The St. Nicholas church and the  
"Schreierstoren" (tower of the weepers, where  
women waved goodbye to their husbands and sons  
who went out to sea)





The "Skinny bridge"



Street organ



Coffeeshop and Redlight district

# STATUTORY REGULATION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY IN BRITAIN

by  
**Peter Philippson**

I want to update AAGT members on significant developments in the field of psychotherapy in Britain that will affect Gestaltists, and which Gestaltists have been very much involved with.

## Background history

We have known for a long time that the government will eventually regulate psychotherapy, and my organisation, GPTI, took the decision many years ago (1989, I think) to be part of the process, to own it rather than submit to it. Soon after this, I became a delegate from GPTI to the UK Standing Conference on Psychotherapy, which, in around 1993 became the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). This involved most of the major psychotherapy training institutes from a large range of disciplines: psychoanalytic, behavioural, humanistic and integrative, hypnotherapy, etc. We set up our own voluntary register of psychotherapists, open to all who trained in our member organisations, and welcomed into memberships training and accrediting organisations who provide a reasonable level of training, ethics and assessment. We asserted that there was a profession of psychotherapy, separate from psychology and psychiatry.

UKCP has always been an organisation whose members were member organisations, training, accrediting and listing. Individuals were registrants, but not members. It was realised early on that the different modalities of psychotherapy needed significantly different ways to organise, and some different training and assessment requirements. For example, to ask someone to undergo personal psychotherapy in the modality they are training in throughout training is meaningless in a modality which provides brief solution-focused therapy, or couples therapy. Conversely, to ask people training as psychoanalytic psychotherapists to have less than twice-weekly therapy would be to make their training unacceptable to their peers.

Thus the member organisations (MOs) were divided into Sections based on modality. There were two large Sections with many organisational members, the Psychoanalytic (PP) and the Humanistic and Integrative (HIPS), one Section - Behavioural - with very large membership, but only one membership organisation, and a number of smaller sections: couple and family, hypnopschotherapy, experiential-constructivist (Ex-Cons), psychoanalytic therapy with children, analytic psychology (Jungian).

At first the Sections were at each other's throats, and some of the psychoanalytic organisations left to set up the very hostile British Confederation of Psychotherapy, now being renamed as the British Psychoanalytic Council. More recently, while the Sections have continued to be significant, there has been a much better relationship between people from different Sections, and often Section was not significant in AGM decisions. In fact, UKCP has become a point of contact between people from many different therapies, and there is now an annual conference where people present from lots of different perspectives.

As well as GPTI, there have been several other Gestalt training organisations in UKCP, and 'Gestalt Psychotherapist' is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest affiliation on the Register.

## The present situation

The government has announced that it intends to regulate psychotherapy by 2008, but that it is willing to take advice from the profession how to do it. It has provided money to UKCP and the leading counselling organisation, BACP, to research ('map') the different levels of activity and training. Is counselling objectively different from psychotherapy? Is psychoanalysis different or a part of psychotherapy?

So, it looks as if, by 2008, there will be a government-protected register of psychotherapists, to standards agreed by us, not forced on us. Of course, governments can do what they like, and this can change for the worse, but I don't feel that the present structure constrains me in any way that feels wrong for my teaching or practice of Gestalt therapy.

If you want to know more of the specific standards, or ways of doing things, you can contact me on [Peter@mgc.org.uk](mailto:Peter@mgc.org.uk) or look at UKCP's website at [www.psychotherapy.org](http://www.psychotherapy.org).

21<sup>st</sup> March, 2005.



## Call for Proposals

### Dreaming the Future: Expanding our Consciousness through Gestalt Therapy

AAGT 8th International Gestalt Therapy Conference

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., CANADA

August 9-13, 2006

Conference presentations will be two hours in length, with time for participant discussion. We encourage innovative and creative presentations, student papers, and presentations based on research projects relating the conference theme to Gestalt Theory, neuroscience, transpersonal dynamics, spiritual and religious experience, clinical practice, social justice, and organizational change. Presentations may be theoretical, clinical, or experiential, and they may be demonstrations, panels, video presentations, or discussions. Presentations will be selected by the conference planning committee following blind peer review.

Continuing Education credit will be offered to attendees. The AAGT is an approved provider for Continuing Professional Education by the American Psychological Association (APA), National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), California Board of Registered Nurses, California Board of Behavioral Sciences for Licensed Marriage, Family, and Child Counselors and Licensed Social Workers.

Those wishing to submit a proposal are encouraged to download a presentation proposal form from the AAGT web site ([www.aagt.org](http://www.aagt.org)) and send it via post (not fax) to the address in the accompanying instructions. We prefer electronic submission. To begin the process of electronic submission send an email request to [2006@g-gej.org](mailto:2006@g-gej.org); a presentation form with instructions will be sent via email.

# Presentation Proposal Form

## Dreaming the Future: Expanding our Consciousness through Gestalt Therapy

AAGT 8th International Gestalt Therapy Conference  
University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., CANADA  
August 9-13, 2006

Please provide a cover letter with a space between it and the form which follows (for postal submissions use a separate sheet). Include in your cover letter the title of your presentation, your name, highest degree, your complete address, telephone number, FAX, and e-mail address, and (if applicable) the same for all co-presenters.

Presentation Proposal Form [Do not put identifying information in the following section]

ID #\_\_\_\_\_ (please leave blank)

You may choose to send your proposal electronically or through the postal service.

For electronic submission, copy this announcement and form, along with a cover letter, to an email message, fill in the data, and send to Philip Brownell (2006@g-gej.org). Identify that your message is an AAGT proposal submission by naming the subject as AAGT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION.

For submission by postal service, make four (4) copies of this form, plus a cover letter, and send them (via mail, not FAX) to:

AAGT Peer Review  
c/o Bea Mackay  
201-2678 West Broadway Avenue,  
Vancouver, B.C. V6K 3N2  
CANADA

Include in your cover letter the title of your presentation, your name, highest degree, your complete address, telephone number, FAX, and e-mail address, and (if applicable) the same for all co-presenters.

DO NOT put any identifying information in this presentation proposal form.

If accepted, the corresponding presenter(s) will be required to submit (within two weeks) a 100 word abstract of the presentation to be published in the conference program, a 60 word biography reflecting the relevance of presenter background(s) to the presentation, a signed release permitting the taping of the presentation (in case this becomes an option to the program committee), a description of any audiovisual aids required, and a curriculum vita for each presenter (please have these ready). All these items are necessary to support the process of review and



Please type (all sections must be completed in order to be considered: expand the sections as needed and/or use additional sheets as necessary).

1. Gestalt Experience Level Suggested for Participants:

- ☐ Experienced  
☐ Novice  
☐ No Limitations

Format (check all that apply)

2. Didactic Category

- ☐ Based on a formal paper (have copies available)  
☐ Based on a research project  
☐ Based on work experiences  
☐ Based on theory

3. Experiential Category

- ☐ Demonstration  
☐ Panel  
☐ Discussion  
☐ Experimental participation  
☐ Video/multi-media Presentation

4. Title (Limit to 65 characters, including spaces):

5. Description (a 200-300 word description of what you intend to do, how you intend to do it, and in what ways that relates to the conference theme; be specific):

6. A five to ten-point outline of the material to be covered, expanding on the description above; this need not be detailed:

7. An assessment test consisting of five objective questions (multiple choice, true-false, fill in, or matching). The correct answers to these questions must be included. If the presentation is entirely experiential, answer this question, "What three new awarenesses were the result of participation?" The questions must be able to be answered as a result of attendance, and the shorter and less complicated the better.

