

**Yes we care!**

Gestalt therapy is more than a  
psychotherapeutic concept

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**EAGT (European Association for Gestalt  
Therapy) Committee for Human Rights  
and Social Responsibility**

# EAGT

- European wide Umbrella organisation for Gestalttherapists, National Organizations and Training Institutes.
  - Gestalt Therapy (and any other psychotherapy) has a political impact.
  - The suffering of societies vs. the individual suffering on society: Where to start?
  - Field theory: on-going exchange organism-environment is that we also have a job to do on social, ecological, cultural and political level.
  - One of the aims of Gestalt therapy: To enable
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# EAGT Committee for Human Rights and Social Responsibility

- Founding: Prague 2003.
- An association of Gestalttherapists should develop forms of participating on changes in society to defend Human Rights and support Social Responsibility.
- Mission: improvement of mental health, quality of life and psychological growth and specific for vulnerable societies, groups and communities to strengthen their capacities for the adjustment to the rapidly changing society. Our focus is to strengthen self-

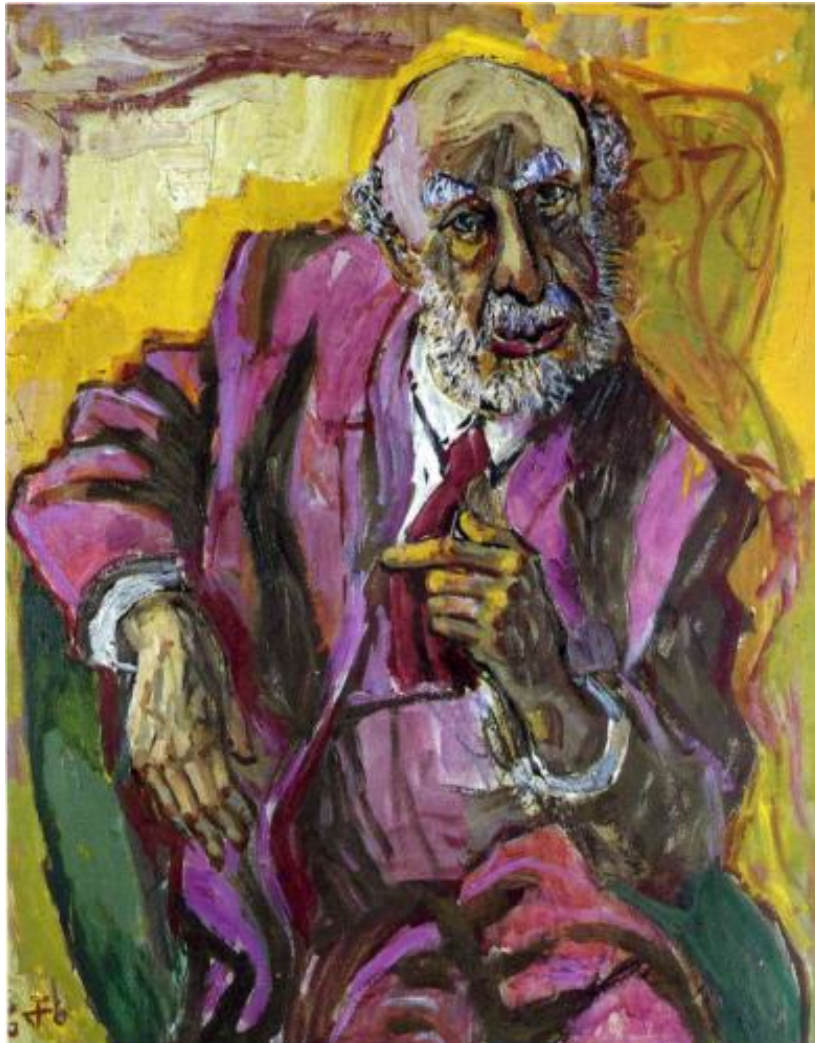
# Projects and activities

- PBI (Peace Brigades International): Cooperation with this NGO. Support of HR defenders protecting volunteers. Supervision, Coaching.
- Israeli and Palestinian conflict: Promoting dialogue among professionals from both sides.
- Ukraine: Support of professionals in the country in dealing with traumatized patients.
- Greece: Support of a center for integration of refugees: Free workshop for volunteers on the topic of loss (of home, family, identity, country, culture) and how to deal with it.
- Congress among Gestalttherapists „Social, political and cultural relationships as therapy's ground“. Result: Book „Yes, we care“. Benefit of sales goes to a fund to finance HR&SR activities.

For sale here available.

