

EDITORIAL

JOSEPH MELNICK, PH.D.

An aspect of Gestalt therapy that I have always appreciated is the joint focus on **content** and **process**. One of the classic ways of distinguishing between the two is by describing content as “what you eat” and process as “how you eat.” A core assumption of the Gestalt approach is that we must have knowledge of both in order to live a good life.

This is not to say that we focus on both equally, at all times. In fact, in our work as therapists and consultants, we learn to shuffle back and forth between the two. In our everyday lives, when things are going well, we usually focus on the content, and consequently, our awareness of process is minimal. During these times we are able to “just live.” However, when little or big events throw us off balance, an awareness of process is useful to help us get back on track.

From the feedback we have been receiving on the *Gestalt Review*, we believe that things are going well. If this feedback is accurate, then you, the reader, are enjoying the content and not strongly drawn to our “hows”—the processes involved in creating and operating this journal. This is our first issue of the new year, a time when we institute changes. I thought that I might use this as an opportunity to describe our production and editorial processes by giving you a glimpse of our inner workings, starting with a brief history. I hope this description will help you understand why and how we make some of our decisions.

GR'S HISTORY

Although we are entering our eighth year of publication, *Gestalt Review* was conceived two years before that at a Writers' Conference (see Elizabeth Revell's Back Pages editorial, this issue). During a lull in the conference, I happened to mention that the Gestalt community was capable of creating

Dr. Melnick, editor of *Gestalt Review*, has been practicing, teaching, and writing about Gestalt therapy for more than 30 years.

and publishing more articles, and that we were lacking a peer-reviewed journal that would have credibility in academic circles. (At that time there were just two journals, the *British Gestalt Journal* and *The Gestalt Journal*, which has recently become the *International Gestalt Journal*.)

The participants all thought a peer-reviewed journal of our own was a good idea. However, when I looked around for volunteers to edit this new venture, I quickly became aware that everyone was looking at me. Within a few minutes I was elected editor with lots of support from others, including the editors of three European journals, Malcolm Parlett from England, Jean Marie Robine from France, and Reinhard Fuhr from Germany. They proceeded to give me invaluable advice with respect to the dos and don'ts of my upcoming role. It seemed that within minutes, Edwin Nevis was figuring out how to generate the financial support needed for this new venture. The *Gestalt Review* was in process.

I then developed a prospectus, and Edwin and I went around searching for a publisher. We were pleasantly surprised that the first two on our list were very interested in *Gestalt Review*, and both offered to become our publisher. We settled on The Analytic Press for a number of compelling reasons, both personal and professional. Their vision matched ours; they were a highly respected publisher of journals; and they were good people. This relationship worked well, but after six years we separated in order for us to try our hand at self-publishing. (I wish all separations were as respectful and easy as this one. They are a class act.) We are now entering our second year of self-publishing and still learning how to do it ourselves.

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

From the beginning we were committed to creating a fair and impartial screening process for submitted manuscripts. To that end, we delete all identifying information from a submitted manuscript and then send it out to four members of our editorial board for review. They are asked to evaluate it by listing strengths and weaknesses and, if recommending publication, to list areas for revision. Authors then receive a copy of all the reviews with the reviewers' names deleted, along with a letter from the editor that communicates the final decision regarding publication.

If the article is accepted, authors are usually assigned an Action Editor (AE) to help them with the revision process. The AE is a senior Gestalt writer with expertise in the area in which the author is working. (As an aside, editorial board members do not receive financial remuneration for their time.)

Once the review and revision process is complete, the text of each issue of *Gestalt Review* is sent to a copyeditor who checks the text, citations, and references. The copyeditor also works with the book designer on the most appropriate location and formatting for footnotes, references, and so on. As part of the copyediting process, authors may be asked to provide any missing information, such as references, or respond to questions pertain-

ing to clarity. A corrected copy of the manuscript is forwarded to the book designer. She then formats the text into the page design for the printer, and sends proofs to the copyeditor and to the editor for checking. They return the proofs to the book designer who makes the final changes and sends the entire package to the printer. We tell the printer how many copies to print, where to deliver them, and the like. Prior to printing, the galleys are sent to the editor for one final proofing. After printing, the *Reviews* are sent to a distribution house, which mails them to you, our subscribers.