8. List one to three significant readings (articles or books) on the subject of your presentation. These need not cover the specific topic, but should serve to provide information for further study and be generally relevant. Use this format:



**ANNOUNCING (WITH GREAT FANFARE):**

## **AAGT'S EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2006**

**DREAMING THE FUTURE: Expanding our consciousness through Gestalt Therapy.**

**AUGUST 9 - 13, 2006.**

**We are thrilled to announce AAGT's 8th International Conference to be held in the sparkling and vibrant city of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.**

**The venue for accommodation and workshops will be at the University of British Columbia, a unique and beautiful campus, home to Canada's largest university conference facility.**

**UBC is surrounded by ocean on three sides and a large rainforest park on the fourth. In addition to it's spectacular physical setting UBC contains many world class attractions and is only twenty minutes from both the downtown core of cosmopolitan Vancouver and the International airport. As well as a gorgeous travel destination in it's own right, Vancouver is also a jumping off point for other exciting attractions such as Whistler/Blackcomb, Vancouver Island, Southern Gulf Islands, Seattle, and cruises to Alaska.**

**Come early or stay late, build your own memorable and deeply satisfying holiday and conference experience in the summer of 2006.**

### **Location**

The conference will be held on the campus of the University of British Columbia, situated on 450 hectares of woodland and surrounded on three sides by the Pacific Ocean, yet only 20 minutes away from downtown and the Vancouver International Airport. The campus is home to the world-renowned Museum of Anthropology, as well as several botanical gardens and a myriad of recreational activities, including a golf course, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, hiking and cycling trails.

Vancouver is a cosmopolitan city offering a wealth of cultural, dining and recreational experiences. The city is a gateway to great vacation opportunities, both in the province of British Columbia and further afield.

### **Accommodation**

Comfortable, reasonably priced accommodation in a variety of room types is available on campus at the Walter Gage Residence within easy walking distance of the meeting venue.

Opportunity for AAGT conference 2006! Interested in working on a committee? Best way to enhance your connections and experience of the conference is to have input while working with interesting colleagues. People interested in working on committees for the 2006 conference are encouraged to contact Co-conveners Bea Mackay: [bea@drbeamackay.com](mailto:bea@drbeamackay.com) and Warren Weir: [wbweir@telus.net](mailto:wbweir@telus.net)

COMMITTEES: Peer review: Process Groups: Scholarship: Interest Groups: Worker Bees

## 2006 Vancouver Conference—A Sneak Preview



Gage Towers



UBC Campus



Cecil Green



Vancouver Waterfront



False Creek Boats

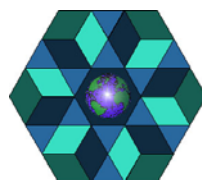
## *A Call to Adventure - An RCP Update*

by Marilyn Myles

My adventure as an RCP began five years ago when I sat in on an RCP conference meeting and promised to "think about" taking on that role. Later, when I realized that being an RCP was somewhat like being part of an ongoing process group, I was hooked! I eventually became the Midwest Regional Contact Person, and with the support of RCP's and other board members, I found the courage to volunteer on the program planning committee and offer a workshop for the 2004 conference. I never thought this was possible five years ago. I recently volunteered to serve one year as the RCP Representative, a job which will now be rotated annually among the RCP's. This is a big transition for us, as we were fortunate to have Nancy Woldt serve many years as our coordinator. I want to extend a heartfelt thanks to her for keeping us connected with her warmth, encouragement, vision and energy. We recently implemented one of her suggestions, that of inviting RCP's to share biographical sketches as a way of getting to know one another. I am pleased to introduce you to one of our new RCP's, Maragaret Brodie, from Western Canada, whose bio appears in this newsletter. I am pleased to welcome other new RCP's - Jenny O'Neill, Australia, Razi Ghaemmaghham Farahani of Eastern Canada, and Emmanuel Hernani of the Philippines. I am fascinated by the unique journeys bringing each of us to Gestalt which are described in our bio's, and yet we all share the same desire for self-discovery and aliveness. Look for additional bios in upcoming newsletters.

Being an RCP involves meeting four to six times a year in conference calls (which is paid for by AAGT), providing outreach to new members in our respective regions, and educating others about the benefits of belonging to AAGT. Being an RCP means being greeted by familiar faces which immediately ground me at the conferences, and having a space after the conference that supports integration of new knowledge and experiences. I have been inspired by other RCP's who took action to reduce their sense of isolation between conferences and build their own local Gestalt community by establishing Gestalt salons. I am particularly enjoying the synergy of new members who bring fresh perspectives, enthusiasm, and questioning, and experienced members who provide history, experience and examples of successful outreach. Bea Mackay and Tine van Wijk keep us updated on the Amsterdam conference/annual meeting and the upcoming 2006 conference respectively, and other RCP's are networking with them to provide support for those ventures.

We have membership in several places not currently represented by an RCP, such as Germany, Italy, Argentina and France. If you would like to represent your region, or want more information about what that would involve, please contact me ([mylestherapy@comcast.net](mailto:mylestherapy@comcast.net)). Being part of an international community like ours is truly an exciting adventure!





February 26, 2005

# Hello AAGT Organizational Members

This letter is a report of a meeting/workshop that was held at the AAGT 7th International Conference at St. Pete Beach, Florida, on November 10-14, 2004. About 15 AAGT members met for the purpose of exploring issues specific to Gestalt Organizations and their development. The meeting was also open to anyone interested in attending. The structure of the meeting centered around eliciting a palette of mutual themes, identifying specific issues within the themes, and developing pathways for Organizational Members to move forward along lines of mutual interest. Morgan Goodlander facilitated the group in discussion:

## EMERGING FIGURES

Different Perceived Values

Partnership Development

Support Community

Toxic Competition vs. Healthy

Cooperative Exchange of \_\_\_\_\_

Requirement of Trainees

Perceived value of programs

**Format of Training Programs - standards - values - methods - assessment**

Time Management

Boundaries

Cost/revenue/profit - business models

**Marketing**

Continuity for Organizations

Dual relationships

### 1) The Group chose **MARKETING** as a TOPIC for discussion at the meeting:

Internet - email - site postings [www.AAGT.org](http://www.AAGT.org) -

Phone calls

Newsletter OM page

Marketing was the chosen theme for discussion

Free Intros - samplers, two hours, one day, two days...

Ads in local papers

Email lists

Direct Mail

Cold calls

Follow up calls

Fax discount coupons to local organizations for multiple attendance

Website

Word of mouth

Specific workshops with compelling themes or a series

Free introductory seminars for community orgs.

Monthly seminars on a particular theme (free or not)

Build connections with academic programs through specific people

Offer CEUs

Sponsor a small gestalt conference for your region Apply to present workshops at conferences of other groups

Apply to present workshops at AAGT.

Rent table space at AAGT

Write articles for AAGT newsletter

Join AAGT at the Organizational level.

Invite key people in the community for free workshop

Gestalt Institute of San Francisco  
415-379-9848

### 2) The Group chose **TRAINING VALUES and STANDARDS** as a future email discussion topic.

Each institute could share its training and other standards and then compare to standards of other groups (Ganz).

### WE INVITE YOU TO RESPOND:

- SHARE your ideas about **MARKETING** and/or **TRAINING VALUES/STANDARDS**.
  - ASK for **DISCUSSION** on a **NEW TOPIC**.
- If you'd like to be excluded from this discussion, please reply to this email with "DELETE."

Warm regards,

Morgan Goodlander,

AAGT Board - Organizational Members' Representative  
[gestaltinstitute@yahoo.com](mailto:gestaltinstitute@yahoo.com) or [morgan@gestaltinstitute.com](mailto:morgan@gestaltinstitute.com)

Ruth Boerger  
[ruthbb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ruthbb@sbcglobal.net) or [ruth@gestaltinstitute.com](mailto:ruth@gestaltinstitute.com)

## Results of Needs Assessment Inventory from 2004 AAGT Conference

### Ansel Woldt, Continuing Education Officer

**Approximately half (N=56) people who attended the 2004 AAGT Conference completed the Needs Assessment Inventory at the end of the conference.** Instructions for completing the survey were as follows: "Planning and Continuing Education Committees very much appreciate your taking a few moments to express your desires for the kinds of workshops and presentations you would be interested in our offering at future conferences. It doesn't matter if you are a clinician, academician, administrator, researcher, or any combination of these. We are interested in your input to better plan to meet your needs. **If you are attending the conference for CE credits, you are REQUIRED to complete this inventory prior to obtaining your Continuing Education Certificate.** If you are not attending

*Following are the results of the survey, The number in each parentheses is the number of people who responded to the survey):*

1. Professional Affiliation(s): **Psychologists (15), Counselors (10), Social Workers (13), Marriage & Family Therapists (7), Rehabilitation Counselors (2), Nurses (3), Chemical Dependency Counselors (1), Organizational Development Practitioners (2), Gestalt Trainers/Institute Faculty (3) Physicians (0), Pastoral Counselors/Priests/Ministers/Rabbis (0),**
2. Highest Degree attained: **Doctorate (22), Masters Degree (26), Bachelors Degree (5), LMT (3 - Licensed Masso Therapists)**
3. Primary Employment Setting: **Private Practice (27), Training Institute (10), University (5), Community Mental Health Center (5), Hospital (2), School (5), Private Consultant (1), State Employee (1)**
4. **Check the topics below that most interest you for future conferences, considering that each would likely have specific or unique applications of Gestalt Therapy Theory &/or Methodology:**

RANK      No.

