

aagt.org

# AAGT

Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy

2008 June

**SPECIAL  
CONFERENCE EDITION**



**Borders and Bridges: Differentiation in Contact**  
Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy  
An International Community (AAGT-AIC)  
9th International Conference for Gestalt Therapy  
Manchester, England \* July 23-27, 2008



## General Information

<http://www.aagt-manchester08.org/info.html>

## Conference Program

<http://www.aagt-manchester08.org/presentations.html>

**Pre-conference Workshops are still available!!**

<http://www.aagt-manchester08.org/pre-conference.html>

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The Thistle in Manchester

## Looking Back

by *Sarah Fallon*

In just a few weeks many of us will be together in Manchester. In one week more, we will be gone again.

As I pause here, I reach for words to describe what the experience of convening has been like for me. Since the beginning, when I realised the form the planning would take, I have held in mind the image of a large, English country house. In the house have been many committee rooms: publicity, programme planning, the board, scholarship fund, peer review, treasurers, administration, process-group organisation. Each room has developed its own ambience; its own style of leadership, of conducting business and of attending to process. I have been struck, as I have felt the variety of these scenes, by the mosaic of differences that we have managed to contain within the house. Admittedly, sometimes the walls between rooms have felt rather thin, and a group of us might be suddenly showered with a plummet of falling plaster onto the carpet from a neighbouring scene.

There have been points where I have been reminded of the relevance of the conference theme in a very real and actual sense. Like others, there have been times when I have felt hurt and, on occasions, I have had to step outside for some air. Like others, I have come back in with new breath. And I have witnessed several parties opening to receiving each other again this way. Sometimes we have first found each other in the back-channelling corridors of the court, maybe moving on to taking a stroll around the garden: taking time, taking care, being open to starting again. Although, in communication terms, the planning has been (sometimes frustratingly) virtual, I have generally found our relating to have been touchingly real.

But the planning has centred on more than the rooms inside the house. Some of us have made connections with the neighbourhood: the hotel, the recording company, the band, local tour-guides, the local Irish Pub. We have made choices from our travels beyond the grounds about the others we would like to bring into our home.

There are several of you who have been available to me personally when I have needed you. Through texts, phone-calls, emails, face to face conversations and Skype, you have given me a needed space; a potting-shed in the planning. A quiet moment away from the hustle and bustle of the main house. These potting-shed moments have been vital in supporting me to support the planning process. I want to thank you for giving your time this way.

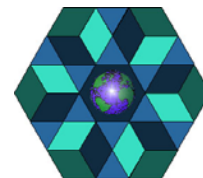
To my mind, the scale of what we have all been doing here is considerable. And I feel very aware that we have done it together.

The most important room of the house, for me personally, has been the CPC (the conference planning committee). This has become my home group. I want to thank the members of the CPC by name. I have noticed that this committee has often gone unnoticed. They have made little noise, with members simply getting on with tasks in this quiet engine-room, with very little fuss. I would encourage any future convenors to select this group of people most carefully.

Those on the CPC I want to thank, for their consistent hard work sustained across the full span of the last two years, and for giving me so much support are: Talia, Peter P, Dan, Janice and Ansel. You have been great company and you have stayed until the end of things. And I am glad to have known you this way.

When I look back I am amazed at what we have all done, and want to pass on my heartfelt thanks to all the committees for their contributions to the whole. We have a full conference with guests from 20 countries. That is something to look forward to! And I am sad that some of you I have enjoyed meeting at previous conferences just can't make it this year.

Very soon this large country house will be empty. And new rooms, with corridors, will be being built somewhere in Philadelphia. I am looking forward to being a visitor in 2010.



## Manchester Hints & Happenings

1) The schedule of conference presentations is now up on the conference website, so people can see how the presentations have been placed into different rounds:

<http://www.aagt-manchester08.org/presentations.html>

2) I'd also like to remind people that although the conference itself is fully booked, there are still some pre-conference workshops with places available for people who might like to attend those. They can make their bookings via the conference registration webpage, here:

<http://register.aagt.org/manchester08.cfm>

3) And that aside, if people would like to discuss the Manchester conference (including things like looking for a room mate to share accommodation with, or posting and receiving travel tips, etc), there's a message board set up to do that:

<http://www.aagt-manchester08.org/discussion/>

4) For travel tips, I'd say that the National Rail Enquiries website may help people plan their train journeys and cost those up in advance. It's good for looking up train times. There can sometimes be delays with trains in the UK, planned engineering, works, etc. The website will sometimes give information about that in advance. I often check it the day before I'm planning to catch a train.

<http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/>

5) In terms of things to do, the Manchester Jazz Festival is happening around the time of the conference. People can find out more information about that here:

<http://www.manchesterjazz.com/>

6) For the musically inclined, I'd also add that Jon Blend is interested in getting together with conference attendees who might like to have a jam session one evening. If anyone is willing to volunteer to bring and lend instruments or amps, or wants to join in with the fun, they can e-mail Jon ([life-changes@ntlworld.com](mailto:life-changes@ntlworld.com)), as he's happy to be a point of contact for that.

