

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2020

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Welcome to the October through December 2020 IAAGT Newsletter!

As we begin a new design for the IAAGT newsletter, we would like to invite all members and any individual that is reading this right now to use this forum as a place to express their thoughts, inspiration, observations, creativity, and anything else. The goal is to create a newsletter that provides information, richness, connectedness, and stimulation. We are fully aware that this can only be created with the richness of all of us that are drawn to the beautiful work of Gestalt.

In this first issue that we have co-created together, we would like to invite all members and readers to take a brief moment to sit in awareness with us. As we reflect on the lessons and challenges of 2020 and we look to the opportunities that unfold for us as this new year begins.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND AGM 2020



The 2020 AGM arrived on the back of a very challenging and extraordinary year, not only for the AAGT, then now IAAGT, but more importantly for the world at large. No-one could have foreseen how long the global crisis would last. At AAGT we remained hopeful that the September 2020 conference in Ireland would go ahead.

As time elapsed it became clear that the conference would have to be cancelled. We debated, argued, tried to make believe that it could be otherwise. Not so. I started to realize that the pleasure of stepping down at a conference was slipping away, and I was taken aback by how meaningful that loss was for me. The wish to meet in person and to address you all for the last time was evaporating. Personally, and as the president, I was devastated - an ongoing sensation that stayed with me for a variety of reasons, for much of 2020. It has been tough all around for most.

Cancellation meant either no AGM at all or a virtual one. We chose virtual...

To read the full article, [please click here](#).

HOW OUR CÉILÍS CAME ABOUT

As a teenager, in the late 1960s, I joined the Woodcraft folk, a left-wing family-oriented international organisation that emphasised conservation of nature, craft, friendship, peace, and equality. Music-making and dancing played a big part in our time together - both on Friday nights in the locality and during weekends spent living under canvas, exploring the countryside.



IAAGT 2020 Cèilidh

Years later, I joined the Camden Cèilidh – a welcoming regular storytelling group performing in North West London. Our host, a drama therapist and Jungian analyst, instrumental in the British storytelling renaissance in the 1980s, encouraged us novice storytellers to take part and to develop our craft in a series of group workshops. The Cèilidh evenings she facilitated were informal, featuring a potpourri of tales from across the world. These were delivered from a small stage, flanked by ancient candelabra in a cosy room in Kentish Town. Here Scottish and Irish traditional tales rubbed shoulders with Palestinian stories and Czech tales of sprites and wicked pixies. A frequent contributor performed compositions on Paraguayan harp. An occasional sprinkling of riddles and wry polemic added to the heady mix.

During those days, several superb professional storytellers, the new troubadours, were plying their trade around the UK. The flamboyant TUUP from Ghana was renowned for his Anansi trickster tales; Scottish traveler...

To read the full article, please [click here](#).

LETTER FROM THE NEW IAAGT PRESIDENT

Dear IAAGT Community:

“In times of crisis the imagination is more effective than the intellect.”
(A. Einstein)

We are living in the middle of very convulsed times worldwide. Our human fragility has aroused in unexpected ways; we are experiencing fear, uncertainty and a sense of loss. We have called “new normality” to what is in fact not normal but certainly new. By the way, what can be called *normal*?

The health crisis with the Coronavirus Pandemic has come along with economic, social and political big challenges. There is a great polarization in our societies with a huge lack of dialogue and understanding among each other.

In our organization we had to cancel our Conference in Ireland and co-create an experiment with a virtual AGM, Cabaret/Ceili included. As part of the outcome of the AGM we have added the word “International” to our name and the new board configuration includes new members from different countries and time zones. I was voted as President without being President Elect the previous years.

Our Gestalt Community is...

To read the full article, [please click here.](#)

WHAT ARE IAAGT INTEREST GROUPS?



IAAGT Interest groups are a gathering together of IAAGT members interested in some specific subject.

