

DEUTSCHE VEREINIGUNG FÜR GESTALT THERAPIE
(GERMAN ASSOCIATION FOR GESTALT THERAPY)
NON-PROFIT-MAKING ASSOCIATION

Umbrella Organisation for Gestalt Therapists
in the Federal Republic of Germany

General objects of the DVG

The objects of the DVG are:

- I. to provide gestalt therapists and gestalt institutes in Germany with a forum for exchange and joint action and to support research;
- II. to provide a sound basis for training and application standards;
- III. to sustain and develop the content as well as the philosophical and societal aspects of the basic foundations of gestalt therapy.

I. Joining forces

The DVG aims to give the broad spectrum of gestalt therapy in Germany a location for exchange and joint action on professional and health issues. It brings together different currents of gestalt therapy and offers them a home where they will find a forum for contact and exchange.

The DVG supports both the publication of academic literature and research in the communication and further development of the theory and practice of gestalt therapy. It promotes and fosters, in particular, personal and academic exchange with representatives of other theoretical orientations and therapeutic modalities at both the national and international levels.

II. Maintenance of a high quality of training

It is the task of the DVG to establish and further develop criteria for the training of gestalt therapists in order to guarantee a high quality of gestalt therapy in Germany.

The training institutes organised within the DVG therefore commit themselves to adhere to defined minimum criteria for the content and conduct of their training.

Adherence to these criteria will be verified regularly by the Quality Control Committee which was established for this purpose.

The criteria shall be oriented towards the clinical requirements of a depth-psychology-based therapy. At the same time they shall do justice to the liveliness of the Gestalt therapeutic process.

The DVG understands gestalt therapy both as an excellent depth-psychological and humanistic *therapeutic method* that has proved itself in clinical routine and as an organismic *growth model*.

The DVG is aware that, in the last analysis, the quality of gestalt therapy, as of all therapies, cannot be measured in terms of countable quantities of hours and training units. It therefore has a critical attitude towards all excessive and unreflected institutionalisation and school-like standardisation of gestalt therapy.

It is the express interest of the DVG to protect and promote the individual characteristics of each individual training institute.

III. Tradition

The DVG feels committed to the existentialist, humanistic and socially critical body of thought of gestalt therapy.

It sees it as one of its main tasks to protect and develop the tradition and content of gestalt therapy in Germany.

Its aim is to represent this position in the therapeutic landscape in Germany.

**The DVG would like to invite colleagues
of like mind and action to collaborate**

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C O N S T I T U T I O N

§ 1. NAME, HEAD OFFICE, BUSINESS YEAR

1. The Association uses the name "Deutsche Vereinigung für Gestalttherapie" (German Association for Gestalt Therapy) (DVG), umbrella organisation for gestalt therapists in the Federal Republic of Germany. The association is to be entered in the register of associations. After it has been entered, the letters "e.V." (registered association) will be added to the name.
2. The head office of the association is in Berlin.
3. The business year is the calendar year.

§ 2. OBJECT OF THE ASSOCIATION

1. The object of the Association is to promote both the professional psychotherapeutic and psychosocial care of the population and the public health system on the basis of gestalt therapy, in particular in the fields of prevention, therapy, rehabilitation, education, counselling and supervision.
2. Particular emphasis shall be laid on the dissemination of the practice and teaching of, scientific research in and further development of gestalt therapy.
3. The Association shall also serve as a community of persons and institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany who and which are interested in the application, dissemination and further development of forms of Gestalt therapeutic work.
4. In order to achieve its object the Association sets itself the following specific tasks:
 - a) health policy initiatives for the promotion of therapeutic practice and educational and psychosocial work, also in conjunction with institutions of the public health system;
 - b) scientific research on, and further development of gestalt therapy, in particular in the fields mentioned under § 2.1. For this purpose the Association shall enter into an exchange of academic thought and opinions with other similar associations in Germany and abroad and also promote and organise conferences, public events and lectures;
 - c) the publication of informational material and commissioned scientific research for interested professionals;
 - d) the setting up of Committees of Experts to assume special tasks;
 - e) the compilation of guidelines for training and further training on the basis of gestalt therapy for members of the helping professions;
 - f) As umbrella organisation for gestalt therapists and Gestalt institutes in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Association endeavours to elaborate and provide academic and ethical criteria for the acquisition and use of a protected occupational title.

§ 3. NON-PROFIT STATUS

1. The Association pursues solely and directly objects that are non-profitable as defined by the third section of the regulations on "Objects subject to Tax Relief" in the German Law on Taxation.
2. The activities of the Association are not for its own profit; it does not primarily pursue objects profitable to itself
3. The assets of the Association may only be employed for objects that are compatible with the Constitution. The members do not receive any financial benefits from the assets of the Association.
4. No person may be advantaged by expenditure that is alien to the objects of the organisation or by a receiving a disproportionately high remuneration.
5. In the event that the Association is dissolved or that the object it has pursued to date ceases to apply, the assets of the Association shall be given to a statutory body, or some other body that enjoys tax relief, to be employed in the promotion of public healthcare.

