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Psychopedagogy of integration and authenticity: on the relationship between Gestalt therapy and Gestalt pedagogy and educational transactional analysis (part 5)[*]

Abstract

The article discusses the links between Gestalt therapy and pedagogy and transactional analysis in its educational dimension.

Key words: Gestalt therapy, Gestalt pedagogy, educational transactional analysis.

> But everything that I could do to help someone to discover themselves is good.
> We really learn only thanks to what we discover on our own[1].
>
> Fritz Perls, *Cztery wykłady*, 1981

In comparison to other therapeutic trends, Gestalt therapy, usually associated with humanistic psychotherapy, marked its presence in pedagogy the most. Therefore, it is treated as a separate trend in psychopedagogy. The main assumption of this concept is a belief that a human being can be understood only as an integrated whole showing their presence in a given environment. Understood as

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[1] All translations – author.

someone genuine, someone that person really is. Someone who does not hide behind "masks," concealing the real nature of their unique self and the exceptional existence of their own.

The reader interested in Gestalt theory and practice can find them in a vast repertoire of available publications (among all, Corey, 2005, pp. 262–305; Jakubowska, 2005, pp. 181–185; Ellis, Smith, 2011, pp. 508–5015; Kepner, 1991; Passons, 1986; Zinker, 1991; Houston, 2006; Paruzel-Czachura, 2015; Clarkson, Mackewn, 2008; Ginger, 2001; Robine, 1994; Later, 1972; Stevens, 1975). Jerzy Mellibruda mentions several important elements that constitute that trend (Mellibruda, 2009, p. 9). These are among all: focusing on action and experimenting in a therapeutic situation, concentrating on direct experience and experiencing oneself "here and now," broadening one's consciousness in various areas of human psyche, learning how to differentiate between important matters and unimportant and harmful questions and issues. It is also emphasizing support and responsibility for oneself and in oneself, stressing the importance of perceiving a human being as a whole, and recognizing the role of their authenticity expressed in truth about them. Similarly to Carl Roger's therapy focused on an individual, Gestalt therapy is situated in the stream of humanistic and insight therapies. However, what makes it different from the aforesaid approach is a definitely more directive nature of influencing a person who asks for help. Gestalt therapy is not limited to unconditional acceptance, reflection, empathy and authenticity, but provides a client with numerous experiences that are supposed to raise their self-awareness and the awareness of their feelings, increase their responsibility for their decisions taken now and in the future. It frequently confronts, in an exceptionally logical and clear way, the client's opinions with the facts, revealing problems hidden behind an artificial "mask" put on to gain social acceptance. In this context, authenticity becomes one of the main categories. J.F.T. Bugental tried to make it more precise in the following way: "Authenticity is a concept used to describe the way one exists in the world, when human existence is in harmony with the world's existence" (Bugental, 1978, p. 330). He continues:

> Authenticity doses not demand man to abandon the world of their experiences, but to understand how much they are immersed in this world, being aware at the same time that the world of their experiences does not constitute a complete scene of human experience (Bugental, 1978, p. 331).

Thus, being authentic means being real, unambiguous, marking one's existence in the surrounding world.

Gestalt therapy

Gestalt therapeutic practice takes place both individually and in a group. It consists of a set of rules, e.g. the rule of being "here and now," the rule of sub-

