



September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Dear Students, Interns, Faculty, Graduates and Friends of the Gestalt Centre,

I recently wrote to you and then we hosted a community meeting, to introduce the idea of an Organisational Transition Process (OTP) that we have begun at the **Gestalt Centre**. The purpose of this process is to develop a business case and strategic plan to ensure the future viability and growth of **Gestalt Therapy Australia** Training Program and the **ConnectGround** Community Clinic. We are also trying to establish a structure that will reflect the values of our modality and community, so it can become an undertaking of the gestalt community of practice in Melbourne.

This will be a slow process and I want to assure that your current student/internship experience is not about to fundamentally change. Instead our hope is to transition the structure over the next 18-24 months. This change will occur in the context of consultation and opportunity to be involved. As another dimension to the context, I want to also acknowledge the recently announced reversal by PACFA that sees pathways reopened to course (and graduate) accreditation. This is very welcome news and will have a positive impact on the whole community.

Despite the many challenges of 2020, the Gestalt Centre is in an okay position. We are already planning for a full and exciting 2021. If we can recruit a reasonable sized 2021 cohort, we should be able to hold (perhaps even increase) overall student numbers across the program. Higher student numbers in the training program will see increased demand for internships in the clinic.

The call on ConnectGround services has never been higher, and we have been able to refer clients on to community members (graduates) who have made themselves available to support the clinic's work. What we teach and deliver here has great benefits for the community and the demand for gestalt services generally is rising.

The vision is that our graduates, and other key stakeholders, will come together to form a **gestalt community of practice**, that will run the Gestalt Centre and support the promulgation of relational therapy and thinking.

A brief summary of the OTP:

- This OTP's intention is to improve transparency of the **Gestalt Centre** and its current operating model (including its ownership structure and financial situation)

- The **Gestalt Centre** has a history of private ownership, we are exploring new structures that might better reflect its vision and values
- The hope is the **Gestalt Centre** could be led by, and support, a more formalized gestalt community of practice
- This would see shared responsibility for the activity of the centre, and in turn might see further growth
- A community led structure would elevate the role of volunteerism across the Gestalt Centre
- A community led structure would also engage more actively in fundraising and be able to receive grants that could be facilitated by being a Not For Profit (NFP) or some other form of social enterprise
- Community ownership will support the sustainability of the training program and clinic. It might also allow for development, change and growth at all levels

At our recent community meeting I introduced Eva Deligiannis who will take up a formal consultative role as our **Change Manager to the Organisational Transition Process**. In this capacity she will:

1. Consult with Gestalt Centre stakeholders
2. Advise MD around capacity building for the organisation
3. Create a transition plan
4. Identify strengths, needs, opportunities, threats etc
5. Support communication processes

As a way to briefly introduce Eva, she completed Gestalt psychotherapy training in 2013 she has a small clinical practice at the moment and alongside her coaching and consulting practice using the Relational Organisational Gestalt (ROG) model. She has served on the GANZ council and helped organise 2 GANZ conferences and has connections within the Gestalt community in Australia and NZ.

Initially Eva will lead a research and evaluation phase that will take roughly six months. In this time, we will be working with key stakeholder groups to determine the future needs of the organisation. This will include talking to you and helping all involved connect with the community of practice. We'd love you to be involved. Please let us know if you would like to take part in further conversations or receive more regular updates. We will be in touch in December with some proposals and next steps. If you would like to be in touch with Eva her email address is [eva@changemaking.com.au](mailto:eva@changemaking.com.au)

We are aware that some people have 'fallen off' our graduate email list. Can you make sure we have your preferred email address and check in with your colleagues and peers to make sure they are in the loop.

I feel very excited about this process and look forward to hearing from many of you across the duration of the OTP. Please feel free to contact me directly 0432 321 353.

Kind regards,

Tony Jackson