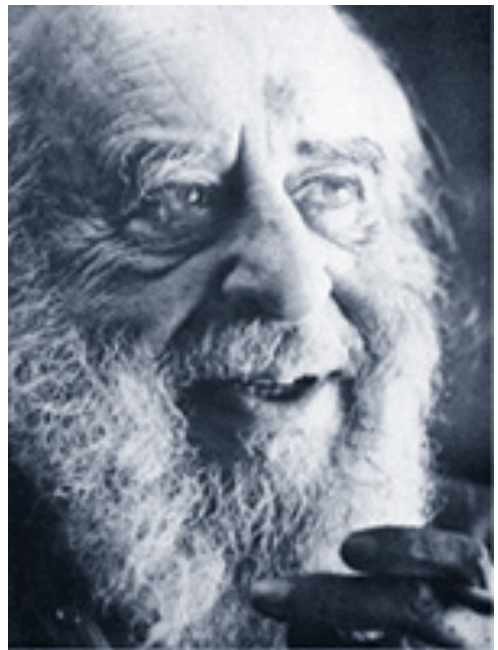
## Psychotherapy was always in a direct connection with the political

- For Psychoanalysis the ~~field~~ <sup>idea</sup> and declare sexuality as a central factor in human life was very important, but also caused a lot of resentments and discrimination.
- Gestalt in the beginning was very active in demanding the liberation of homosexuality and bisexuality, which was also breaking taboos.
- The Gestalt Founders Fritz and Lore Perls, as Jews and socialists, had to leave Germany 1933 because of the Nazis. They came here to South Africa and founded a praxis for



Fritz Perls  
by Otto  
Dix

# Fritz Perls (1893 – 1970)



# Lore Perls (1905 – 1990)





# Fighting against war, violence and apartheid

- Paul Goodman , one of the founders of Gestalt was a strong opponent of war (for example the war in Vietnam) and the Military – Industrial Complex
- In Germany all the therapeutic Schools argued for the elimination of the § 175 which said that homosexuality is illegal and must be prosecuted
- Many organizations joined the campaign „Free Nelson Mandela“ and boycotted South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s

**FREE  
NELSON  
MANDELA**



# European Association

- As the European Association of Psychotherapist we are aware that our role in a World Congress must be modest and respectful.
- European nations were the colonizers of many countries and caused enormous damage to the local people and nature (esp. here in Africa), so we are not in the position to tell anybody what to do.
- [www.eagt.org](http://www.eagt.org)
- <http://www.eagt.org/hrsrcommittee.htm>

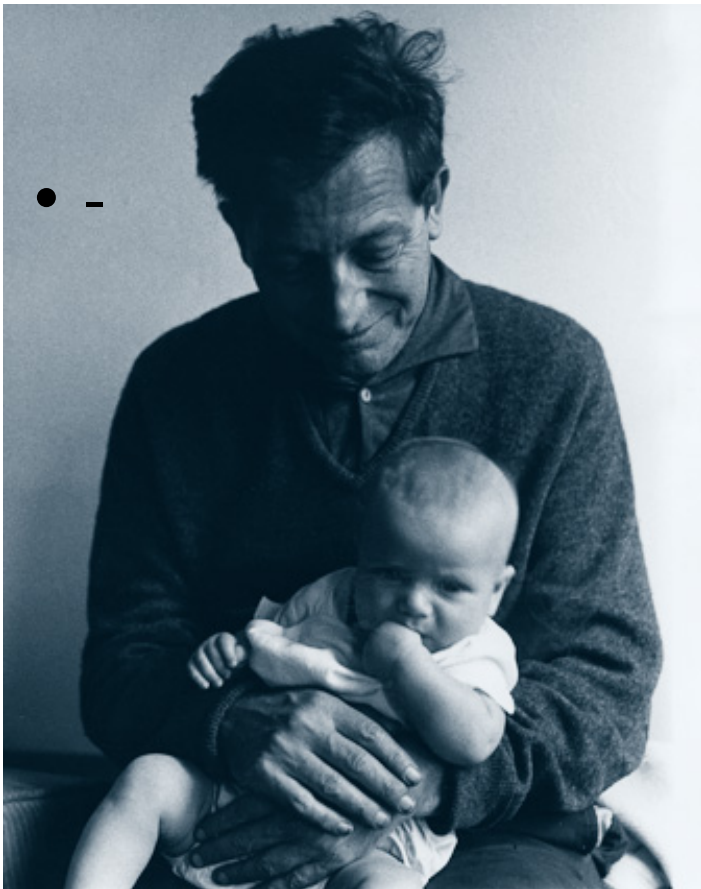
# We would love to share our experiences

- Book: „Yes we care“
- We give information about our projects, we are not reclaiming a political field for us
- We invite other Therapeutic Associations to go similar ways of activities and social responsibility
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Poverty is not an accident.  
Like slavery and apartheid,  
it is man-made and  
can be removed by  
the actions of  
human beings.

- Nelson Mandela





## Paul Goodman (1911 – 1972)

**Thank you for your attention**