jectivity of utterance, the rule of Me and You, some other ones, and something which is described as games. However, their nature is different from games in TA. These are therapeutic exercises or techniques consisting in performing certain activities that are often symbolic and artificial. A sample set of these procedures includes: a dialogue between parts of one's own person, expressing certain message and feelings towards particular people, initiating and finishing particular and unfinished matters from the past, analyzing the feeling of guilt and shame (Mellibruda, 2009, pp. 60–81). In groups, one of more popular techniques is the so-called making rounds, which allows for expressing particular feelings or thoughts towards given participants of a meeting. A group meeting also offers an opportunity to present and act out one's projections. It means that a given person, addressing certain judgements or attitudes towards others, acts out a scene that is to verify whether they project their own mental states in this way. Similar scenes can concern discovering opposites, where a client tries to demonstrate behaviour opposite to the one that characterizes them the most, or to make an attempt to act out roles, attitudes and behaviours which have existed only in that person's imagination so far. In case the client makes unintentional gestures, movements or utters words that might signify they hide unsolved or distorted problems, they are encouraged to demonstrate the same in a more intense and exaggerated way. Another technique described as exercising responsibility consists in the client finishing each sentence regarding themselves with "and I take responsibility for that," or an exercise "Can I offer you a sentence?" in which a therapist asks the client to repeat and check if the sentence they utter about the client can be accepted by them. All those techniques are supposed to aim at raising the participants' awareness. Further on, one can talk about working on clients' fantasies and dreams, and several different procedures and therapeutic techniques whose list is not closed and unchanged (Mellibruda, 2009, pp. 171–188). Thus, we can see how the aforesaid well-structured techniques differ from a non-directional attitude to work with a client proposed by Carl R. Rogers. A disturbed process of one's self-regulation with their environment leads to behaviour disorders. Energy that is badly directed or not focused in a proper way does nor serve to meet an individual's needs and their development, resulting in five most typical forms of disorders (Mellibruda, 2009, pp. 15–18).

The first one is described as introjection, being a passive, thoughtless and unprocessed internalizing various – somehow "strange" – parts of the environment to one's own psyche[2]. The second source of disorders is projection, which as one of typical defence mechanisms, consists in not admitting certain aspects of one's own person and attributing them to others. The third type of disorder is called retroflection, which consists in directing actions that should be directed

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[2] Referring to introjection, J. Strojnowski accurately remarks that "We can find a similar description of a mental state in Eric Berne's concept called transactional analysis, where such a personality structure is called the adult ego state" (Strojnowski, 1985, p. 70).

outside at oneself (e.g. auto-aggression). Deflection, on the other hand, is an attempt to distance oneself from direct engagement in relations with others, particular situations or the whole environment, and is linked with not undertaking expected actions (e.g. due to talkativeness, using generalizations, pranks, avoiding eye contact with an interlocutor, ritualisation and conventionalization of one's behaviour, etc.). The last type of disorder, confluence, consists in blurring of borders between an individual and their situation, passive blending in with one's surroundings and losing one's identity (e.g. by conformism). Let us add that contemporary theorists distinguish the sixth disorder in which an individual due to weak, unclear and ambiguous contact with their environment, leaves many "unfinished" matters and problems that need to be "finished" during the therapy process (Ellis, Smith, 2011, p. 512). There are the following rules to be followed in Gestalt therapy: self-awareness, responsibility, meeting one's needs, human value, here and now, interaction between the background and the figure, closure and self-regulation (Sills, Fish, Lapworth, 1999, pp. 16–19).

The main aim of Gestalt therapy is personality development expressed in achieving true and authentic self of the client. It most often happens in form of group therapy, where the therapist works individually with a given person against the group background. Other therapy participants witness this event, share their feelings, thoughts and experiences, which constitutes a further subject of analysis. Methods of therapeutic work in this trend focus mainly on: emphasizing what is hidden, psychodrama and monodrama, Two Chair technique, contacting one's consciousness and many other procedures. However, in its current form, Gestalt therapy goes beyond purely psychotherapeutic use. It offers a new and different outlook on the world, where a particular value is attributed to interpersonal relations, lifestyle based on openness and the ability to use one's resources and potential, lifestyle which is creative and compatible with its harmonious development. That is why the aforesaid concept is widely used in various areas of practical application, such as healthcare, welfare, enterprise and organization functioning, pedagogy and education.

It should be noticed here that the development of Gestalt therapy created an opportunity to abandon some orthodox solutions promoted by Perls and sometimes arising anxiety and doubts. The emphasis was put more on building an optimal relation between a client and a therapist than on emphasising differences or lack of responsibility for another person, which is expressed by famous "Perls's prayer", often criticized as the most prominent display of egotism:

> I do my thing and you do your thing.
> I am not in this world to live up to
> your expectations,
> And you are not in this world
> to live up to mine.
> You are you, and I am I,
> and if by chance we find each other

it is beautiful.
If not,
It can't be helped (citing: Shepard, 1975).