At the moment, we have the following list of Interest Groups:

| INTEREST GROUP | NAME OF CONTACT PERSON(S) |
|--|----------------------------|
| Child and Adolescent | Jon Blend |
| Gender Sexuality Diversity +LGBTQIF | Daniel Bak & Billy Desmond |
| Research | <i>(open)</i> |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Trainee & Newly Qualified | Nick Adlington |
| White Identified | Burt Lazarin |
| People of Color | Katie Beaulieu |
| Social Activism | Kamila Bialy & John Gillespie |

The Research Interest Group is inactive at this moment. If anyone is interested to lead it, that role is currently available.

If you have an interest in participating, creating, or leading please contact [Inma](#) and [Soneide](#).

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT INTEREST GROUP (CAIG)



CAIG, IAGT's **Child and Adolescent Interest Group** is a small, supportive, open group that meets monthly for two hours on Zoom. Participants share news about and reflect on child and adolescent psychotherapy practice. *We welcome new members!* Membership is open to anyone interested in gestalt approaches to therapeutic work with young people. From April to July last year, we met fortnightly to discuss responses to Covid-19 and share experiences of adjusting our work in response to changing conditions across regions. In September we resumed meeting monthly. Members have joined us from Canada, Croatia, England, Hungary, Romania, Poland, Spain, and, the US. In December I contributed to the Second International Congress of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy, Sarajevo, exploring some safe, effective ways of facilitating anger expression and containment (healthy retroflexion) during this period of the pandemic.

Some of our CAIG themes:

Therapist self-care; how lockdown is affecting family functioning; animal-assisted therapy; localized politics and delivery of Gestalt Therapy with children; taking therapy work outdoors/ into nature; establishing a Covid protocol around the use of art materials/ workplace safety; exploring anxiety through movement and voice; homophobia & racism; attachment issues; loss and mourning; dreamwork; exploring sleep anxieties and nightmares; supporting mothers and new-borns during Covid; self-regulation and co-regulation; shame; building self-esteem and acknowledging mastery; adolescent development; how lockdown challenges 'disembedding' / expansion of the Lifespace.

**Future dates: (meetings start at 6pm GMT/ 7pm CET/ 10am PST
(or equivalent time/date in your region)**

21st January
18th February
18th March

To join the Zoom calls please send your contact details to IAAGT's administrator- [Nicola Ray](#) and copy [Jon Blend](#).

WHITE IDENTIFIED INTEREST GROUP (WIIG)

We meet about once every four or five weeks exploring our issues around whiteness. Some of us identify as white, others of us recognize we are perceived by others as belonging to this "white" group yet don't feel white, and others of us have never given much thought to any racial self-definition and what this all means. We consider the privileges that accrue to being white in our society, discuss the ramifications of racism throughout our social structure, the power differentials, and the echoes in our own lives. Though books are referenced and their themes become topics around which we may dialogue, we have not set created a reading list or curriculum. Our group is peer-led with no formal agenda, just what comes up for attendees at any meeting.

For more information, please contact Burt.

ELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT FROM THE IAAGT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

We are pleased to announce that the following members were elected to represent the membership on the IAAGT Board:

| | |
|---|--|
| President | Eduardo Rubio Ramirez |
| Vice President / President Elect | Maryanne Nicholls |
| Secretary | Bernadette Latuch |
| Treasurer | Jing Luo |
| Organization Members' (OM) Representative | Deirdre Foley |
| Membership Co-Chairperson | Tomáš Divéky (joins Nadine Wilson) |
| Interest Groups' Coordinators | Inmaculada Vázquez Jiménez Soneide Caetano Jungnitz |
| Bud Feder Scholarship Committee Co-Chairpersons | Heather Anne Keyes Lori Farley |

The following will remain on the Board to complete their terms:

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Past President/Vice President | Tali Bar-Yoseph Levine |
| Continuing Education Officer | Marlene Blumenthal |
| Archivist | Ansel Woldt |

The following were appointed or reappointed to Board positions:

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Associate Continuing Education Officer: | Dina Miller |
| Research Liaison | Mark Reck |
| Regional Support & Co-Sponsorship Committee Liaison Officer | Deirdre Winter |
| Communications Director | John Hovell* |
| Newsletter Editor | Rafael Cortina* |
| Members at Large | Dominique Chabre Shareefah Sabur* |

Respectfully submitted by
Gayla Feinstein and Marlene Blumenthal, Chairpersons, on behalf of committee members Ansel Woldt, Charlie Bowman, Eduardo Rubio Ramirez, Nickei Falconer, and Piotr Mierkowski

*Appointed after the AGM

5TH INTERNATIONAL GESTALT RESEARCH CONFERENCE



DATE: 24 September - 26 September 2021, Hamburg, Germany

REMINDER: The early-bird prices for the 2021 International Gestalt Research Conference will last until **28 February 2021**.