ORDER      VOTES      INTEREST AREA (*Ordered according to number of votes registered*)

1 <sup>st</sup>	30	Gestalt Group Therapy
2 <sup>nd</sup>	29	Assessment & Diagnosis from Gestalt Perspective
3 <sup>rd</sup>	28	Gestalt Therapy Advanced Practice
4 <sup>th</sup>	25	Leadership Issues in the Gestalt Community
5 <sup>th</sup>	24	Drugs/Alcohol/Chemical Dependency: Gestalt Approach
6 <sup>th</sup>	23	Gestalt Therapy for Beginners
7 <sup>th</sup>	22	Trauma & PTSD: Gestalt Treatment
8 <sup>th</sup>	21	Clinical Supervision: Gestalt Models
9 <sup>th</sup>	21	Gestalt, Transpersonal Psych. & Spiritual Development
10 <sup>th</sup>	20	Gestalt Couples Therapy
11 <sup>th</sup>	19	Somatic / Physical Models with Gestalt
12 <sup>th</sup>	18	Body-Based Gestalt Therapy
13 <sup>th</sup>	17	Gestalt Applications in Organizations
13 <sup>th</sup>	17	Research Methods in Gestalt Therapy
14 <sup>th</sup>	16	Adolescent Psychology & Gestalt Therapy
14 <sup>th</sup>	16	Child Psychology & Gestalt Play Therapy
15 <sup>th</sup>	15	Psychopathology – Gestalt Views
15 <sup>th</sup>	15	Depression & Gestalt Therapy
16 <sup>th</sup>	14	Neuropsychology & Gestalt



16 <sup>th</sup>	14	Gestalt Family Therapy
16 <sup>th</sup>	14	School Counseling & Gestalt
16 <sup>th</sup>	14	Crisis Intervention using Gestalt Approach
17 <sup>th</sup>	13	Geriatric Psych.: Gestalt Therapy with Elderly
17 <sup>th</sup>	13	Sexual Dysfunction & Gestalt Approach
18 <sup>th</sup>	12	Gestalt Therapy for "Old Timers"
18 <sup>th</sup>	12	Gestalt Therapy for the Timid or Scared
19 <sup>th</sup>	11	Professional Ethics in Gestalt Work
19 <sup>th</sup>	11	Cross-Cultural & Multi-Cultural Issues
20 <sup>th</sup>	10	Organizational Consulting & Gestalt
20 <sup>th</sup>	10	Psychology of Men & Gestalt
21 <sup>st</sup>	9	Psychology of Women and Gestalt
21 <sup>st</sup>	9	Industrial/Organizational Psychology & Gestalt
22 <sup>nd</sup>	8	Beginning Gestalt Counseling/Psychotherapy Skills
22 <sup>nd</sup>	8	Death & Dying: Gestalt Approach
23 <sup>rd</sup>	7	Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender Issues & Gestalt
24 <sup>th</sup>	6	Divorce Counseling & Gestalt Therapy
25 <sup>th</sup>	5	Schizophrenia: Gestalt Approach
25 <sup>th</sup>	5	Medical Disorders & Gestalt Psychotherapy
26 <sup>th</sup>	4	Health Psychology/Issues & Gestalt

The following received 1 or 2 votes each: **Gestalt Approach to Behavioral Assessment, Biofeedback & Gestalt Therapy, Career Assessment & Gestalt Counseling, Forensic Psychology & Gestalt, Gestalt Therapy in Religious Life, Hypnosis & Gestalt Therapy, Rehabilitation Psychology & Gestalt Therapy, Use of Computers in Professional Work, School Psychology & Gestalt, Gestalt Developmental Assessment**

5. These were written in as suggested programmatic topics: **Specific Gestalt Methodologies** (e.g., **Using Experiments, Using Paradoxical Interventions, Using Metaphors**), **Gestalt and Dual Relationships, Creativity & the Arts in Gestalt Therapy, Gestalt Dreamwork, Gestalt Therapy Theory Development, Gestalt Field Theory, Gender Issues in Gestalt Therapy, Cross-Pollination/Integration with other Therapies, Gestalt with Community & Political Issues, Gestalt/Psychoanalysis and Intersubjectivity, Gestalt and World Peace, Gestalt Mediation & Conflict Resolution, Body Image and Gestalt Therapy**

6. *Comments or suggestions for our future AAGT Conferences & Continuing Education programs: Consider having some "double sessions" (back to back) for more intense training or where therapeutic work is being modeled. Deeper and more meaningful Process Groups. Offer some pre- and/or post-conference workshops – especially for those of us from outside the USA. More demonstrations and actual therapeutic work modeled. Offer a "selected workshop" during each time slot that focuses on the conference theme. Set an agenda and time parameters for Community Meetings. Schedule more "Free Time" during daylight and more "Programs & Workshops" at night. Move the Auction to a Community Meeting where everyone is present. Continue offering the Marathon Group*



## *Spring at Last* by Sonia March Nevis

After a long winter, the daffodils opened yesterday. The weather bureau has told us that Cape Cod had more snow this winter than has been recorded in one hundred years. We had already guessed as much. It was incredibly beautiful and I felt privileged to see it all. The glass flowers continue to thrive and look all clean and sparkle in the sun.

I was searching for a theme for my letter to you all but was discarding thought after thought.

Then I remembered the file folder of "quotes" that I collect. Whenever I read something that I'm reluctant to throw away, I put it in my file. The file is fat by now and I use it whenever I need to ground myself. I decided to look in there for inspiration. The inspiration that came was to share some of the quotes. Maybe they will be useful for you as they are for me.

Many of them are in the folder to remind me about how much I don't know about intimacy. I do know a lot about it but the mysteries are still mysterious. Here a few quotes that I pulled out of the folder: I know as little about the nature of romantic love as

I knew when I was 18, but I do know about the deep pleasure of continuing interest, the excitement of wanting to know what somebody else thinks, will do, will not do; the tricks played and unplayed, the short cord that the years make into thick rope.... (Lillian Hellman)

When Alistair asked his wife what was wrong and how could he understand if she didn't tell him, she said if only he spared her a moment's attention he would understand without being told. Every intimacy is a potential hell. (Tim Parks)

Every home should have a room, or at least a nook with two chairs, where it is a sin punishable by immediate expulsion to speak of money, business, politics, or the state of one's teeth. (Anon.) Nothing goes right if your underwear is tight. (An advertisement)

And now a few words about the Center. Activities are starting after the quiet of the winter. The Membership Forum on Cape Cod was very satisfying. We learned a lot and had fun. The European Membership

Forum was also very satisfying. The next Forum, on Cape Cod, is September 30. Come, if you can, you'll like it. The Second Leadership program will end in a couple of weeks and the next one starts in October. Both the faculty and the participants are very pleased with how much is being learned. We are very excited by the program.

We have a couple of places left in the Cape Cod Training program, you may recognize it by its former name - the Couple and Family program. It starts May 15 so if you are thinking about it, this is a time to contact us.

We have two Conferences related to Power. The first, The Influence of Power and the Power of Influence is for professional women. We held it last year and it is back by popular request. It takes place on June 10-12.

The other Conference on power is the Conference on Shame and Power in Organizational Life. I think it will be fascinating. It takes place on June 16-19.

Check it all out on the website [www.gisc.org](http://www.gisc.org), or

e-mail us at [office@gisc.org](mailto:office@gisc.org) or call 1-508-349-7900.

Warmly, Sonia

Sonia March Nevis  
Gestalt International  
Study Center  
PO Box 515, South Wellfleet, MA 02663 USA  
1-508-349-7900, Fax 1-508-349-7908  
[www.gisc.org](http://www.gisc.org)



### Springtime Prayer

For flowers that bloom about our feet,  
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet,  
For song of bird, and hum of bee,  
For all things fair we hear or see,  
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!

For blue of stream and blue of sky,  
For pleasant shade of branches high,  
For fragrant air and cooling breeze,  
For beauty of the blooming trees,  
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!