Mae

The English Summer is a hard one to get to know. The only way to engage with it is to be prepared for all its sudden mood swings. To outwit it, people should bring all of the following: sunglasses, umbrella, sunscreen and light waterproof jacket. One never truly knows....

Sarah

For anyone landing in London or arriving via London ~ getting train tickets in advance it is much cheaper.

You can do so on the [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

Tali

### Borders and Bridges: Here we go....Again!

*by Charlie Bowman*

The next AAGT Conference is just around the corner and I can feel my excitement growing day by day! I get lost in fantasy - getting to London and then Manchester ... walking into the Thistle and letting go into the whirlwind of fresh "hello's" ... getting registered for the program and getting my name tag ... that first real contact with a friend I haven't seen in years ... jumping into the program with both feet ... WOW! Besides the fact that I can really kill a lot of time in fantasy, I come back to reality knowing that the support AAGT provides me for this upcoming experience is palpable and provocative. My challenge will be to stay in the moment, support and be supported, advocate for what I believe in for myself and for AAGT and to enjoy this unique collection of humanity. There's no place else like an AAGT Conference! I love AAGT!

## *My thoughts on Motions for the Annual Meeting*

by Peter Philippon

I have proposed two motions for the AAGT Annual Meeting in Manchester, and I would like to take this opportunity to say more about them.

The first motion is that money should be put aside to help the President to attend relevant meetings. I think this is becoming really important now that we are turning into a more widespread international community. We need to be able to make good formal and informal connections with other Gestalt communities that organise our field round the world. During my Presidency, I attended (at my own expense) the EAGT Conference in Athens, the AAGT Annual Meeting in Berkeley, California, and the Yalta Conference in Ukraine. I was booked to attend the British Gestalt Society conference, but was turned back by flooding. I was unable to attend the Latin American conference in Argentina and the GANZ conference, because I could not afford them.

I believe we need to support future Presidents better to make these links, and I believe also that the experience we have had around Manchester of the increased interest in our community generated by these links shows that we could also benefit financially from these links which would recoup the cost of this support. I also don't want good people to be put off from standing for President because of financial considerations. I know Brian O'Neill put a huge amount of his own money into travelling to conferences in America and Europe from Australia.

The second motion I have put is to hold the 2009 Annual Meeting in Madrid on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, following the international conference held there from 30<sup>th</sup> April to 3<sup>rd</sup> May. We have tried in the past to hold our 'between years' Annual Meetings (the ones which are not part of our biennial conferences) at events where a number of our members will either be present, or will be able to participate in something more than just the meeting, and this is likely to be the biggest event around. I know Dan Bloom, our incoming President, and myself are already booked to be there.

I think it is also important that the 2009 Annual Meeting is in Europe. We have been explaining to people, some of whom have been quite suspicious that we are really just an American association, that we have made definite commitments to being more fully international. This must be reflected in our planning for meetings if we are to be seen as being in good faith. Our 2006 and 2007 Annual Meetings and Conference were in North America (Vancouver and Berkeley), our 2010 Conference will be in Philadelphia. If our 2009 Annual Meeting was also in America, that would make 4 out of 5 years there, and I believe we would lose considerable support in Europe. I realise that this will add to the costs of many long-standing members. However, we discussed this explicitly at several conferences, and I put the viewpoint in Vancouver that when we agreed to add 'An International Community' to our name that would have implications for where we hold our conferences. There was no dissent expressed to this at that meeting.

We have truly moved to a much wider connection in the world in the last four years, and we need to be true to this change and reflect it in our organising. I look forward to the day when we will be able to hold a conference also in Australia or New Zealand. To compare, the Transactional Analysis community has been successfully holding its conferences in many different countries for many years. Gestalt Therapy is an internationally significant movement, and our community is bringing people together who have not spoken to each other before.

# Report (Brief) of the Task Force on Decision Making

by Dan Bloom

The Task Force on Decision Making was formed after the Vancouver Conference in order to address the nature and qualities of decision making in the organization. We members of the Task Force have been having a vigorous discussion on decision making at AAGT, an international community, and the discussion is by no means completed.

We believe that this discussion has been allowing us to revisit the core ideas that hold us together and support us as we proceed with one another. We are urging everyone to join this discussion on the Members List and in the Newsletter.

These items are on the agenda of the annual meeting in Manchester. We expect a hearty discussion. It is the nature of our organization to regularly till the soil of our foundation, to maintain the richness of our values of dialogue and community.

These are the same items which are energizing our discussion, and are offered to you, and at the annual meeting, for that purpose.

1. **On Consensus**: In our discussion, many of us are clear that the consensus process is an inclusive one in which all voices are heard and listened to so that the final decision incorporates all perspectives, although this decision is not one of unanimous agreement. It is not a simple majority-vote process, either.