THE EDITORIAL PROCESS

The Associate Editors meet in the Fall of each year. We deal with a wide range of issues, small and large. Examples include the color of the journal for the new year, changes in the front and back covers, additions to the editorial board, what to include on our website, how to handle obituaries and interviews, and more. A summary is made of this meeting and mailed to the entire editorial board.

As always, there are exciting changes that occur in our process. Of most importance for the upcoming year, Elizabeth Revell—who has been serving as Back Pages editor—has agreed to join me as co-editor. I have known Elizabeth for a number of years and am excited about the opportunity of working with her. A second important change is that we will begin offering reduced-rate subscriptions to full-time students. Third, we will list the names of members of the Gestalt community who have passed away in Back Pages.

On our website, www.gestaltreview.com, we will continue to list one article from each issue of *Gestalt Review*, and highlight Writers' Conferences around the world. We are in the process of creating a special section that lists the titles of all theses and dissertations written in English. We will also be sponsoring our second Research Writers' Conference next fall (see the *Gestalt Review* website for details).

OUR CURRENT ISSUE

The current issue features three important dialogues dealing with organizational work, sexual therapy, and therapy with children. The first is Hank Karp and Kanata Jackson's "Hubris: A Gestalt Alternative to Groupthink," with a commentary by Mary Ann Walk. After comparing two approaches to individual and organizational effectiveness, Authentic Management, based on Gestalt principles, and Mainstream, with its origins in the business and educational settings, the authors describe the condition of hubris, a "toxic form of self-delusion" that can affect individuals in leadership positions. Walk, a former Vice President of Human Resources at AT&T, draws on her extensive professional experience with the negative effects of hubris on leadership effectiveness.

I am excited to be publishing Stella Resnick's "Somatic-Experiential Sex Therapy: A Body-Centered Gestalt Approach to Sexual Concerns." From its inception, the Gestalt approach has been oriented to the integration of body and mind. Yet, as all practitioners know, dealing with sexuality in psychotherapy can be a difficult and potentially dangerous topic. Because of this, sexuality has often been ignored or reduced to formulaic procedures. Resnick begins her article by drawing on a lifetime of experience to compare and contrast different models, introduce her methodology, and present case studies. Kathleen Logan-Prince, and Beverly Reifman, two highly experienced sex therapists, ask critical questions. Resnick then responds by describing in detail the ongoing decision-making process in her work with couples.

In "The Story of Daniel: Gestalt Therapy Principles and Values," Sandra Cardoso-Zinker first lists her guiding principles in working with children, and then describes her work with Daniel which spanned three and a half years. Violet Oaklander, considered by most to be the leading Gestaltist working with children, and Anna Marie Norén, head of the Gestalt Academy of Scandinavia and a seasoned child psychotherapist, provide important insights. I was captivated by the brilliant simplicity of Cardoso-Zinker's formulations and therapeutic work. I know that you will be, too.

We begin this issue of *Gestalt Review* with Sharon Snir's interview with Edwin Nevis. Nevis is to organizational development what Oaklander is to child psychology. However, this article moves away from his theoretical contributions. Instead, Snir captures Nevis's generosity of heart, commitment to community building, sense of adventure, and characteristic restlessness. As you will discover, Nevis is also a wonderful storyteller, and among his many stories are those which reflect his insights into Fritz Perls, and describe the early days of the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland.

We end this issue of *Gestalt Review* with a book review by Dori Middleman of McConville and Wheeler's (eds.) *The Heart of Development*. I know that you will appreciate the creative process of her book club's ongoing dialogue.

I think that this issue presents an array of topics and perspectives that are both exciting and stimulating. I hope that as you read these wonderful contributions, you will remember "the process" that has brought them to you, and the many individuals who give generously of their time and ideas to *Gestalt Review* and the future of Gestalt therapy.