- Ralph Waldo Emerson!



# Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy

## Constitution and By-Laws

### AAGT PREAMBLE

These **BY-LAWS** provide rules, as specified by and in compliance with the **ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**, for the governance of the **Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy** (also herein referred to as the **Association**, and by its initials, **AAGT**), and for the functioning of the Association's **Board of Directors** (also herein referred to as the **Board**) which shall develop and set, consistent with the mode of functioning of this organization, all Association policy, and for the Association's **Executive Council** (also herein referred to as the **Council**, or as the **Officers of the Association**, or as the **EC**) which shall provide leadership for the Association and carry out the decisions of the Board to the best of its ability.

The Association is organized and certified as a non-stock, non-profit corporation entitled to engage in any lawful act or activity exclusively for educational, scientific, and charitable purposes except that no part of the activities of the Association shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to intervene in any of these **ARTICLES**, nor otherwise engaging in activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3), or by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2), of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

## ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE

### SECTION 1. NAME:

The name of this professional organization is the **Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy**, also referred to by its initials, **AAGT**, and also, herein, as the **Association**.

### SECTION 2. PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Association shall be to support the professional and personal associating and advancing of persons interested in participating in a forum committed to the preservation and advancement of the philosophy, theory, practice, and research of Gestalt therapy and its various applications.

*In furtherance of this purpose, AAGT shall encourage the development and application of principles and practices in the organization consistent with the following tenets:*

That an organization can be created, rather than imposed, and that it will grow out of our contacting; and

That a structure will emerge in response to our shared needs, interests and concerns; and

That by believing in the unity of theory and practice, an organization which so creates itself, is itself an experiment, an on-going organic process of Gestalt formation and destruction, in which old forms are destroyed and new figures emerge through contact that is bright and lively, energetic, graceful and fluid; and

That such an organization provides the ground for the enrichment, articulation and support of the constantly emerging figure that is **Gestalt Therapy!**

## ARTICLE II: REGISTRATION, OFFICES AND AGENTS

### SECTION 1. ASSOCIATION REGISTRATION

The Association is registered as a legal entity with **The Secretary of State** in the **State of Delaware** and is filed accordingly with **The Register of Deeds** in Delaware as a non-stock and non-profit corporation.

### SECTION 2. PERMANENT ADDRESS

The permanent address of the Association is that of the Association's "**Registered Office**" which is located at **201 North Walnut Street, Wilmington, County of New Castle, Delaware 19801; Telephone # (302) 575-0440; FAX # (302) 575-1346.**

### SECTION 3. REGISTERED AGENT

The "**Registered Agent**" of the Association is **The Company Corporation**, which is located at the above address of the registered office.

### SECTION 4. WORKING OFFICE

The "**Working Office**" of the Association is that office where Association archives and records are maintained which shall be located at the home office of the Founding Secretary, **511 Beryl Drive, Kent, Ohio 44240**, until such time that other suitable location(s) may be designated by the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE III. CONSTITUENCY, MEMBERSHIP AND PRIVILEGES**

### **SECTION 1. CONSTITUENCY**

The Association is a voluntary organization of individuals expressing their interest(s) in *Gestalt Therapy*. Participation shall be open to persons of all nations in the world, who shall be treated with respect and without discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, mental or physical disability. The Association shall undertake and encourage activities and may also develop programs which have as their goal the amelioration of conditions that may restrict members from full participation in the Association.

### **SECTION 2. MEMBERSHIP**

There are two classifications of membership in AAGT – Individual and Organizational. Members of the Association shall be persons interested in the history, development, preservation, and/or advancement of the Gestalt approach who pay an annual membership fee (the amount of which shall be designated by the Board of Directors and paid to the Treasurer by each member annually) and who otherwise meet the standards prescribed by these **BY-LAWS**. The designation Member, as used in these **BY-LAWS**, shall be deemed the preferred classification of all persons and organizations belonging to the Association, although at some time it may also include various other categories of membership such as "Honorary Fellow", "Charter Member", "Emeritus Member", or "Sustaining Member", or any other categories so recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by the membership at a general meeting of the Association. Within the Individual Membership category, AAGT has determined to provide a reduction in annual dues for certain groups such as couples, students, and retired members. Membership may be terminated by the Membership Committee or by the Executive Council for non-payment of dues and for other criteria to be determined by the Board of Directors and approved by the membership.

### **SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES**

Members shall have the right and be encouraged to express their individual opinions and convictions, to secure fair consideration, to vote at Annual Meetings, to hold office (providing prerequisites are met), and to have their voices be heard in this Association. Membership in the Association is not credentialing nor is it intended to imply or to convey that members have met any minimum standards of training, any criteria for certification, any level of knowledge, nor the mastery of any skill as a Gestalt therapist.

## **ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS, CONFERENCES AND CONVEYANCES**

### **SECTION 1. ANNUAL MEETING**

There shall be an **Annual Meeting** for members of the Association, presided over by the President, for the purpose of including members in the activities of the Association. This shall include but not be limited to the election and appointment of Officers and Board of Directors and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the membership. The time and place of Annual Meetings shall be decided by the Board of Directors. Members shall be notified in the **AAGT Newsletter** by the President or his/her designee as to the time, place and tentative agenda of Annual Meetings.

### **SECTION 2. OTHER MEETINGS**

The Board of Directors may call special meetings or hold special conferences at locations, either within or outside of the United States, for the furtherance of the purposes of the Association and shall give notice of said meetings to the members in the **AAGT Newsletter**.

### **SECTION 3. MEETINGS AS FORM, FORUM AND PROCESS**

The form and forums of all meetings shall be based on Gestalt Therapy principles of organismic self-regulation, good figure/ground formation, quality contact and respect for the functional resistance necessary for structure that supports sufficient flexibility to provide nourishing ground for personal and professional integrity, meaningful interpersonal interaction, inclusionary decision-making, personalized networking, and professional development among the members of the Association.

In accordance with the Gestalt principles which precipitated and guided the inception and development of this Association, the form and forum for the decision-making process of the Association shall be concerned with the human and decisional processes as well as with the outcome and products of those decisions. Community Meetings were developed for the presentation and discussion of issues pertinent to the Association. The Association's founders placed a high priority on major decisions being made in an open forum where face-to-face contact is possible and where consensus is sought, rather than voting as accorded by "*Robert's Rules of Order*." Consensus encourages the expression of feelings and dissenting opinion, whereby both majority and minority views are aired openly on the decisional issue before the body. If time permits, each member shall have a voice if s/he so wishes to express it, providing it pertains directly to the task/issue at hand. After a consensus has been reached there shall be an attempt to include the minority/dissenting part into the whole. In situations or cases wherein consensus cannot be reached or time constraints do not permit the full expression and articulation of the opinions and feelings of all present, the act of a majority of members present in the meeting shall be the treated as the act of the Association unless otherwise precluded by law or these **BY-LAWS**.

Because Gestalt therapists encourage, respect and support alternative voices, value non-confluent relationships by owning and expressing differences, engage with resistances as "the energy, not the enemy," identify and work with polarities in the field, and honor dialogical processes as the heart and soul of Gestalt methodology, the "**Covenant of Community**" was developed and approved at AAGT's 2002 Gestalt Conference. This was done to provide supplemental guidance for and a commitment to creating and sustaining dialogue in our Gestalt community. The "**Covenant of Community**" invites AAGT members to subscribe to the fol-

lowing dialogical processes, particularly when encountering dramatic differences:

We will undertake and encourage one another to engage in ongoing dialogue with one another and to remain open and in contact when choosing to withdraw temporarily from dialogue.

We will undertake to recognize, acknowledge and own our projections, to check out our assumptions, and to encourage one another to do so.

We will undertake to maintain community through patience and understanding.

We will undertake to support the needs of the members of our community.

We will undertake to stay with even difficult dialogue, acknowledging the need for space and refreshment when hungry, tired and frustrated, but not abandoning one another.

We will undertake to get and remain interested in the impact our behavior, words and intentions have on one another.

We will undertake to put our desire for and interest in power (in whatever form) out on the table along with being honest and direct in other arenas.

We will undertake to attend carefully to language or other communication that objectifies the other.