Proposal: The by-law defining consensus be amended to state that a decision reached by consensus is neither a unanimous nor a simple majority decision and the decision shall include a statement of the dissenting opinions. The function of such a consensus is the continuation of a process, and not the silencing of any of its voices, even though those voices may be in disagreement with the decision made.

2. **On the necessity of decision within a certain time**: The by-laws now are vague about who decides when matters require immediate decision. It specifies that when time is of the essence, a majority vote replaces consensus.

Proposal: The by-law be amended to state that the urgency of matters on the agenda be indicated at the time they are proposed, or decided by the president at the time of the meeting.

3. **President's power as facilitator**: Many of us thought that the president, as facilitator of the meeting, holds the sense of the group, and as such, can sum of the process of discussion so as to conclude the meeting has reached a consensus.

Proposal: The by-law be amended to state that the president, as facilitator of the meeting, holds the sense of the group, and as such, can summarize the discussion so as to decide that the meeting has reached a consensus.

Dan Bloom, chair on behalf of Task Force members: Claire Bertram, Charlie Bowman, Phil Brownell, Seán Gaffney, Judy Graham, Cathy Gray, Burt Lazarin, Tali Levine Bar-Yoseph, Brian O'Neil, Peter Philipppson, Sharon Warwick, Ansel Woldt.



## Scholarship Fund Auction

### Manchester Scholarship Fund Auction Sure To Be A Hit

-from the offices of the AAGT Scholarship Fund

**Bring your article, artifact and ardor to Manchester and be a part of the AAGT Scholarship Fund Auction.** Yes, back by popular demand, the Auction will be held immediately following Dinner on Saturday night. Charlie Bowman will continue as the completely inept but occasionally humorous auctioneer for yet another conference. According to Bowman, "This year's auction promises to be the most professional thus far. I have even surfed the net and read a page about how to be an auctioneer!" This year's program includes a guest auctioneer and several hawkers that will be sure to get the crowd juiced-up and ready to outbid their Gestalt comrades in pure fits of here-and-now purchasing compulsivity.

His enthusiasm was apparent during the interview, but he readily acknowledged needing interesting donations for the scholarship fund to make for a lively, entertaining evening. "Items related to the Gestalt founding Fathers and Mothers are always good, as are art and craft items created by the membership," said Bowman. He continued, "Books can be tedious unless there's something special about them, but we're not picky - everything that's donated is auctioned, the donor is recognized, and 100% of the proceeds goes directly into the scholarship fund. Don't forget that services and discounts can also be considered!"

Please bring your donations on Saturday night and join the fun!

Thank-you for donating to the AAGT Scholarship Fund!

## Our Executive Council

- ♥President: Peter Philippon: [president@aagt.org](mailto:president@aagt.org)
- ♥Vice President: Daniel Bloom: [dan@djbloom.com](mailto:dan@djbloom.com)
- ♥Secretary: Ann Bowman: [bowmanca@aol.com](mailto:bowmanca@aol.com)
- ♥Treasurer: Peter Cole: [peterhayscole@hotmail.com](mailto:peterhayscole@hotmail.com)
- ♥Continuing Education Officer: Ansel Woldt: [nanselw@aol.com](mailto:nanselw@aol.com)
- ♥Membership & Publicity Chairs: Robert de Vos: [r.devos@vivium.nl](mailto:r.devos@vivium.nl), Brian O'Neill: [boneill@uow.edu.au](mailto:boneill@uow.edu.au)
- ♥Organizational Representatives: Bud Feder: [bfeder@comcast.net](mailto:bfeder@comcast.net), Morgan ©Goodlander: [Mogan@Gestaltinstitute.com](mailto:Mogan@Gestaltinstitute.com)
- ♥Interest Group Coordinator: Jack Aylward: [JackatPCC@aol.com](mailto:JackatPCC@aol.com)
- ♥e-Newsletter editor: Marcy Stern: [imawareru@comcast.net](mailto:imawareru@comcast.net)
- ♥Information Technology Officer (IT): Phil Brownell: [philbrownell@logic.bm](mailto:philbrownell@logic.bm)
- ♥RCP at Large: Susan Gregory: [GestaltSing@aol.com](mailto:GestaltSing@aol.com)
- ♥RCP Representative: Marilyn Myles: [mylestherapy@comcast.net](mailto:mylestherapy@comcast.net)

## AAGT Board Minutes Now Online

The AAGT Board Minutes can now be viewed online on our web site: [www.aagt.org](http://www.aagt.org). From the home page, click on the "About AAGT" link, then go to the AAGT Executive Council and the link for the minutes is located near the top of that page. The minutes from each meeting will be added monthly. If you do not have Internet access and would like to receive a "hard copy" of the notes, please notify Ann Bowman, AAGT Board Secretary at 317-843-0717 opt. 2.