In her therapeutic practice, Anna Tanalska replaces the aforementioned message with a different one, which reflects a more relational character of two subjects engaged in the therapy process:

I, the person, with my body,
feelings, thoughts, values.
And here you are. Let us try
to meet and create a new situation
together. You come to me
for help – special one
– and I am here to help you.
Within this situation we are both
human beings, persons (Tanalska, 1991, p. 58).

These are not the only questions raised by this concept. It imposes many difficult tasks and challenges on a therapist. They have to be able to accompany their client and be fully present, frequently when feelings are demonstrated very strongly and expressively. They cannot abandon their client when hurtful or difficult issues emerge, without any support, help in striving to solve occurring problems.

Using Gestalt techniques requires the ability to select them fast and adequately to a given person's characteristics, their problems and a particular therapeutic situation. Gestalt therapy seems to be more beneficial for patients who are sometimes called "non-psychotic," i.e. demonstrating various anxiety or affective disorders, adaptation or personality difficulties. These are usually people who are subject to excessive pressure and outer containment, too "socialized" or inhibited in their expression. On the other hand, in case of disorders with a more profound, sometimes psychotic foundation, therapy is much more difficult, time-consuming and requiring long-time engagement from the therapist's side. In the initial stage of therapy it is necessary to abandon typical Gestalt solutions for the benefit of building mutual trust between the therapist and the client, and to apply procedures facilitating their contact with reality and their feelings coming from their own body. Some patients, especially those with more serious disorders, might demonstrate at the beginning of therapy defensive and manipulative attitudes, which might make the therapist feel an unjustified urge to interfere too early in order to break such defence. Excessive concentration on the client's individuality, ignoring their relation with the environment, might also lead to the feeling of alienation from their natural environment and create new problems of an interpersonal nature.

Too much focus on the Me category marginalizes and often ignores the Us concept. The shallow slogan "I do my thing and you do your thing," is unfortunately addressed to all those people who are not willing to sacrifice their time and care for other people, frequently their closest relatives. Inevitably, it has to promote narcissistic and egoistic attitudes. Moreover, patients characterised by no

ability to control their impulses and drives, which quite often occurs in antisocial disorders, might find justification for their antisocial behaviours in expressive techniques of that trend. A well-known maxim "Where *id* was there shall *ego* be" from Freud's psychoanalysis might have an opposite meaning in this kind of therapy "where *ego* is, there shall be acceptance for unlimited *id*." Hence contraindications for using this method while working with clients who cannot control their impulses, who are short-tempered or psychopathic. Another limitation might be striving to make clients look for support in themselves too early, which might look like personality integration or maturity that can be truly achieved by a long-lasting learning process and many attempts in that area.

Gestalt pedagogy

At the end of his scientific activity, the founder of Gestalt therapy, Fritz Perls (1893–1970), got interested in the possibility of using this concept in education, especially in upbringing. Hilarion Petzold, one of key representatives, apart from George I. Brown, of Gestalt pedagogy, and a close co-worker of Fritz Perls, defined this trend in the following way:

> The essence of education in the Gestalt approach is direct and complete understanding between subjects at the level of their bodies, minds and feelings, and this holistic way of thinking about a human being is linked with the awareness of one's life space, creating one's space for action, realizing one's origins and accepting the limitations of one's cognition, consciousness and mortality of one's existence (after: Żłobicki, 2008, p. 44).

Gestalt pedagogy attracted the attention of many distinguished researchers, e.g. Olaf-Axel Burow, who had an undeniable influence on the development of this concept. The main assumptions of Gestalt pedagogy read as follows:
— teaching an individual to develop their own range of abilities and skills;
— learning about an individual's needs and interests, their further development;
— noticing opportunities to develop one's potential to act and experience;
— creating efficient relations between: discipline and spontaneity, behaviours deriving from immediate needs and hierarchical behaviours, free decision making and responsibility, etc.;
— self-determination with the awareness of social ties (the unity of an individual and their environment);
— social engagement with the awareness of self-responsibility;
— contributing towards an individual's autonomy;
— developing one's experiencing and perception abilities;
— openness to "requirements of a given situation", i.e. the ability and readiness to identify expectations and corresponding behaviours (Ginger, 1998, p. 22).