## **SECTION 4. CONVEYANCES AND PUBLICATIONS**

The Association may publish and distribute such materials, newsletters, journals, tapes, films, or other matter that may be of interest to the membership as may be authorized by the Executive Council and/or Board of Directors. The official publication for the conveyance of information relative to the functioning of the Association shall be the ***AAGT Newsletter*** to be published on a regular basis and edited by the Director of Publications, an appointed member of the Board of Directors. Endorsements appearing in any publication of the Association shall be approved by the Executive Council. The Administration and direct management of AAGT publication activity shall be under the auspices and direction of the Director of Publications in consultation with the President and/or his/her designee from the Board, and/or member(s) of the Association with expertise in editing and publication.

# **ARTICLE V: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE**

## **SECTION 1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The activities and affairs of the Association shall be the responsibility of the **Board of Directors (Board)**, a body of Association members determined by these **BY-LAWS** to include an Executive Council and other Board Members. Only members of the Association shall be eligible to serve on the **Board**. The Board is expressly authorized, in accord with the **AAGT ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**, to make, alter or repeal Association decisions within the constraints provided by Delaware law pertaining to non-profit, non-stock corporations, to wit, "***the Board of Directors shall not exercise any power of authority conferred herein or by Statute upon the members.***" To facilitate the smoother functioning of the Association, the **Board** may delegate to the **Executive Council** all the powers of the **Board** necessary to carry on the management of the Association's activities and affairs.

### **A. Composition of the Board of Directors**

The **Board of Directors** shall consist of:

#### **1. The Executive Council (Association Officers)**

The **Executive Council (EC)** is part and parcel of the Board of Directors and shall be composed of five (5) Association Officers -- the **President**, the **Vice President** (who shall be the **President-Elect** one year and the **Vice/Past President** during the year succeeding the president's two year term), the **Secretary**, the **Treasurer**, and the **Continuing Education Officer**.

#### **2. Additional Members of the Board of Directors**

Composition of the Board of Directors shall be determined at the Association's Annual Meetings. In addition to the Executive Council, people elected or appointed to the following offices shall constitute the Board of Directors: the **Director of Publications**, the **Treasurer-Elect**, the **Membership Chairperson**, the **Association Archivist**, the **OM (Organizational Members') Representative**, the **RCP (Regional Contact Persons') Representative**, and the **Coordinator of Interest Groups**.

### **C. Election Procedures**

Officers and other Board members shall be elected or appointed (as designated in these **BY-LAWS**) at the Annual Meetings of the Association by those members present. As with other decision-making processes described in these **BY-LAWS**, the election or appointment to positions on the Board shall be by consensus of members present at the Annual Meetings unless consensus is impossible or improbable within the time constraints of the meeting; in which case, a majority vote (over 50%) of those present shall suffice to determine the outcome of the election. The Vice President shall be responsible for the preparation and organization of the election, including the recruitment and presentation of nominees. If an **Elections Committee** is to be utilized, it shall be the responsibility of the Vice President to organize such a committee as an *ad hoc* group for the purposes of recruiting and nominating members who meet the requirements of the office as stated herein and who are willing and able to serve **AAGT** as leaders on the Board of Directors. Fair notice of open positions on the Board and the terms of office shall be announced in the ***AAGT Newsletter*** prior to the Annual Meeting; such announcement being the responsibility of the Vice President. Members interested in running for office should notify the Vice President or a Board member and shall be invited submit a position paper in the ***AAGT Newsletter*** and/or at the Annual Meeting.



## **D. Terms of Office**

In order to maintain optimal levels of awareness, organizational interaction and vital contact, the terms of office on the Board shall be for terms varying from 1 to 3 years, with terms of office being as follows:

### **1. Executive Council**

**President** \_\_\_\_\_ **2 year term;** *The **BY-LAWS** changes in 2004 provide for election during the Annual Meeting at International Conferences. [Next due in 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, etc.]*

**Vice President / Past-President** \_\_\_\_\_ **1 year term;** *Continues after Presidency as Vice President until next Annual Meeting.*

**Vice President / President-Elect** \_\_\_\_\_ **1 year term;** *Elected at the Annual Meeting during International Conferences.*

**Secretary** \_\_\_\_\_ **2 year term;** *Elected at Annual Meeting during International Conferences beginning in 2004 [Next due in 2006, 2008, etc.]*

**Treasurer** \_\_\_\_\_ **2 year term;** *Elected at Annual Meeting in 2004 [Next due in 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, etc.]*

**Continuing Education Officer** \_\_\_\_\_ **3 year term;** *Originally **appointed** in 1997 [Next due in 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, etc.]*

### **2. Additional Board Members**

**Treasurer-Elect** \_\_\_\_\_ **1 year term;** *Elected at Annual Meeting preceding expiration of Treasurer's term.*

**Interest Groups' Coordinator** \_\_\_\_\_ **3 year term;** *Elected at Annual Meeting, originally in 1992 [Next 1995, 1998, 2001, etc.]*

**Membership Chairperson** \_\_\_\_\_ **3 year term;** *Elected at Annual Meeting, originally in 1995 [Next 2004, 2007, 2010, etc.]*

**Publications Director** \_\_\_\_\_ **3 year term;** *Originally **appointed** in 1993 [Next 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017, etc.]*

**Association Archivist** \_\_\_\_\_ **3 year term;** *Originally **appointed** in 1994 [Next 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, etc.]*

**OM Representative** \_\_\_\_\_ **1 year term;** *Originally elected in 2004 [Next 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, etc.]*

**RCP Representative** \_\_\_\_\_ **1 year term;** ***Selected annually by and from amongst fellow RCPs. [2003, 2004, 2005, etc.]***

## **E. Board Quorum**

It shall be necessary to have a majority (over fifty percent) of the Board members involved in the consensus and/or voting process, to constitute a quorum.

## **F. Manner of Acting as a Board and AAGT Decision-Making Process**

In accordance with the Gestalt principles which precipitated and guided the inception and development of this Association, the form and forum for the decision-making process of the Board shall be the same as that of the Association; namely that it shall be concerned with the human and decisional processes of the Board as well as with the outcome and products of those decisions. Board decisions will be made preferably through consensus-seeking rather than by majority vote, whereby protocol encourages the expression of feelings and dissenting opinion; and whereby both majority and minority views are aired openly on the decisional issue before the body. Each member shall have a voice if s/he so wishes to express it, providing it pertains directly to the task/issue at hand. After a consensus has been reached there shall be an attempt to include the minority/dissenting part into the whole. In situations or cases wherein consensus cannot be reached or time constraints may not permit the full expression and articulation of the opinions and feelings of all present, the act of an absolute majority of the Board members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board except where otherwise precluded by law or these **BY-LAWS**.

## **G. Official Board Minutes**

The Secretary shall keep a copy of the Official Minutes of all meetings of the Executive Council and Board. A copy of the minutes shall be distributed as appropriate by the Secretary to members of the Board and be published in the ***AAGT Newsletter*** within a reasonable length of time following each meeting.

## **H. Board Vacancies**

Vacancies on the Board, which occur between annual meetings, may be filled by presidential appointment, with the approval of the Board.

## **SECTION 2. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

The **Executive Council**, also referred to variously as **Council**, **Association Officers**, and **EC** is constituted by and empowered to function in behalf of the Board of Directors and the Association. The Association designates to the Executive Council all the powers of the Board necessary to carry on the management of the Association's activities and affairs. It shall consist of AAGT's President, Vice President Elect (*which shall be either the Past-President or the President-Elect, except in 2004-2005 when both are active members of the EC*), Secretary, Treasurer, and Continuing Education Officer. Succession of all offices shall take place during the Association's annual meeting. In the event of illness, absence, or any other reason causing inability of an officer to serve, the Board of Directors may act to fill the office until the next regular election or until the officer is able to return to her/his office. The officers and their duties are as follows:

### **A. President**

Becoming the Association's President involves a four-year commitment. The first year of a President's term is as President-Elect

and is equal to the year succeeding the Past-President's presidency. The President-Elect is Vice-President in the year before taking office as President (*i.e., the 2nd year of the previous presidency*), and in the year after his/her Presidency (*i.e., the 1st year of the next presidency*) the Past-President is again a Vice-President; thus, a four-year block committed to the leadership of the Association.