## My Visit to Yalta by *Peter Philippon*

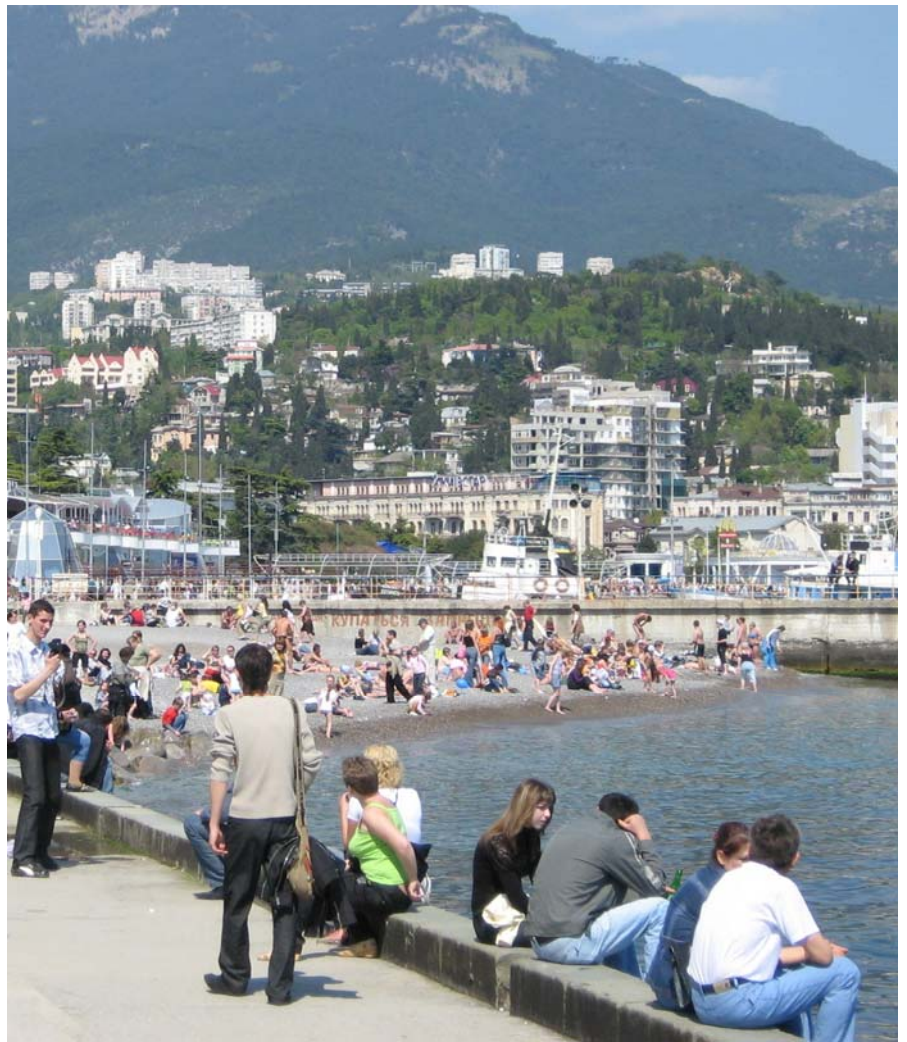
At the beginning of May, I travelled to Ukraine for the Ukrainian Psychotherapy Conference at the invitation of Vitaly Lezhnev and Valeria Gershkovich, and the suggestion of Tine van Wijk, who had been several times before. While this is not only a Gestalt conference, Gestalt therapists are very well represented, and this had the sense of a special occasion, being the 15<sup>th</sup> year the conference was held. After arriving at the airport in Simferopol, the capital of Ukraine, I was met by Vitaly and Valeria and driven to the beautiful Black Sea resort of Yalta where the conference was to be held. On the way, I was amazed to discover that the 50 miles between Simferopol and Yalta over the mountains are served by a regular trolleybus service!

In Yalta, I got introduced to the conference community, and spoke also about what I was intending to present. The format was of daily Master Classes run by the invited presenters followed by evening presentations and conference feedback for the whole community. Some people stayed with the same group over the conference, some moved around, so I had varying numbers of people attending, up to about 30 people. I think we all managed very well considering that I do not speak Russian or Ukrainian. I had an interpreter and some of the participants spoke good English. The atmosphere was lively and interested.

I was glad to see two AAGT friends, Daniel Khlomov from Moscow and Kailash Tuli from Delhi., who were both presenting at the conference. There were quite a lot of people from Russia, mainly Moscow and St. Petersburg (we were in the Russian-speaking part of Ukraine, which feels closer to Russia than the Ukrainian-speaking part where I presented last time I went).