Gestalt pedagogy formulates particular behavioural norms for a learner, who, during their educational process, should:

— experience the feeling of belonging and social bond,
— get support,
— have the right to respect and dignity,
— have an opportunity to get or regain courage and trust towards one's own person (Janowska, 1995, p. 36).

It is claimed that Gestalt therapy became the main inspiration to introduce psychotherapy into the Polish educational system in the 80s of the 20th century. Psychologists in Cracow and Warsaw got the first signals from the West that psychological training called "psychological help by active methods" was used in schools, which allowed them to gradually implement this kind of solution in educational-vocational centres. Classes took the form of therapeutic groups.

> Their aim – as Zofia Pierzchała remarks – was to help young people solve emotional problems of adolescence, rebellion, protest, failure to adjust, and school difficulties (Zalewska-Stolzman, Pierzchała, 2013, p. 348).

Among the pioneers of such activities, which resembled sociotherapy in many aspects, one can mention Jerzy Nałęcz-Nieniewski, Jacek Pierzchała, Zofia Pierzchała, Magdalena Zalewska-Stolzman or Maria Różańska. In her memoir, the latter one states the fact that the traditional activity in the area of psychological and pedagogical support consisted mainly in diagnosing learners referred to these institutions by their schools and issuing opinions and certificates. Thus, no wonder that introducing psychotherapeutic and innovative forms of support met some reluctance. Consulting centres were perceived by parents and students as the continuation of school, which undermined the feeling of safety and trust and resulted in treating children like objects (Różańska, 2011, p. 40). However, the changes were developed in a long process, which – as we know – to a large extent, led to the evolution in the functioning of psychological and pedagogical counselling centres.

The Gestalt concept also found its place in the theory of teaching. In this context, the name of Wolfgang Köhler (1887–1967) is frequently mentioned. On the basis of his experiments, he drew the conclusion that learning happens via the act of getting insight, and a learner learning or solving a given task must know elements of that task and the goal they are to achieve. Moreover, they shall have a possibility to look at the general context of a given situation. Thus, learning means mental or physical manipulation of these elements until the solution occurs. Some of these elements have been rooted in a person since their birth. Human mind absorbs simple concepts and arranges them into more complex categories, giving them meaning.

> […] we react to meaning, synthesising it in our mind. We learn Einstein's theory by insight, by discerning relations between particular concepts, and not by reinforcing our instrumental behaviour (Phillips, Soltis, 2003, p. 57).

It is also one of characteristic features distinguishing the Gestalt approach from the behavioural theory of learning. Wiktor Żłobicki's publications offer the

most complex description and analysis of the application of Gestalt therapy in education. His monograph entitled *Edukacja holistyczna w podejściu Gestalt. O wspieraniu rozwoju osoby* (*Holistic Education in the Gestalt Approach. On supporting One's Development*) (2008) and a series of articles published in *Gestalt* journal (2001, pp. 20–24; 2002a, pp. 14–19; 2003a, pp. 17–22; 2003b, pp. 26–30; 2004, pp. 26–30), constitute a comprehensive compendium of knowledge on Gestalt pedagogy clearly being formed on these foundations. The author's works contain a typology of relations between the teacher and the learner, interesting from the perspective of an educational transactions analyst (Żłobicki, 2008, pp. 52–54). The first model characteristic for Gestalt pedagogy emphasizes complete subjectivity of each interaction partner. It is expressed by the following diagram:

(ME) PUPIL   ⟷   **(ME)** TEACHER
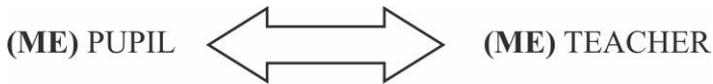
This model relation is disturbed when e.g. the learner becomes the object of the influence of the teacher who takes on the role of an expert. It is a typical situation for school understood in the traditional way. The diagram takes on another shape:

(ME) TEACHER

⬇

(IT) PUPIL
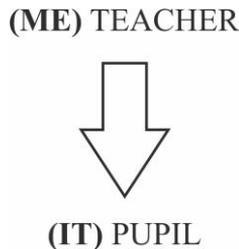
In too permissive relations of contemporary school, the aforesaid model can develop in an opposite direction, where the teacher takes a role of a carer who allows their learners to do everything:

(ME) PUPIL

⬇
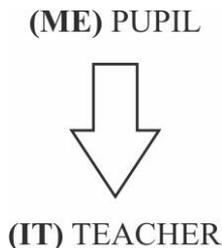
(IT) TEACHER

It is difficult not to notice the dramatic situation (IT) LEARER – (IT) TEACHER, which makes this relation devoid of subjectivity on both sides. The author concludes with a remark:

Both the teacher and the learner are not able to make any contact with each other. A characteristic feature is mutual manipulation and exploitation, closing the path to any development, making learning impossible (Żłobicki, 2008, p. 54).

The teacher's role in the Gestalt concept is unique.

Maybe that is why – Bogusław Śliwerski writes – this pedagogy is described as the one initially coming from the educator (teacher, head teacher) (Śliwerski, 2004b, p. 160).

In order to create an optimal relation with their learner, the teacher has to be aware both of didactic and educational goals to achieve, and how they function in relations with other people. Moreover, they should know their own abilities and limitations, how they adjust to the environment, whether they integrate and process own experiences. Their mental state is an important instrument in educational situations and the process of teaching and educating. Without any doubt, these are requirements not all educators can meet. And this might be one of important reasons (apart from unwillingness shown by representatives of the teaching profession originating from Marxist pedagogy) that in spite of high interest this pedagogical trend enjoyed in the West (the USA, Germany, Austria, Sweden) – as Bogusław Śliwerski states – in Poland the Gestalt approach did not fulfil its educational potential (Śliwerski, 2004b, pp. 170–171). Nevertheless, Jadwiga Uchyła-Zroski notices broad potential possibilities for the use of Gestalt pedagogy in contemporary school. In case of this concept, its educational and teaching values are expressed by motivating the subjects of the educational process to activity and self-reflection. Learning creates at a given moment ("here and now") a balance between an individual ("Me"), the group ("Others"), topic (the "Problem") and the surrounding environment (the "World"). It is also important to emphasise the role of emotions in this process, awareness and autonomy of the subjects taking part in it, no to mention responsibility for the result of made decisions and undertaken actions (Uchyła-Zroski, 2004, pp. 71–80).

Undeniably, undertaking such a special educational role by a teacher requires specialist and professional training. Janina Janowska made such an attempt, presenting theoretical and programme guidelines, and forms in which classes conducted for her pedagogy students and teacher training university students were realised (Janowska, 1995, pp. 33–49). That author thinks that the essence of training for teachers using the Gestalt approach is: belief in a student's development potential, creating situations that facilitate learning, referring to one's own experiences that allow for theoretical generalizations, and teacher-learner feedback (Janowska, 1995, p. 37). Many goals quoted in the programme guidelines (e.g. developing interpersonal skills, revealing the teacher's personality features that facilitate learning, developing relations based more on cooperation than on initiating competition, creating the atmosphere of peace, and others) could be applied in the concept of teacher training analysed from the perspective of transactional analysis.

Gestalt therapy and educational transactional analysis

Everything that has been said above significantly brings the Gestalt approach closer to educational transactional concepts, and the very Gestalt therapy is quite often, in its many different aspects, matched with transactional analysis. It is worth noticing that experiences and lives of Fritz Perls, the founder of Gestalt therapy, and Eric Berne, the founder of transactional analysis, progressed in a parallel way, within a certain cultural paradigm. They both came from the same generation, broke with orthodox psychoanalysis they derived from, and developed their own therapeutic systems, becoming widely acknowledged and popular in the United States in the post-war period (James, Jongeward, 1994, p. 30). Both schools are focused mainly on group work, aiming towards therapy transparency and effectiveness, yet each of them emphasizes different aspects. While Gestalt therapy concentrates mainly on client's emotional self-understanding, TA focuses more on the rational and intellectual side.

Many therapists have used in their practice, and certainly still do, the combination of the Gestalt approach and TA (e.g. Phil Lapworth, Mary and Bob Goulding, Petruska Clarkson, Muriel James and others). The crucial assumption of this trend concerning the fundamental relation Me-You can be discerned in many TA contexts.