As the Presiding Officer of the Association the President shall preside over and provide leadership for the Executive Council, the Board of Directors and the Association of members. It shall be the responsibility of the President to perform the following duties:

1. Chair all meetings of the Executive Council, Board and Association.
2. Oversee and exercise general administration of the affairs of the Association.
3. Unless someone else is so designated, affix the signature of the Association to all papers, conveyances, obligations, and instruments in writing that may require the same.
4. Supervise, subject to the control of the Board, all officers, agents, and employees of the Association.
5. Assist the Treasurer with the preparation of an Annual Budget for the Association.
6. After consultation to seek consensus with other members of the Board, appoint members of ad hoc and advisory committees, associate editors, and other Association representatives.
7. Be the representative of the Association, or so designate a Board member who is agreeable to all parties, to coordinate the Association's Annual Meetings and activities pertaining thereto with the conference coordination personnel.
8. Network with other Gestalt organizational leaders regarding Gestalt therapy within the global community.
9. Serve as Vice President of the Association and member of the Executive Council during the year immediately following service as President.

## **B. Vice President Elect and Vice/Past President**

The Vice-Presidency provides for involvement in the leadership of AAGT both as an "intern" (as President-Elect) and as an experienced mentor (as Vice/Past President). The first year in office as President-Elect is equal to the year succeeding the Past-President's presidency, serving as Vice-President in the year before taking office as President (*i.e., the 2nd year of the previous presidency*). In the year following his/her Presidency (*i.e., the 1st year of the next presidency*) the Past-President is again a Vice-President.

The President-Elect shall be elected at the Annual Meeting during AAGT's International Conferences for a one (1) year term and shall serve in this office on the Executive Council and Board of Directors with the intent of it being a "presidential internship," while simultaneously fulfilling the role of Vice President, prior to assuming the duties of President. It shall be the responsibility of the Vice-President to perform the following duties:

1. Consult and collaborate with the President and Board members in developing short and long-term goals for the Association.
2. In the absence of the President, or due to her/his inability to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President and, when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all of the restrictions upon the President.
3. Serve as the Chairperson for Elections. If an Elections Committee is to be utilized, it shall be the responsibility of the Vice President to organize such a committee as an *ad hoc* group for the purposes of nominating members who meet the requirements and who are willing and able to serve AAGT as leaders in the Executive Council and/or on the Board of Directors. An important role is the recruitment and nomination of prospective members for offices, which may necessitate considerable dialogue to communicate the essence of any open position on the Board. Being responsible for the election also necessitates the preparation of an announcement of available offices for the AAGT Newsletter well ahead of the Annual Meeting. If a ballot vote is to be cast, it shall be the Vice Presidents' responsibility to prepare a ballot of nominees for each office due for election, and present the nominees to the membership at/or prior to the Annual Meetings.

## **C. Secretary**

The Secretary shall be elected to a two (2) year term of office, beginning in the year 1992 and in the even-numbered years thereafter, and shall serve as a Member and Secretary of the Executive Council, of the Board of Directors, and of the Association. The Secretary shall:

Keep a record, called "Minutes," of the proceedings of and persons in attendance at meetings of the Executive Council, the Board of Directors, and the AAGT Annual Meetings, and shall provide copies of said Minutes to the Board and membership in a timely manner.

Assist the President and Board with official correspondence for the Association.

Provide a copy of all pertinent Association records, minutes, and documents to the Association Archivist.

## **D. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be elected to a 3-year term of office beginning in 2004 and every third year thereafter. S/he shall serve as a member of the Executive Council and the Board of Directors and serve the Association as Treasurer with the following responsibilities and duties:

1. Be in charge of, maintain custody of, and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Association.
2. Maintain an accurate record of all members' dues payments; this being done in cooperation with the Membership Chairperson.
3. Receive, safely keep, and give receipts for all funds and moneys due and payable to the Association from any source whatsoever and deposit such moneys in the name of the Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy in a federally insured

bank or in such savings and loan or trust companies or depositories as shall be specified by the Board.

4. Keep all financial records in a manner designated by a Certified Accountant and file all forms required by the Internal Revenue Service and any other Tax Boards as necessitated by law.
5. Make timely payments of all bills and maintain records of all payments, ascertaining that the annual requirements of a not-for-profit corporation are met and all documents filed with proper authorities in our "Registered Office" with the Company Corporation in Delaware.
6. Report as needed to the Board the status of the treasury, showing bank balances, program expenses, income from dues and conferences, and administrative expenses.
7. Prepare an Annual Financial Report, including a summary of revenues, outlays, and bank balances, and present it to the Board of Directors and to the Membership at our Annual Meetings.
8. Prepare, with the President, an Annual Budget to be presented to the Association at the Annual Meeting, which shall include ideas or plans for fund raising during the ensuing year.
9. When transferring books from one Treasurer to another, the President shall approve of an independent, qualified agent to assist in auditing of the books.
10. The Board may require the Treasurer be bonded for the faithful discharge of these duties in such sum and with such surety or sureties as the Board determines is warranted; and
11. In the event of resignation, incapacity, death, or removal from office the President shall designate one of the members of the Association to act in the Treasurer's stead and shall follow the procedures designated in duty number six (Item # 6. above).

## **F. Continuing Education Officer**

The Continuing Education (CE) Officer shall be appointed by the Board (*based on review of qualifications and recommendations by the Executive Council*) to a three (3) year term of office, commencing in the year 1998, to serve as a member of the Executive Council and Board of Directors. His/her duties and responsibilities shall include:

Direct, administer and coordinate AAGT's Continuing Education (CE) activities, including such things as completing Applications for Provider Approval, filing Annual Reports to approval boards and keeping files of CE Programs and Participants as required by approval boards.

Formulate CE policies for approval by the Board as necessitated to maintain providerships in the various professional societies whose advocacy and involvement we desire in our programs.

Implement, operationalize and oversee the functional aspects of CE Provider Agreements with regard for policies of the Association in such a manner that is in keeping with ethical practices of professional societies.

Prepare the necessary forms and materials for CE registration at conferences and programs, including the preparation and dissemination of Certificates of Completion and Certificates of Attendance for patrons not enrolling for continuing education credit.

Serving as Chair of the Association's Advisory Committee for Continuing Education; and

## **SECTION 3. ADDITIONAL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THEIR DUTIES**

In addition to the Executive Council, other Members of the Board shall include members fulfilling the following offices and duties:

### **A. Treasurer-Elect**

This office was created to provide the opportunity for someone interested in becoming the finance officer of the Association to serve the maximum of a one-year internship in order to "learn the ropes" of the office of Treasurer. While not yet a member of the Executive Council, the person fulfilling this role shall participate in as many monthly conference calls as possible and attend to the following responsibilities that involve becoming knowledgeable of the financial responsibilities of the Association, including but not limited to obtaining knowledge of:

How to establish and maintain an Association checking account.

How to deposit and withdraw monies from the bank.

How to maintain the necessary forms and payments as a not-for-profit educational corporation.

How to process financial information on the Internet.

How to process the receipt and prompt payment of accounts payable.

How to process and obtain payment of Annual Membership Dues.

How to engage in contractual relationships with vendors, regional representatives, hotels, etc.

How to handle projects involving supplemental income such as Continuing Education Fees, Conference Fees and Conference Auctions.

### **B. Director of Publications**

The Director of Publications shall serve as the Editor of the AAGT Newsletter and other association publications, being ap-

pointed by the Board of Directors (*based on a review of qualifications and recommendation by the Executive Council*) to a three (3) year term of office, commencing in the year 1993 and every three years thereafter, and shall serve on the Board of Directors with the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Provide guidance in the development of publication efforts of the Association.
2. Formulate and recommend publications and editorial policies for approval by the Executive Council and/or Board.
3. Implement, operationalize, and oversee the functional aspects of editorial and publication decisions and policies of the Association in such a manner that is in keeping with ethical journalistic practices of professional societies.

### **C. Membership Chairperson**

The Membership Chairperson shall be elected to a three (3) year term of office, commencing in the year 1995 and every third year thereafter, to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. Her/his duties and responsibilities shall include:

Prepare membership brochures, fliers and other promotional materials.

Actively engage in the recruitment and maintenance of members.

Communicate monthly with the Association Treasurer regarding the collection of membership dues for new members.

Work cooperatively with the RCP Representative and Interest Groups Coordinator to facilitate interest in joining the Association.

Communicate as often as necessary with officers, members of the Board and any other key persons in the Gestalt community regarding the opportunities available through membership in the Association.

Facilitate the development of an active Advisory Committee on Membership to assist in membership activities.