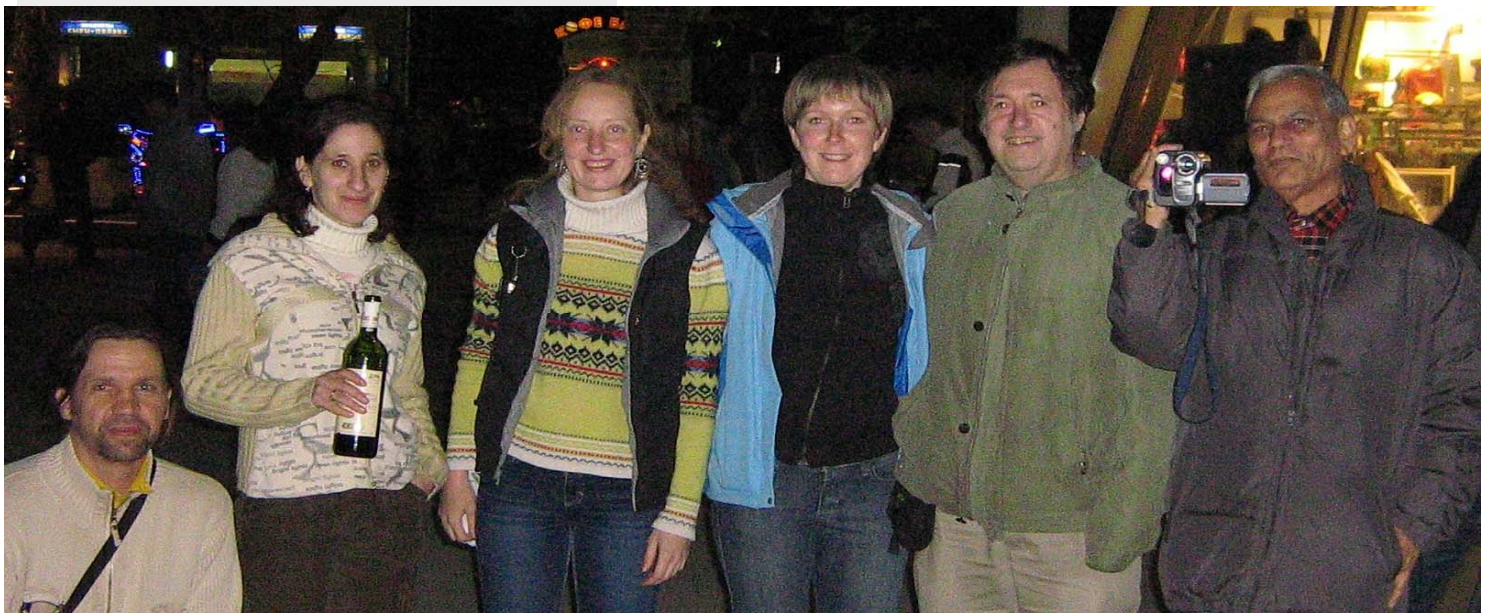
It was also fascinating to go into the town and see the May Day celebrations: bands, funfair, stalls, a rock concert. I got very fit doing this as the sanatorium where the conference was held is a LONG way uphill from the town. I also went to the palace where the Yalta conference was held at the end of World War Two.

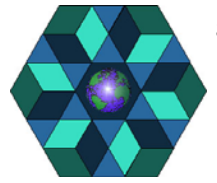
It is great to be able to renew a link between AAGT and a lively Gestalt community that has been so well held by Tine.



Above: Yalta on May Day, which is a public holiday

Below: Peter with Vitaly and Valeria (on the left)





## SECOND ANNUAL AAGT- SE USA CONFERENCE

Please mark your calendars for another weekend of gestalt community in the mountains of North Carolina! The second annual AAGT-SE USA Conference --- "Being a Gestalt Community: As the Leaves Turn" --- will be held on the weekend of **October 17-19, 2008**, with a pre-conference workshop on Friday, October 17.

**WHERE:** Gentle BioEnergetics Institute, 29 Lovers Loop Road, Asheville NC 28803.

**LODGING:** Ramada River Ridge (828-298-9141). The AAGT group rate is \$99 per night if 10 people register. Mention the Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy/ Anne Leibig and be sure to register before September 15, after which the Ramada will release any remaining rooms.

**COST:** Pre-conference \$75. Conference \$100 (\$80 for full time students and for groups of three or more registering together.) Please register as soon as possible. Registration form is available at <http://www.agti.org/ashregistration.html>. Send checks or money orders to: GBI attn: AAGT-SE-USA conf., PO Box 19833, Asheville NC 28815.

**CREDITS:** 10 CE credits can be earned for the conference and 6 CE credits for the pre-conference workshop. (\$15 CE administrative fee.)

The Appalachian Gestalt Training Institute (Patsy, Nicholas, Anne) with the Gentle Bio-Energetic Institute (Dick Overly and Sandy Tompkins) are the hosting and planning groups.

For more information, check out [www.agti.org/asheville.html](http://www.agti.org/asheville.html). More information will also be emailed to this list in a few weeks.