> At the beginning it should be stated – Anna Tanalska writes – that the therapeutic situation in Gestalt therapy is an optimal relation between two persons, two subjects, speaking more philosophically (Tanalska, 1991, p. 56).

Andrzej Jastrzębski draws our attention to comparable possibilities offered by TA:

> In the context of transactional analysis, every person can change their life as they are free and able to make independent decisions. It reverberates with the assumptions of the humanistic-existential trend and Gestalt therapy (Jastrzębski, 2010, p. 360).

This aspect of the therapy in question is also noticed by Mariola Paruzel-Czachura who suggests recognizing Gestat as a trend with strong philosophical foundations, thus deserving the name of – as she calls it – philosophical therapy (Paruzel-Czachura, 2015, pp. 206–209). It is difficult to deny that every emerging trend and school of psychotherapy was developed on a certain ideological or philosophical foundation and further on, to a lesser or greater extent, referred to these origins. Therefore, many elements of Gestalt therapy demonstrate the similarity to analogous assumptions of transactional analysis. Let us list some of them. Undoubtedly, the first place is occupied by the feature of authenticity in communication by open and sincere relations of interaction partners, providing oneself and others with support, increasing mature responsibility for one's life choices. All of this aims at restoring healthy self-regulation of man and their environment. Moreover, the style in which the therapist approaches their client, where one of the

basic rules is the rule of *époche,* well-known from phenomenology, which assumes that the therapeutic relation should be devoid of any former assumptions, views or beliefs, is of no little importance (Sills, Fish, Lapworth, 1999, pp. 101–102). It is difficult not to notice similarities to the so-called thinking Martian described by Berne (Hostie, 1982, pp. 168–170).

In the context of sociotherapy, it is also important to mention what is described in Gestalt therapy as experimenting, which in sociotherapeutic procedures can be expressed by identifying and developing new behaviours and personal skills of children, teenagers and adults, coping with internal and external conflicts, practising new skills, completing and working on one's developmental deficiencies and deficits in relations with others, or finishing matters that are still open and not dealt with, or eliminating the feeling of injustice (Jagieła, 2007).

It can be also stated that both Gestalt's and transactional analysis' main aim is to serve people's development, their autonomy and independence so as to make them more "victorious" the way TA understands it. Correspondences between transactional analysis and Gestalt motivate some authors to seek synthesising solutions. For example, that is what Ken Wilber (Wilber, n.d.) does in one of his long texts. He proves that both approaches are of a complementary nature as far as the same psychodynamic factors are concerned, thus the synthesis of the best elements from both trends shall be more effective that using each of them separately. He also remarks that the value of TA is expressed in its simplicity and effectiveness, whereas Gestalt therapy reaches more strongly and deeper to the fundamental changes of human development. Undoubtedly, it is a good reason to make an attempt to carry out such a synthesis and I am convinced that, apart from a few theoretical differences, it is possible to obtain the synthesis combining the pace and simplicity of TA with Gestalt effectiveness and depth.

All in all, these two approaches might create a simple and effective system in psychotherapy. Muriel James and Dorothy Jongeward do accordingly, putting an equation mark between the two tends. They write as follows:

> Transactional analysis developed by Eric Berne and Gestalt therapy interpreter by Frederic Perls are two methods of self-discovery and learning about others (James, Jongeward, 1994, p. 19).

Further on in their book, they point to similarities between the two concepts more than once. Similarly, Leonhard Schleger in his lexical work devoted a lot of space to this issue, at the same time offering practical examples taken from his own therapeutic practice (Schleger, 2002). In conclusion, he states that all methods of psychotherapy are convergent in many areas and mutually complement each other, merely emphasising different aspects, hence disputes of representatives of some trends seem pointless. Mary and Robert Goulding (Goulding, Goulding, 1979) point to the possibility of using Gestalt therapy in the procedures of transactional analysis aiming at redecision, whereas Petruska Clarkson (Clarkson, 1989, 1995) and other authors pointing to similarities of both therapies (e.g.