Register for the conference at research-conference-hamburg2021.com/prices/

Visit research-conference-hamburg2021.com/program to review the conference program and find the offerings that interest you. Know that some of the conference offerings are being planned to be live-streamed.

ONLINE RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM SERIES

We'd like to remind you to join us at our first Online Research Colloquium series, beginning Friday 8 January.

During the series, our researchers will be sharing their work with the international Gestalt community. Each presentation will have its own structure and format, and all will have a member of the Research Committee serving as a session moderator.

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Friday, 8 January 2021 | 8am EST / 2pm CET | Exploring Privilege and Invisible Barriers to Access to Continuing Education among Gestalt Therapists | Heather Keyes |
| Sunday, 31 January 2021 | 12pm EST / 6pm CET | Humans of Gestalt: An Experiment in Dialogue | Heather Keyes, Kamila Bialy |
| Saturday, 13 February 2021 | 10am EST / 4pm CET | The Overlap of Gestalt Psychotherapy Techniques and MDMA-Assisted Psychotherapy | Aneta Dorazilova |
| Friday, 19 February 2021 | 8am EST / 2pm CET | Validation of a Tool to Observe the Phenomenology and Aesthetics of Primary Relationships: The Dance Steps between Caregivers and Child | Alessandra Vela |

You are welcome to sign up for any or all of the sessions (on a voluntary donation basis), and you will receive a zoom link in your email upon registration and a reminder two days before the sessions you select. Please join us to support Gestalt research and to see what is going on with the researchers in the IAAGT community!

[SIGN UP](#)

If you have any questions, please reach out to us at researchcommittee@iaagt.org and PLEASE feel free to share this information and invitation to other colleagues.

[Full descriptions of the sessions are available here.](#)

Warm regards,

The IAAGT Research Committee
(Mark, Soneide, Ansel, Sam, Heather)

EVERY DAY I WONDER...

Every day i wonder...
if the demon that slumbers in me will arise, filling my head with lies I have vivid thoughts as well as dreams.
Watching blood flow and hearing screams
I try to fight this
While i ask "why am i like this?" I'm acting cheerful while i'm truly fearful In the darkness something's lurking, and it's smirking.
I wonder... is my medication working?
I fill page after page with raw emotion
Unrelenting rage as powerful as a stormy ocean I go to therapy, searching for answers.
I hope it's helping me
But my soul is infected as if it has cancer Is this infection simply a reflection of what i truly am?
Or another deception?

Tobías Sledge
published with his permission

Reflections from Rafael Cortina as Newsletter Editor

As the year comes to an end, I sit in my office which now is located a few steps from my bedroom and its main feature is a computer and lamp, I take a moment to seat with awareness of what 2020 has thought me as human, as therapist, as father and husband. I'm acutely aware on that as the years past I accumulate life experience and knowledge, but I also accumulate deaths and loss, and with each loss comes growth (not always but most of the time and of course there's some responsibility and choice in that). I give myself a moment to appreciate the value of contact through a computer screen, the beauty of life within the walls as I witness my daughter transformed from a child to a creative and willful teen, I am grateful for the love support and friendship of the most amazing woman I have ever met, and I get to stop and challenge my

blindness to my privilege and the social responsibility that comes from this awaking. As my computer beeps to announce the arrival of my next client I give thanks to 2020 for its beauty and its horror, and most of all for the clearness of the road to the mending of bridges and the awareness of my responsibility in maintaining my piece of the bridge.

Thank you for reading the newsletter, please submit all IAAGT newsletter feedback such as thoughts, feelings, sensations, ideas, articles, and events to communications@iaagt.org

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