Anne Leibig

## **REGIONAL CONTACTS:**

- ♦ Donna Cotzen, Northeast USA: [DJCotzen@aol.com](mailto:DJCotzen@aol.com)
- ♦ Isabel Frederickson, Southwest USA: [FREDDY9282@aol.com](mailto:FREDDY9282@aol.com)
- ♦ Lynn Statler: [LynnStadler@verizon.net](mailto:LynnStadler@verizon.net)
- ♦ Judith Graham United Kingdom [jugrfrog@dircon.co.uk](mailto:jugrfrog@dircon.co.uk)
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- ♦ Bruce Aaron Membership Chair: [dovbear@earthlink.net](mailto:dovbear@earthlink.net)
- ♦ Allan Singer Membership Chair: [asingerlicsw@aol.com](mailto:asingerlicsw@aol.com)

**The NE Regional Conference will be "Gestalt Inter-Institute Connections"**

**WHEN:** Saturday, September 27, 10:00 to 5:00.

**CONTACT:** For details, contact Susan Gregory, president, NYIGT, at [gestaltsing@aol.com](mailto:gestaltsing@aol.com)

**We always need news of the Regions.**

If you are an RCP, please send any updates/news of your region/ announcements/etc. to Marcy Stern: [imawareru@comcast.net](mailto:imawareru@comcast.net)



# **EVALUATION SUMMARY**

## **First Annual SE-USA AAGT Regional Conference**

**“Dreaming the Future ... As the Leaves Turn”**

*This is a summary of the Evaluation Forms completed by conference participants and returned to Dr. Woldt, AAGT's Continuing Education Officer & CE Registrar, upon completion of the conference.*

*The numbers in parentheses are the number of people in that category.*

*Feedback statements are clustered together with similar comments.*

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Conference Attendance **20** – *All participants completed and returned their evaluation forms.*

Professional Identity (Note: Numbers in parentheses do not total the number of participants due to some having multiple licensure)

Counselor – LPCC, LPC (**6**) – NBCC (**2**); Psychologist (**4**); Social Worker - LISW, LSW (**6**); Psychotherapist (**13**); Marriage & Family Therapist (**2**); Professor (**3**); Gestalt Therapy Teacher (**6**); Graduate Students in Counseling (**6**); Expressive Arts Therapy (**6**); Amazon Goddess (**1**)

Areas of Specialization (Note: Numbers in parentheses don't total the number of participants due to multiple specialties)

Individual Adults (**9**); Children/Adolescents (**5**); Geriatrics (**2**); Couples (**4**); Families (**3**); Groups (**5**); Gestalt Therapy Students (**5**); Substance Abusers (**3**)

How did you become aware of this conference?

Word of Mouth (**12**); Employer/Supervisor/Professor/Colleague (**6**); Brochure/Flyer (**3**); AAGT-RCP *Regional Contact Person* (**2**); AAGT Web-Site (**1**); Gestalt Listserve (**1**); Other: Gestalt Institute Director (**1**); Conference Organizer (**1**); AAGT Newsletter (**0**)

Are you an AAGT member? Yes (**8**) No (**13**)

Are you a former AAGT Member? Yes (**8**) No (**13**)

No. International AAGT Conferences attended?

All (**2**); Eight (**2**); Seven (**1**); Six (**1**); Four (**2**); Three (**1**); One (**1**)

Are you considering attending the next International Gestalt Therapy Conference in 2008 in Manchester, England? Yes (**12**)

What do you envision the relationship between Regional AAGTs and our parent body, AAGT-AIC?

Co-supportive and co-creating (**10**); Cooperative and reciprocal relationship (**6**); Okay (**2**); Not sure what all of this is about, I'm just learning about the existence of this AAGT stuff (**2**)

Topics that interested you most during this conference\_ *(All participants reported more than one topic of high interest)*

The experiential nature of gestalt therapy (**7**). AAGT's sense of community, support and connectedness (**6**). Understanding and working with shame in therapy (**6**). Process group experience (**6**). Gentle Bioenergetics (**5**). Gestalt Dreamwork (**5**). Getting to meet and know famous professors and psychotherapists (**5**). Meditation and gestalt therapy (**4**). Mindfulness and gestalt therapy (**3**). Appreciating commitment and efforts of conference organizing committee (**3**). Organizational development and application of gestalt therapy in different work settings (**2**).

Identify things you learned at this conference that you hope to use in your work

Some practical strategies for healing clients who have shame-based lives (**6**). How to do gestalt dreamwork (**4**). How therapists unexpectedly and unknowingly shame their clients (**4**). Use of meditation with gestalt therapy (**4**). How to be genuine, yet non-judgmental of clients (**3**). How better to take care of myself as a practicing counselor, including the importance of self-validation and how to “de-stress” (**3**). The importance of community and personal connectedness in a living, creative organization as AAGT is a prime example (**3**). How to better attend to my clients' physical presence, body language, nuances, posture, etc. (**3**). How to apply gestalt principles in organizational settings (**2**). Advanced awareness training (**2**). Information on Ph.D. programs in counselor education and counseling psychology (**2**). I learned that I need to (and how to) “slow

down” in my therapy (1). I became aware of how “ultra-individualism” has impacted and infected psychology<sup>10</sup>(1). I learned a couple new things about gestalt theory and practice (1).

