



**AAGT**  
 The Association for  
 the Advancement of  
 Gestalt Therapy

*An International Community*

## 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

### MINUTES

SATURDAY, JUNE 13 – SUNDAY, JUNE 14

KEAN UNIVERSITY, UNION, NEW JERSEY, USA

<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	Patricia Tucker welcomed AAGT members to the 2015 annual general membership meeting.
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<p><u>Saturday, June 13 (44 Total Attendees)</u>          Patricia Tucker, Gail Feinstein, Toni Gilligan, Susan Gregory, Bruce Aaron, Dominique Chabre, Bud Feder, Nickei Falconer, Daniel Bak, Maryanne Nichols, Marilyn Lammert, Thomas Smith, Evelyne Chemouny, Mark Reck, Nancy Woldt, Ansel Woldt, Marlene Blumenthal, Bob Witchel, Dina Miller, Denise Campono, Joe DePaula, Burt Lazarin, Susan Gregory, Adam Weitz, Charlie Bowman, Ann Bowman, Maria Kirchner, Anne Leibig, Mary Lou Shack, Frank Wu, Ken Meyer, Gary Gray, Cathy Gray, Iris Fodor, Jim Battaglia, Carl Hodges, M’Lou Caring, Andy Lapides, Nancy Bristol, Ronald Cohen, Perry Gunther, Diana Stokke, and Michael Sasiain</p> <p><u>Sunday, June 14 (27 Total Attendees)</u>          Patricia Tucker, Gail Feinstein, Toni Gilligan, Susan Gregory, Bruce Aaron, Dominique Chabre, Bud Feder, Nickie Falconer, Daniel Bak, Maryanne Nichols, Marilyn Lammert, Thomas Smith, Evelyne Chemouny, Mark Reck, Nancy Woldt, Ansel Woldt, Marlene Blumenthal, Bob Witchel, Dina Miller, Denise Campono, Joe DePaula, Burt Lazarin, Susan Gregory, Adam Weitz, Charlie Bowman, Ann Bowman, and Michael Sasiain</p>
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Alan Schwartz
<b>CHAIR PERSON</b>	Patricia Tucker (President), Gail Feinstein (Vice President), and Toni Gilligan (President Elect)
<b>MINUTES PERSON</b>	Michael Sasiain (Administrator)

### AGENDA TOPICS

#### 1. WELCOMING MEMBERS

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patricia Tucker opened the annual general membership (AGM) meeting by welcoming and orienting AAGT members to the ground rules, aims, and intentions of the 2015 AGM</li> <li>Patricia T. reviewed the agenda for Saturday and Sunday’s meetings</li> <li>Patricia T. presented AAGT board members to the AGM attendees</li> </ul>									
<b>DECISION</b>										
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</th> <th>DEADLINE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE						
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2.

OPENING EXERCISE

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toni Gilligan lead attendees in an awareness-raising exercise centered on closing of the eyes, focusing on the breath, and reflecting on the following prompts:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is the aim of AAGT?</li> <li>○ What is my intention in being here?</li> <li>○ What are my fears?</li> <li>○ What is your vision of and for AAGT?</li> <li>○ What are you rejecting from your awareness?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Attendees separated into smaller groups in which they discussed and processed the prompts</li> </ul>		
<b>DECISION</b>			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	

3.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members reformed into a single, larger group and were encouraged to share their views and reactions with the whole</li> <li>• Some views that were expressed by members:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “I do not want to be here at all” yet “would miss the people here”</li> <li>○ “I like AAGT, specifically appreciates internationality of outlook and membership and returning to horizontal/egalitarian format”</li> <li>○ “The process of developing support and how it titrates out is meaningful to me”</li> <li>○ “I feel a sense of kinship in AAGT and am at the AGM because it is the engine that drives the car”</li> <li>○ “I hate it [the AGM] yet it is important to be here”</li> <li>○ “I’m here to support because without AAGT there would be no association”</li> <li>○ “To pass a bylaw”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>DECISION</b>			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	