James, 1977) notice the potential of using it in various particular TA procedures and techniques. However, they sometimes treat those similarities in a simplified way, writing e.g. that Transactional Analysis (TA) offers simple and vivid language, explains especially scenarios and unconscious games in human relationships and the need for social recognition (caresses or strokes), and different degrees of personal entanglement (Ginger, 2004, p. 62).

Stephen Johnson, who also combined the transactional approach and Gestalt therapy while working with narcissistic patients, writes in publications well-known in Poland:

> I apply a useful idea from Gestalt therapy, according to which I divide my patient into "parts" and help them see, while being the "parent" at a given moment, how demanding, strict and destructive towards their "child" they are. Then, I ask my client to assume the role of the "parent" and talk to their "child" as a caring, helpful father, who undertakes to be kind, spend a lot of time with the child, give them many opportunities to rest, relax and play (Johnson, 1993, p. 107).

And he adds:

> In every case of the narcissistic style therapy, I try to initiate and maintain a dialogue between the magnified fake self and the real self. In this exercise, whose source is Gestalt therapy, I usually equate the real self with the "child" and the magnified fake self with this part of the patient that urges, criticizes it and has unrealistic expectations towards it (Johnson, 1993, p. 108).

Inspiration by TA is explicit here and raises no doubts. It is only a pity that the author does not state its origins clearly. It is not possible to list all the authors making an attempt to combine transactional analysis and Gestalt. However, it is worth mentioning a few more. Some of them refer to the treatment of particular psychosomatic disorders, e.g. migraines. One of such situations is described by Cecile H. Pichel, family and marriage counsellor in Menlo Park, California. She discusses a case of 17-year-old Laura suffering from recurring migraines since the age of 12. The therapeutic work described by the author consisted in combining the typical Gestalt Two Chair technique with a transactional attempt of script redecision, expressed in this case with an imperative "It shall not be OK!" Pichel achieved significant reduction of symptoms and a new life decision, namely reformulating the formerly unfavourable relationship between the mother and the daughter and a decision to draw from adult resources of the patient (Pichel, 1977, pp. 58–60).

The Two Chair technique was similarly used by Art Oblas, a certified ITAA member from the National Academy of Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselors in New York, who evaluates the aforesaid method as the one enabling the therapist to react more appropriately and control their reactions in highly dynamic situations of therapeutic sessions with the client (Oblas, 1981, pp. 328–329). On the other hand, Selmer Wathney, a clinical psychologist working in the Youth Council in Sacramento, describes the use of paradoxical interventions both in

Gestalt and TA sessions. This interesting article describes cases of working with teenagers with the use of paradoxical interventions and presents arguments for this kind of method. In his conclusion, the author dispels doubts that paradoxical interventions might strengthen behavioural symptoms. He claims that the opposite happens as new behaviour evoked by a paradoxical instruction takes place in a new context, which itself facilitates adolescents' control from the Adult ego state position over their former ways of problematic behaviour (Wathney, 1982, pp. 185–189).

In one of their articles, Michael F. Hoyt and Robert L. Goulding, leading transactional analysts, show the role of Gestalt therapy techniques in supervision, aiming at demonstrating transference, countertransference and impasse experienced by psychotherapists (Hoyt, Goulding, 1989, pp. 201–211). Kenneth R. Evans, the head of Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute in Nottingham (England), cooperating with the Institute for Integrative Psychotherapy in New York, and the head of the European Association for Psychotherapy, focuses on the phenomenology of human shame, which originates in early childhood and remains till adulthood (Evans, 1994, pp. 103–108). The author understands shame as defence against power abuse in the original relationship of a newborn baby and its carer. Toxic shame can be treated on the basis of dialogic work in Gestalt therapy and a balanced transactional relation between the therapist and their client. The following elements are crucial here: mutuality, integration, presence and engagement. However, the author does not believe that one can get rid of such feelings completely. In certain cases, it is possible to face this "enemy" and reach the state of "not being ashamed of shame" on the basis of choosing more appropriate emotions such as anger, fear, sadness or joy.