### Likert-type Satisfaction Rating Scale

Participants circled the number that best reflected their overall opinion of these elements of the conference

0 = NOT APPLICABLE   1 = POOR   2 = FAIR   3 = SATISFACTORY   4 = GOOD   5 = EXCELLENT

Major Workshops/Presentations	0 0	1 0	2 (1)	3 (5)	4 (5)	5 (9)
Gestalt Theory	0 0	1 (1)	2 (5)	3 (4)	4 (5)	5 (5)
Gestalt Practices	0 0	1 (2)	2 (3)	3 (5)	4 (6)	5 (5)
Format of Conference	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 (2)	4 (10)	5 (13)
My Professional Expectations were Fulfilled	0 (1)	1 0	2 0	3 (6)	4 (7)	5 (7)
Advertising, Marketing & Information	0 0	1 0	2 (3)	3 (5)	4 (5)	5 (7)
Location/Setting of Conference	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 0	4 (5)	5 (15)
Coordination, Registration & Administration	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 (2)	4 (6)	5 (12)
Continuing Education Procedures	0 (8)	1 0	2 0	3 0	4 (2)	5 (10)
Cost of Conference	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 (2)	4 (7)	5 (11)
Meeting Rooms & Physical Environment	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 0	4 (2)	5 (18)
Hotel Accommodations/Guest Rooms	0 (5)	1 (5)	2 (1)	3 (5)	4 (2)	5 (2)

### Suggestions for future meeting sites and ways to improve future regional conferences

- Keep our conferences located in Ashville and at this Gentle Bioenergetics Center; Ashville is great; I love Ashville and the Appalachian Gestalt therapists (14 like this).
- Please have more experiential workshops (7 like this).
- More live demonstrations of gestalt therapy (5 like this).
- Define the purpose of the process groups before our first session and have the facilitators follow gestalt methodology by keeping them in the “here and now” -- less “mind f---ing.” (4 like this).
- The designated hotel was lousy; consider the Marriot close to downtown but continue to meet here (4 like this).
- More personal therapy work followed by processing and analysis based on gestalt therapy theory (3 like this).
- In advertising the conference you need to have a wider outreach, there are lots of people within driving distance who would benefit (3 like this).
- The hotel doesn’t have enough seats for breakfast (3 like this).
- For new people not having a background in gestalt, it would help tremendously to incorporate a brief introduction to gestalt therapy and how it differs from the most common ones, like CBT, in the opening plenary session (2 like this).
- Consider having the conference in a hotel downtown – too much driving out here (2 like this).
- Make sure the presenters know it is important to be on time and start promptly (1).
- I found it hard to sit through the 2 hour workshops (1).



## EVALUATION SUMMARY

### 13th Annual SW-USA AAGT Regional Conference

#### “Gestalt Approaches and Ethics of Group Work”

*This is a summary of the Evaluation Forms completed by conference participants and returned to Dr. Woldt, AAGT’s Continuing Education Officer & CE Registrar, upon completion of the conference.*

Conference Attendance 45 TOTAL, Evaluations completed N = 18 *Note: Only those participants registering for Continuing Education were required to complete and return their evaluation forms.*

Professional Identity *(Note: The numbers in parentheses were taken from the Attendance List, not from the 18 Evaluations submitted. Some have multiple professional identities.)*

Counselor – LPCC, LPC (5) [NBCC=1]; Psychologist (14); Social Worker - LISW, LSW (10); Psychotherapist (6); Marriage & Family Therapist (5); Professor (5); Gestalt Therapy Teacher (8); Counseling, MFT & LSW Graduate Students and Gestalt Institute Trainees (8)

Areas of Specialization *(Note: These numbers were tallied only from the returned Evaluations; some of whom identified multiple specialties)*

Individual Adults (6); Children/Adolescents (5); Geriatrics (1); Couples (4); Families (2); Groups (4); Gestalt Therapy Students (5); Substance Abusers (2); Organizational Behavior/Consulting (2); Public Health Administrator (1); Writer (1); School Consultation (1)

How did you become aware of this conference? *(Note: These numbers were tallied only from the returned Evaluations; some indicated multiple sources of information..)*

Word of Mouth (6); Employer/Supervisor/Professor/Colleague (6); AAGT Web-Site (6); Gestalt Listserve (5); Brochure/Flyer (4); Other: “From email and regular mail due to having attended previous SW-AAGT conferences” (10)

Are you an AAGT member? Yes (14) No (4)

Are you a former AAGT Member? Yes (12) No (6)

Number of International AAGT Conferences attended?

All 8 (3); Seven (2); Six (1); Five (1); Four (3); Three (1); Two (1); One (1) None (5)

Number of SW--AAGT Conferences attended?