4.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AAGT committee chairs and co-chairs presented their annual reports to the membership               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>A copy of the reports is available online</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Members discussed aspects of the various reports, namely:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parity of regional development fund with membership</li> <li>○ Ratio of American to non-American AAGT members</li> <li>○ The benefit of becoming an organizational member</li> <li>○ Changes to the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) CE provider policy, adherence to American Psychological Association (APA) sponsor requirements, and discontinuation of AAGT providing CE credit hours from the California Board of Behavioral Science (CBBS).AAGT research fund</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Volunteers were requested to assist with investigating the options for AAGT to be a CE provider for Social Workers and others to get CE credits hours.</li> </ul>		
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<b>DECISION</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>

5. BY-LAW PROPOSAL CONCERNING VENUE PROPOSALS TO HOST THE AAGT BIENNIAL CONFERENCES

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anne Leibig proposed a new by-law (Article IV, Section 5) concerning venue proposals to host the AAG biennial conferences</li> </ul>	
<b>DECISION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consensus was reached and the bylaw was changed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please refer to <u>Article IV, Section 5</u> for a copy as displayed in the Constitution &amp; Bylaws section of aagt.org</li> </ul> </li> <li>Charlie Bowman will complete the process of writing up the changes to the new by-law that were adopted by the membership at the AGM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cathy Gray will assist with editing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>

6. REGIONAL TASK FORCE AND THE RELATION OF REGIONS TO AAGT

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burt L. articulated the overarching concern of entities self-identifying as AAGT regions in the absence of an established protocol/guideline and explained the rationale for the creation of the regional task force</li> <li>Members discussed what may be appropriate content for workshops associated with AAGT-sponsored regional conferences in relation to both gestalt-therapy and meeting the requirements of accrediting bodies for continuing education credits. Differences in cultural perspectives (i.e., internationality) was likewise processed</li> <li>Members explored the topic of unknown regions requesting regional development funds to host a conference along with the notion of what constitutes an AAGT region and the current lack of oversight or guidelines for organizations hosting a conference (e.g., who gets money and how?)</li> <li>Discussion also centered on the type of support regions may seek from AAGT, on what constitutes the formation of a region (e.g., a formal request to be recognized as an AAGT region versus several AAGT members deciding they are a region), and the context in which the AAGT name should be used by regions</li> <li>Additional discussion on the Pacific Northwest (PNW) region’s decision to only allow local AAGT members to present workshops in the 2015 PNW regional conference within the context of exclusionary and inclusionary criteria. Members also explored the role of the AAGT board regulating regional decisions in terms of maintaining horizontalism on the one hand and providing an organizational structure on the other</li> </ul>	
<b>DECISION</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
	Adam Kincel	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task Force on the Regions is continuing to meet regularly and will present a report of their recommendations in the near future</li> </ul>		

FACILITATED BY VARIOUS REPRESENTATIVES

7. "WORLD CAFÉ" SMALL GROUPS

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The title of six topics (see below) were written in different sections of the meeting room and AGM participants were asked to congregate around one theme. Participants spent 5 minutes in each topic and shared their thoughts, opinions, and reactions with each other and the topic facilitator. Topic facilitators wrote the comments and suggestions of participants on a white board.</li> <li>The AAGT-related topics explored in the World Café Small Groups were:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing Internationality</li> <li>Regions</li> <li>Biennial International Conference at Taormina, Sicily</li> <li>Conflict Process</li> <li>Web-Based Presence</li> <li>Interest Groups.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>		
<b>DECISION</b>			
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	