Therapists working with children can be certainly interested in Keith Tudor's ideas as she suggests integrating TA and Gestalt therapy while working with groups of younger children (Tudor, 1991, pp. 12–20). Based on her own findings and discussing other authors' work, she describes educational and therapeutic work promoting mental health, integrating both approaches in her work with children aged 5–14. "To feel – to know – to think – to enjoy – to close" is a cycle of therapeutic measures following the suggested model. Therapeutic work in this age group requires from its therapist the feeling of their own strength, protecting and understanding children's developmental stages. As far as permission known in TA is concerned, she sees it mainly in the context of working with parents. She agrees with the statement of another well-known transactional analyst, Thomas Harris, who said that "the best way to help children is to help their parents" (Harris, 1987, p. 169) as far as the system is concerned, but in case of working on positive promotion of mental health, the impact on children also makes sense and is beneficial to their parents.

Although there are noticeable convergences and similarities between both concepts, without any doubt there are also differences in the approaches proposed

by Gestalt and transactional analysis. Serge Ginger remarks that while TA (and also NLP) values adapting oneself to another person, the environment, system (? – sic!), only Gestalt "puts a high value on an individual with their needs and unique values, which should not be destroyed by constant environmental pressure" (Ginger, 2004, p. 62). It seems that the aforesaid statement does not withstand scrutiny. It is hard to find in TA the glorification of "overwhelming" strength and pressure of the environment, though sometimes such environmental impact also takes place. On the other hand, the defence of extreme individualism can easily lead to egotism, loneliness and alienation of many people, whose cultural indications can be easily discerned in the contemporary world of western civilization.

Although in Poland many initiators of therapy treating behavioural disorders of children and teenagers by group therapy initially identified themselves or originated from training deriving from this Gestalt trend, it does not seem that all the possibilities offered by this concept for sociotherapy have been fully used. We should not be misled by the belief, no matter how right and justified, that Gestalt therapy is addressed to people with, so to speak, excessive social adaptation (easy to submit, timid, withdrawn, anxious), as the nature of this kind of adaptation is far from expected. Neither should we be misled by the term "socio-Gestalt" occurring in the context of this concept as it does not mean its use in sociotherapy but constitutes a branch of Gestalt, in this case referring to the functioning of institutions or organizations understood "as a whole" (Ginger, 2004, pp. 67–68). This concept gives a slightly different meaning to aggression, whose manifestations are so frequently encountered in sociotherapy. Aggression is not understood as destructive violence but as certain "life drive" and facing the world and its challenges, contrary to withdrawal and submission. We begin with child dependence, go through adolescent anti-dependence full of rebellion, adult independence, and finally mature codependence, giving oneself and others the feeling of freedom (Ginger, 2004, pp. 113–115). Yet, one can hope that Gestalt therapy and its application in working with children and teenagers is, like Petruska Clarkson and Jennifer Mackewent remarked "a chemical process which, once initiated, is going to go on its own" (Clarkson, Mackewn, 2008, p. 132). Shall it be in fact like that? The years to come shall confirm or question that belief.

Among various schools of transactional analysis, the so-called redecision school seems to be closest to Gestalt therapy. Its assumptions come down to the belief that remote early-childhood and destructive decisions shall be replaced by more appropriate forms of working on these early script imperatives and limitations (Stewart, Joines, 2016, pp. 376–377). A teacher or head teacher aware of these processes can encounter a similar phenomenon. Former experiences of a given child can often have impact on developing current school relationships, leading to educational issues and impasse, which is the outcome of self ego states in conflict. Representatives of the aforesaid school also put emphasis on personal

responsibility for taken decisions, establishing c o n t r a c t s, self-obligations and several other elements which can play a crucial role in solving many educational problems, at the same time constituting an important area of future research in the field of educational transactional analysis and the Gestalt concept.

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Psychopedagogika integracji i autentyczności, czyli o związkach terapii i pedagogiki Gestalt z edukacyjną analizą transakcyjną (cz. 5)

Streszczenie

Artykuł omawia terapię i pedagogikę Gestalt i jej związki z analizą transakcyjną w jej edukacyjnym wydaniu.

Słowa kluczowe: terapia Gestalt, pedagogika Gestalt, edukacyjna analiza transakcyjna.