All 12 (2); Eleven (1); Eight (1); Six (2); Four (1); Three (2); Two (1); One (8)

What is your view of the relationship between Regional AAGTs and our parent body, AAGT-AIC?

Overall it’s pretty positive and healthy, but I would like to see a more synergistic engaging and inclusive relationship (3); Currently friendly, connected and mutually supportive and its getting better (5); There seems to have been a pretty loose connection but we should have a closer affiliation (1); Co-supportive and co-creating (10); It should be more organic (1); Okay (2); Don’t know, I’m not sure what all of this is about since this is my first conference (2); There’s not much connection but I think it’s okay (1); Our growth has been natural (1); Our RCP is always involved on conference calls and lots of SW members attend the big conferences (1); Seems like there can be more collaboration as we’ve experienced some resistance amongst our SW members, especially when we’ve scheduled our conferences very close to AAGT’s big conferences; there should be more attention to and consideration of the larger AAGT’s scheduling (3)

Topics that interested you most during this conference\_ *(All participants reported more than one topic of high interest)*

Chaos theory (14). Body awareness and movement (3). Attachment theory and its relationship to gestalt therapy (1). Gestalt group theory, practice and demonstration (9). AAGT’s sense of community, support and connectedness (3). Social justice (1). Social activism (2). Gestalt writers’ group (2). Past, present and future of Gestalt therapy (2). Gestalt approach to supervision and training (2). Sensory awareness (2). meet and know famous professors and psychotherapists (5). Meditation and gestalt therapy (4). Mindfulness and gestalt therapy (3). Appreciating commitment and efforts of conference organizing committee (3). Organizational development and application of gestalt therapy in different work settings (2).

Identify things you learned at this conference that you hope to use in your work

Chaos theory and how it applies to my clinical work (4). The demonstration of Gestalt group therapy makes me want to reintroduce group work in my practice (2). Ethical practices in group work (1). More attention to body process (2). The significance of neural mirroring and understanding mirror neurons (2). The significance of embedded systems/levels in doing group work (1). From the chaos theory presentation I realize how we map into consciousness information for our clients and vice-a-versa (1). Realizing from Bud Feder's group demonstration, the inherent values of Gestalt work in the here and now (2). Isabel and Joseph's group presentation sparked interest in things I can do better in my on-going therapy groups (2). Continued support for Gestalt therapy as an effective intervention (1). I learned a lot about running groups using Gestalt therapy theory and practices (2). Ideas for structuring groups (1). From Ansel I learned a lot about what to look for in supervising interns and therapy in general using principles of Gestalt therapy (1). I am aware of how many parallels there are between Gestalt therapy theory and many of the somatic theories I work with (1).

### Likert-type Satisfaction Rating Scale

Participants circled the number that best reflected their overall opinion of these elements of the conference

0 = NOT APPLICABLE    1 = POOR    2 = FAIR    3 = SATISFACTORY    4 = GOOD    5 = EXCELLENT

Major Workshops/Presentations	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 (3)	4 (5)	5 (10)
Gestalt Theory	0 0	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (2)	4 (4)	5 (5)
Gestalt Practices	0 0	1 0	2 (2)	3 (2)	4 (7)	5 (7)
Format of Conference	0 0	1 0	2 (2)	3 (1)	4 (4)	5 (11)
My Professional Expectations were Fulfilled	0 0	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (8)
Advertising, Marketing & Information	0 0	1 (3)	2 (3)	3 (4)	4 (3)	5 (5)
Location/Setting of Conference	0 0	1 0	2 (3)	3 (4)	4 (6)	5 (5)
Coordination, Registration & Administration	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 (3)	4 (7)	5 (8)
Continuing Education Procedures	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 0	4 (6)	5 (12)
Cost of Conference	0 0	1 0	2 0	3 0	4 (3)	5 (15)
Meeting Rooms & Physical Environment	0 0	1 (3)	2 (3)	3 (3)	4 (5)	5 (4)
Hotel Accommodations/Guest Rooms	0 (3)	1 (2)	2 (3)	3 (4)	4 (1)	5 (5)

Suggestions for future meeting sites and ways to improve future regional conferences

Full 3-day conference with opening workshop Thursday eve plus longer Friday and Saturday.

Keep doing them; I enjoy the camaraderie; love it as is.

Need to vary the location, North – South, especially.

More experiential workshops and more choice of presentations, maybe solicit workshop offerings from regular participants and early registrants.

More live demonstrations of gestalt therapy like Bud Feder's group; although not necessarily group work -- personal therapy demonstrations followed by processing and analysis based on gestalt therapy theory and principles.

Better agenda planning and scheduling of presentations.

Wider outreach in marketing the conference, there are lots of people who would benefit.

Coordinate meeting dates better with large conferences, esp. AAGT, so we don't meet so close.

Better advertising with AAGT members, get listed on AAGT.org Web site and AAGT Newsletter.

Better accommodations and more inviting environment; this hotel was lousy (but inexpensive).

Help new people feel more welcome.