Create and distribute an Annual Report on Membership to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association and any other reports as deemed essential by the Executive Council; and

### **D. Association Archivist**

There shall be an Association Archivist appointed by the Board of Directors (*based on a review of qualifications and recommendation by the Executive Council*) to a three (3) year term of office, commencing in the year 1994 and every three years thereafter, and shall serve on the Board of Directors with responsibilities for the following duties:

1. Maintain the library of AAGT's history and archival information, including, but not limited to, copies of the Association ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION, CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS, minutes of meetings, notes on proceedings, newsletters, tapes, films, and any other Association documents.
2. Chair the Advisory Committee for the Constitution, By-Laws, History and Archives.
3. Serve as liaison archivist between the Association and the Frederick and Laura Perls' Special Collections and Gestalt Therapy Archives maintained for posterity and on-site research in the Kent State University Library, Kent, Ohio.
4. Serve as the liaison person between AAGT and the publishers/producers of Gestalt materials of interest and of historical value to the Association, particularly with

Gestalt Review, The Gestalt Journal, British Gestalt Journal, Australian Gestalt Journal, International Gestalt Journal;

Gestalt Journals and Publications from other countries and nations;

GICPress, Gestalt Institute Press, Sage Publications and similar publishers that may now or in the future create materials of particular interest to Gestalt Therapy; and

### **E. Organization Members' (OM) Representative**

The person elected to serve on the Board as the representative of Gestalt Institutes and other Gestalt organizations shall serve a one-year term of office commencing at our Annual Meetings. His/her duties and responsibilities shall include:

1. Represent the interests of Gestalt institutes, trainers, consulting firms and other affiliated organizations on the Board of directors.
2. Serve as a liaison between the Association and affiliated Gestalt organizations.
3. Foster interest amongst Gestalt organizations to submit workshop proposals for our conferences.
4. Coordinate communications and activities among the Organizational Members, such as surveys and research projects.

### **F. Regional Contact Persons' (RCP) Representative**

The Representative of Regional Contact Persons (RCPs) shall be selected annually by and from among the Regional Contact Persons to a one-year term of office commencing in the year 2004 and every year thereafter to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. Her/his duties and responsibilities shall include:

1. Coordinate the development and maintenance of a network of Regional Contact Persons (RCPs) for regions in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and other nations and regions throughout the world for the purpose of communicating the goals of AAGT to those interested in the Gestalt approach.
2. Develop and maintain regular communications with RCPs and facilitate discussion of matters of importance to the Board and likewise, communicate the interests of the Board to RCPs.
3. Serve as a liaison by providing input to the Association regarding the wants and needs of RCPs and as the conduit of information from the various regions to the Board of Directors.

4. Provide the names and biographical data to the Board on persons volunteering or being nominated as RCPs and obtain Board approval of nominees willing to serve as RCPs.
5. Create and distribute an Annual Report on RCP Activity to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association and any other reports as deemed essential by the Board; and

**Regional Contact Persons (RCPs)** *[For clarification role and function, not as Board members.]*

Members of the Association who share common professional interests involving Gestalt Therapy and/or the Gestalt Community may desire to organize into Regions, each of which shall have an RCP (Regional Contact Person). The number of Regions in the Association shall be determined by geography and the interest generated amongst the membership. RCPs may be self-nominated/volunteers, or selected by constituents in their respective regions. RCPs may be removed for cause, and may be so done by the majority vote of the Board of Directors upon the recommendation of the RCP Representative. The duties of RCPs shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Serve as the RCP of said Region which includes, but is not limited to, chairing meetings in the Region and providing leadership and direction in the creation, development and implementation of goals appropriate to the Association's purpose and **BY-LAWS**.
2. Participate on all **RCP Conference Calls** that are feasible and work cooperatively with the RCP Representative in the formulation of ideas of interest to the **AAGT** membership.
3. Prepare and submit to the RCP Representative items of interest that can serve as publicity in the **AAGT Newsletter** and an Annual Report about the activities in the region, plus any additional reports that may be requested by the President or Executive Council.

**G. Interest Groups' Coordinator**

The Coordinator of Interest Groups shall be elected to a three (3) year term of office, commencing in the year 1992, and every three years thereafter, to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. Her/his duties and responsibilities shall include:

1. Assist the President with creating and formulating ideas and development of guidelines for Interest Groups and committees that facilitate creative possibilities in the organization.
2. Be responsible for the recruitment, assignment and nurturance of Chairpersons for Interest Groups.
3. Provide guidance and leadership for Interest Group Chairpersons, including, but not limited to, developing short and long-term goals with vision of what is possible to accomplish in each area of interest and being a catalyst for creative problem solving in their implementation of goals.
4. Provide assistance to the President and discharge such other duties as may be called for by the Council and Board.

**AAGT Interest Groups**

**1. General Information about the AAGT Interest Groups**

Much energy, life and commitment have been dedicated to making AAGT a worldwide force. There is enormous involvement in AAGT formation to a commitment of having members keep Gestalt principles of inclusiveness and commitment to dialogue as they grow. To these ends Interest Groups have been set up as vehicles through which individuals can share their ideas, talents, and concerns about Gestalt Therapy. Active participation in the Interest Groups can facilitate further networking and communication among the AAGT members. Interest groups are intended to provide a supportive forum for collegial contact, discussion, and organizing among AAGT members who have a serious interest in a particular domain. The Interest Groups offer AAGT members an invitation to become more involved with the Association. The number and types of Interest Groups in the Association shall be determined by the interest(s) generated amongst the membership.

**Chairpersons of Interest Groups**

Once organized, each Interest Group shall have a Chairperson. Chairpersons shall be selected by their respective Interest Groups at annual meetings. Chairpersons may be removed for cause and may be done so by the Executive Council upon the recommendation of the Coordinator of Interest Groups. The duties of Interest Group Chairpersons shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- A. Serve as the Chairperson of said Interest Group which includes, but is not limited to, chairing meetings of the Interest Group and providing leadership and direction in the creation, development and implementation of goals appropriate to the Association's purpose and **BY-LAWS**.
- B. Work cooperatively with the Interest Groups Coordinator in the formulation of ideas of interest to the AAGT membership.
- C. Perform such other duties as may be requested by the Interest Groups' Coordinator.

**3. Names and Descriptions of AAGT Interest Groups**

**PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF AAGT**

This Interest Group serves as one of the forums within AAGT for creating and following the form and development of the Association. We attend to the process of shaping our community, supporting the lively desire to base our associating on principles consistent with Gestalt theory. We are concerned with safeguarding self-regulation and voting practices that allow for all voices to be heard and to matter. We are concerned with how AAGT approaches membership and ongoing and emerging tasks in order to maintain a non-hierarchical, diverse, inclusive structure, based on the Gestalt Therapy principles we have written into the By-



Laws of the Association.

### **AAGT WATCHDOG AND BRAKING GROUP**

From the beginning AAGT has been committed to having members involved in "watching and protecting" our processes of "associating" and of "creating." This Interest Group assumes the responsibility for watching -- telling our story, watching our process, and also saving our theory together. We remind members to be respectful of differences, to take time to stay with conflict, to attend to and respect members' individuality, reminding one another that our traditional style of decision-making is preferably by consensus, and carrying along the traditions in our communications through storytelling of history and of the rituals of contact. Our aim is to come back again and again in the experiencing of our theory in our present contacting. The group will endeavor to see that AAGT maintains the value of honoring many people's input, attempting to include everyone in its process, facilitates hearing diverse views, and following a design that honors consensus.

### **GESTALT THEORY DEVELOPMENT AND PHILOSOPHY INTEREST GROUP**

This Interest Group is devoted to the exploration of numerous issues in the theory of Gestalt Therapy and undergirding philosophies. Some members have participated with each other in theoretical dialogues through written correspondence and Internet exchanges, while others have preferred to participate by observing these dialogues.

### **GESTALT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORKING GROUP**

The aim of this Interest Group is to come back again and again to experiencing Gestalt theory in our present contacting. In the ongoing process, we are careful in setting philosophical ground firmly and solidly. We are concerned with building enough safety into the structure to keep the design shaped yet open to new possibilities. We work at creating excitement, including everyone in the process, sharing diverse views, and supporting members' quality contact.