8. GROUP DISCUSSION ON WORLD CAFÉ TOPICS

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AGM participants returned to a large-group format and discussed the various suggestions and beliefs linked with each topic. The salient themes that were discussed are noted below.</li> </ul> <p><u>Increasing Internationality</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial imbalances – ‘Rich’ international members vs ‘poor’ local membership and how the existence of the scholarship fund acknowledges this issue</li> <li>Is AAGT an ‘American organization with international members’ or a truly international organization?</li> <li>Reconciling different and unique cultural perspectives within AAGT</li> <li>Figure creation and destruction (i.e., change) as a component of cultural variety and growth</li> <li>Increasing membership by focusing on quality of membership benefits rather than via campaigning</li> </ul> <p><u>Regions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the Regional Contact Persons (RCP) still needed within the current field conditions?</li> <li>RCPs should go to their respective communities to determine what the members of their region want and need</li> <li>Should specific guidelines be developed that regional conferences must adhere to in order to be a conference that is sponsored and supported by AAGT?</li> <li>Are the identities of regions dependent on or separate from AAGT?</li> <li>The notion of a region as a point of connection (e.g., students across the world) versus regions as a geographic locale</li> <li>Burt L. read Deirdre Winter’s 2015 report on the Regional Development Fund (available online)</li> </ul> <p><u>2016 AAGT Biennial Conference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logistic and instrumental concerns             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the conference being planned?</li> <li>How do AAGT members get involved in the process?</li> <li>What is the structure of the conference?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Overarching concerns             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fear that the AAGT culture and community may get lost in EAGT’s structure and the process overall</li> <li>Fear of losing horizontalism and egalitarianism within EAGT’s hierarchal culture</li> <li>How is AAGT going to “be” AAGT in the joint conference?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What does EAGT want from AAGT? Burt L. noted ‘process group and peer review aspects of AAGT culture’ along with ‘liveliness, excitement, conversation, process, etc.’</li> <li>○ Emphasis that the planning process needs to be transparent and clear on AAGT values and what members desire from the joint conference</li> <li>• Collaboration between AAGT and EAGT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Every committee currently has one EAGT and AAGT co-chair</li> <li>○ The 2016 conference website is “ready and live”</li> <li>○ Dina M. reported she “felt heard” in her collaboration with EAGT conference planners to ensure workshops qualify for continuing education credits</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Charlie Bowman requested to see the minutes of the conference conveners</li> </ul> <p><u>Interest Groups</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using computer mediated communication, particularly Ring Central, to connect interest group members by hearing each other’s voices while seeing each other’s faces</li> <li>• How to improve the facilitation of interest groups</li> <li>• Should interest groups be exclusive to AAGT members or include others (i.e., can non-AAGT members join?)</li> </ul> <p><u>Web-Based Presence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using search engine optimization (SEO) to improve AAGT presence online, particularly when people interested in gestalt therapy use search engines to seek information</li> <li>• Ways of integrating interest groups into AAGT’s website and online services</li> <li>• Expanding the content of the AAGT website such as research methods in gestalt therapy, interest groups, articles on the basics of gestalt therapy, etc.</li> <li>• The possible creation and integration of tutorials for using online technology</li> <li>• Issues with the current online membership system and facilitating the creation and renewal of membership accounts</li> </ul> <p><u>Conflict Process</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to best deal with conflict in the field of AAGT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creation of a watchdog committee, on the one hand, versus the person with the conflict ‘coming to the table’ on the other (in line with the covenant of community)</li> <li>○ How to resolve persistent conflict (i.e., the same conflict emerging ‘over and over again)</li> <li>○ When to ‘draw the line’ when conflict is not resolving despite efforts at dialogue</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Grievance Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dina M. noted one of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) requirements to be eligible to grant continuing education credits is to have an established grievance policy</li> <li>○ Discussion on the creation of a grievance process for AAGT (not merely to satisfy APA)</li> <li>○ Discussion of a Conflict Committee being developed at any time upon request of a member that would include both board members and non-members to deal with specific unresolved conflicts as they emerge</li> <li>○ Finding a medium for a grievance process – May be too idealistic on the one hand and not ‘gestalt enough’ on the other</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>DECISION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A volunteer committee was formed to explore the issue of how to best resolve conflicts within AAGT.</li> <li>• Members who volunteered are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bruce Aaron, Marilyn Lammert, Janneke van Buesekom, Marlene Blumenthal, Gail Feinstein, Carl Hodges, Charlie Bowman, Dina Miller, and Patricia Tucker</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>

9. PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAW CHANGES – UP-DATING AND REMOVING ANACHRONISMS AND ANOMOLIES

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ansel W. proposed to update, modify, or remove sections of the AAGT constitution and by-laws to mirror the current conditions of the AAGT field</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Article II, Section 4</li> <li>○ Article III, Section 1, 2, 3</li> <li>○ Article IV, Section 2, 3, 4</li> <li>○ Article V, Section 1, Subsection A, B, C, E, F, G</li> <li>○ Article V, Section 2, Subsection B</li> <li>○ Article V, Section 3, Subsection A, C, G, H, I, J</li> </ul>	
<b>DECISION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus was reached to accept the majority of the proposed by-law changes</li> <li>• With the exception of the AAGT President, the proposed motion that each committee chair to compose and provide an annual report was not accepted on grounds that committee reports are included in the President’s annual report</li> </ul>	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>

10. BOARD MEMBER ELECTIONS

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending members voted to elect or appoint individuals into the following board positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Association Archivist – 3 year term</li> <li>○ Membership Chairperson(s) – 2 year term</li> <li>○ Continuing Education (CE) Officer – 3 year term</li> <li>○ Associate Continuing Education Officer – 1 year term</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Association Archivist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Toni Gilligan nominated Ansel Woldt for the position of Association Archivist; Marilyn Lambert seconded the motion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Membership Chairperson(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nancy Woldt announced her decision to step down as Membership Co-Chair</li> <li>○ Maryanne Nichol nominated Jim (James) Battaglia for the position of Membership Co-Chair; Dominique Chabre seconded the motion</li> <li>○ Mark Reck nominated Maryanne Nichols to the position of Membership Co-Chair; Dominique Chabre seconded the motion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continuing Education Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dina Miller was nominated and re-elected by consensus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continuing Education Officer Assistant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dina Miller appointed Ansel Woldt to the position of CE Officer Assistant</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Member(s) at Large <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussion on creating a second Member at Large position</li> <li>○ Bud Feder was nominated and elected into the position of Member at Large by consensus</li> <li>○ Patricia Tucker invited Gail Feinstein to accept the position of Member at Large; Dominique Chabre seconded the motion</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>DECISION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members Elected and Appointed to Board Positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ansel Woldt was re-appointed into the position of Association Archivist</li> <li>○ Jim Battaglia was elected into the position of Membership Co-Chair</li> <li>○ Maryanne Nichols was elected into the position of Membership Co-Chair</li> <li>○ Dina Miller was re-appointed into the position of Continuing Education Officer</li> <li>○ Ansel Woldt was re-appointed into the position of CE Officer Assistant</li> <li>○ Bud Feder was re-elected into the position of Member at Large</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A second Member at Large position was created through consensus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gail Feinstein was elected into the position of Member at Large</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

11. CONTINUING EDUCATION REVIEW AND POLL

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to Associate Continuing Education Officer position:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consensus was reached to change the term for 1 year</li> <li>○ Per consensus, CE Officer will appoint who will serve in this position</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dina Miller announced she is seeking to determine the certification and licensure needs of the membership regarding Continuing Education               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dina M. may submit a questionnaire to the membership to identify the aforementioned needs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dina M. announced CBBS will be discontinuing their role of approving providers of CE for their licensees.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dina M. noted after November, 2015 that AAGT will not be able to continue providing CE credits for licensed social workers given these changes. Alternatives options/solutions will be explored.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>DECISION</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>

12. SAYING FAREWELL TO AND WECOMING THE AAGT VICE PRESIDENT

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toni Gilligan was welcomed by attending members as the new AAGT vice president</li> <li>• Attending members expressed their appreciation for Gail Feinstein’s leadership and contribution to AAGT</li> </ul>	
<b>DECISION</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>

<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	Patricia Tucker adjourned the meeting at 4pm on Sunday, June 14, 2015
<b>MINUTES SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Michael Sasiain
<b>MINUTES APPROVED BY:</b>	Board Members
<b>SPECIAL NOTES</b>	