### **GESTALT THERAPY IN ACADEMIA AND HIGHER EDUCATION INTEREST GROUP**

This is a Gestalt network for students and faculty in colleges and universities. Our goal is to build a foundation for Gestalt teaching and learning within academic settings. Major projects of this group are the compilation of a directory of Gestalt faculty, courses and programs at institutions of higher education, collecting teaching materials, course outlines and handouts used in Gestalt-oriented courses, and the building of a network of graduate and undergraduate students interested in Gestalt Therapy.

### **INTEGRATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPIES AND GESTALT THERAPY INTEREST GROUP**

This Interest Group is devoted to discussing and examining key concepts in other theories of counseling and psychotherapy with the aim of potentially integrating them into Gestalt Therapy theory and practice. Beginning with Fritz and Laura Perls and Paul Goodman, the tradition in Gestalt Therapy is to integrate parts of other theories to create a more effective "whole."

### **GESTALT TRAINING INSTITUTES LIAISON INTEREST GROUP**

This Interest Group provides opportunities for AAGT members to exchange ideas about the various ways in which training programs are organized and what teaching approaches are used. The underlying question is, "What relation may these models and approaches have to the theory and practice of Gestalt Therapy?" We are also interested in laying the groundwork for "inter-institute" communication and cooperation, and for having regional training conferences. Chief among the concerns of the Interest Group on Training Institutes Liaison is to see whether structured programs are consistent with the philosophy and practice of Gestalt Therapy theory itself, with its organismic and self-regulating base. Other key issues that have been identified are the need for inter-communications among Gestalt training programs in the U.S.A. and other countries; and the trend toward normalization of Gestalt institutes vis-à-vis the larger society, including state licensing. Concerns and attendant limitations to be addressed include the question of state control, legal issues, and entrance and exit requirements. This Interest Group recently gained a presence on the Board and hopes to promote further dialogue among training programs around the world.

### **GESTALT APPLICATIONS TO DIVERSITY AND SPECIAL POPULATIONS INTEREST GROUP**

The aim of this group is to work on the issues of Diversity and Special Populations. The word "diversity" leaves out the power issue and labeling. It is a powerful thing to label someone else as different and give him/her a pre-configured social identity; or for an individual to take on a pre-configured social identity in compliance or defiance. When working with certain populations considered "diverse" or "special", the therapist must be concerned with what is implied as "norm" or "regular." The social, political, and cultural norms become inextricably parts of the social self of personal gestalten in each individual client down to the level of language and body space. They affect personality (self-image), the style of contacting, the course of therapy, the illusion of authority, and the necessity of aggression. We are committed to extending this knowledge into the Gestalt community.

### **GESTALT THERAPY AND SOCIAL CHANGE INTEREST GROUP**

The focus of this group is on the theme of personal support in the field of social change. This group is comprised of people from diverse communities who are sharing some of their personal experiences and activities in social action. There are folks involved in alternative schools, teaching singing, community work with other people, group treatment with men who abuse / assault women, and many other activities especially with voluntary and non-government groups and organizations. There is something about Gestalt Therapy and the experimental relationship between the organism (individual, social group, class, etc.) and the environment that speaks fundamentally to a process of social change.

### **GESTALT DREAMWORK INTEREST GROUP**

This Interest Group is open to anyone who has special interest in and experience with dreams and dreamwork. We are interested in exploring how dreams can be useful in single dream consult, dream groups, or workshops, and in enhancing and illuminating the on-going therapy process. We also share our ideas and experiences in working with dreams from a Gestalt perspective and from other theoretical perspectives relevant to Gestalt theory and practice.

### **GESTALT THERAPY WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS INTEREST GROUP**

This Interest Group is for members interested in using Gestalt concepts and methods with children. This is an opportunity to bring solidarity to the efforts being made by the Gestalt community in behalf of AAGT's aims to discuss the use of Gestalt therapy with children who may be suffering the effects of loss and/or divorce, substance abuse, neglect and abuse, poverty, and academic and/or behavioral disorders. Ideas on such topics as the theoretical relevance of Gestalt Therapy with children, how self-regulation can be promoted to enhance the developing construction of the self, the effect that learning behavior disorders have on these functions, and how effective Gestalt experiments can be created based on the developmental level of children. We want to establish a networking system among those who work with children to establish, nationally and internationally, Gestalt Therapy as a serious theoretical approach in child treatment will be established.

#### **WOMEN'S ISSUES IN GESTALT THERAPY INTEREST GROUP**

In this Interest Group we explore ways in which Gestalt Therapy and feminism enhance one another. Instead of only interpreting our experience through the lens of Gestalt Therapy theory, we look at our theory and practice through the lens of our lives as women. We serve as a voice for these concerns in the organization.

#### **MEN'S ISSUES IN GESTALT THERAPY INTEREST GROUP**

Our aim is to offer a forum and network for members -- both men and women -- who are interested in male development and identity, masculinity as a ground schema, and the construction and deconstruction of gender role, to explore these issues through a Gestalt theoretical lens, and to dialogue about them from a Gestalt perspective. We propose the idea that rigid gender roles in current society act mostly as limiting ground conditions for contact, placing constraints on self-experience, empowerment, relationship, intimacy, and growth (*for both genders*). The field which is structured in these constricting ways is not "our world" (*to use Goodman's phrase*) and does not support robust and healthy self-process on the individual, relational, or community level. Our focus is on the use of the Gestalt model to support new self-definition for ourselves and our clients, as well as new relational and community forms and structures in support of a freer, more connected and more passionate employment of ourselves and each other. We particularly seek diversity of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, professional activity, and (*of course*) gender in our membership.

#### **GAY, LESBIAN AND BISEXUAL ISSUES INTEREST GROUP**

This Interest Group meets regularly at our International Conferences and maintains an active interest in the welfare of AAGT. We attempt to provide a forum for members to: 1.) Develop awareness, understanding, and sensitivity within the AAGT membership and among the broader Gestalt community to Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual concerns. 2.) Increase clinical competence in working with people across the span of sexual orientation, with particular interest in the application of Gestalt Therapy theory and practice with the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual populations. 3.) Consider how issues of interest to the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual community may be included in AAGT programming and actively represent these ideas and seek inclusion through participation in the AAGT organizational structure. 4.) Provide a supportive and organizing context for collegial contact, discussion and socializing among AAGT members with special interests in Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual issues.

#### **ECOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF GESTALT THERAPY INTEREST GROUP**

The goal of this Interest Group is to facilitate formal and informal exchanges about our ecological elaborations of Gestalt Theory and our experimenting with earth-centered Gestalt work.

#### **SOMATICS AND GESTALT THERAPY INTEREST GROUP**

Body-based work is integral to our theory, but not always addressed in Gestalt therapy training programs. With so many somatic modalities now available and being used by Gestalt therapists, it is important to develop a picture of how we integrate these techniques in our work. We exist to provide support and contact, help identify clinical issues particular to bodywork, articulate Gestalt somatic theory, and advocate for its importance in the larger Gestalt community. By pooling our efforts and experiences we can help the evolution of this dimension of Gestalt Therapy.

#### **INTERNET INVOLVEMENT AND UTILIZATION INTEREST GROUP**

The Internet is a powerful tool. It is an amazing, global network of individuals from diverse fields of interest, cultures, and nationalities. People in this Interest Group work on ways of investigating and appropriating the resources of the internet to enhance the AAGT and to facilitate training and practice, to build community, and to satisfy our curiosity about the world in which we live. We're interested in going beyond the AAGT mailing list to explore how tools of the Net can enhance, hinder, or change contact and communication on a global level. A variety of Internet projects have already evolved from our Interest Group.

#### **SPIRITUALITY AND GESTALT THERAPY INTEREST GROUP**

This interest group is for persons interested in the spiritual dimensions of Gestalt therapy, including transpersonal psychology and meditative practices that have religious and sectarian origins. Interests center on the animating forces of "spirit" that provide inspiration for transformation – taking us to higher levels of development. Spiritual and Gestalt therapy practices are both designed to foster and effect transformation.

## **ASSOCIATION *for the* ADVANCEMENT of GESTALT THERAPY**

### **2004-2005 CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

**Prepared By**

**Ansel L. Woldt, Ed.D.**

**AAGT Founding Secretary and Archivist**

***These By-Laws were recorded and written in accordance with revisions and actions of the membership present at AAGT's 2002, 2003 and 2004 Annual Meetings.***