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§ 4. MEMBERSHIP

The Association has full members (individual and institutional membership), members in training, associate members and honorary members.

1. Full membership

- a) Any natural person who has completed qualified, gestalt-therapy based training and further training in accordance with the criteria of this Association and is resident in the Federal Republic of Germany can become an *individual member*.

The Board may allow exceptions in cases where this is justified.

Applications for admittance as a full (individual) member shall be made in writing and submitted to the Board together with a photocopy of a certificate confirming the completion of training or further training. The Board shall decide whether the applicant is to be admitted as a member. The Committee on Issues of Training and Standards can be requested to consider and give its opinion on applications for full membership. It must be consulted in the case of applications for institutional membership. The Board must confirm the acceptance in writing. Reasons for rejecting membership applications need not be given to the applicant.

- (b) Any legal person or body of persons (institution) that deals with the training and further training of members of the helping professions based on gestalt therapy whose curricular training guidelines fulfil the criteria of the implementation rules of this Association and whose registered office is in the Federal Republic of Germany can become an *institutional member*.

Applications for full institutional membership shall be submitted to the Board enclosing a copy of the institution's articles of association or constitution, its training guidelines and a list of the trainers working for the institution

The Board shall decide whether the application for membership is to be accepted. The Board must confirm its acceptance in writing. Reasons for rejecting membership applications do not need to be given to the applicant.

2. Any natural person who is in gestalt therapy-based training or further training in accordance with criteria of this Association and is resident in the Federal Republic of Germany can become a **member in training**. The Board may allow exceptions in cases where this is justified. Applications for membership in training shall be made to the Board, enclosing confirmation of training by their training institute. The Board shall decide whether to accept the application. As soon as the training and further training is completed or, at the latest, 6 years after acceptance of membership as a *member in training*, the status as *member in training* shall expire and shall be automatically transformed into membership as an associate member, unless an application for recognition as a full individual member is submitted.
3. Any natural or legal person who is interested in supporting and promoting the Association may become an **associate member**. To become an associate member the applicant shall submit a written application for membership to the Board. The Board shall decide whether to accept the application.
4. At the proposal of the Board, the General Meeting of the Members may confer **honorary membership** on persons who have promoted the objects of the Association in a special and outstanding way or have acquired extraordinary merits in the field of gestalt therapy, its further development and propagation.

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§ 5. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS

1. In submitting their applications, applicants accept the provisions of this constitution for the event that their application is accepted.
2. The full, training and associate members are obliged to support the interests of the Association to the best of their ability, to protect its reputation, to comply with the decisions and requirements of the bodies of the Association and to pay the membership subscriptions laid down by the General Meeting of the Members.
3. Full members have the right to bring motions and to exercise their right to vote at the General Meeting of the Members.
4. Members in training and sponsoring members have no voting rights when it comes to concerns of training and further education guidelines and changes to the statutes.
5. Honorary members do not pay membership subscriptions.
6. All members have the right to attend the events of the Association at reduced prices.

§ 6. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership is terminated by death, leaving the Association voluntarily, removal of the member from the list of members, or exclusion.

1. In the event of termination of membership due to death outstanding subscriptions shall be cancelled.
2. Members may leave the Association voluntarily, giving three months' notice to the end of the business year. The notice must be given in writing and addressed to the Board. Members shall be obliged to pay their subscriptions until they leave.
3. A member can be struck off the list of members by a decision of the Board if s/he has not paid her/his subscription after receiving a written reminder setting a 6-week deadline.
4. Decisions on the exclusion of members shall be made by the Board. Such decisions shall have immediate effect. Grounds for exclusion are, in particular, gross violations of the constitution of the Association or of the interests of the Association, repeatedly failing to comply with decisions of the bodies of the Association and damaging the Association's reputation. Applications for the initiation of an exclusion procedure can be submitted to the Board by any member of the Association.

The reasons for the exclusion decision shall be stated and sent to the member in question by registered post. Members have the right to appeal to the Meeting of the Members against the Board's decision to exclude them. The appeal must be submitted to the Board within a period of 2 months following receipt of the exclusion decision. In this case the next Meeting of the Members shall pass a decision on the exclusion with a simple majority.

If the member does not exercise his/her right to appeal or fails to keep to the deadline, the exclusion shall take effect.

§ 7. MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscriptions agreed upon by the ordinary Meeting of the Members are due at the beginning of the financial year. Members who resign or are excluded from the Association are not entitled to a refund.

§ 8. THE BODIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The bodies of the Association are:

- 1 The Board
- 2 The Annual Meeting of the Members
- 3 The Ethics and Arbitration Committee (EAC)
- 4 Committees of Experts

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§ 9. THE BOARD

- 1 The Board comprises at least three full members of the association, who are elected by
the Annual Meeting of the Members
- 2 The following are elected:
 - a) the President, authorized to represent the Association jointly,
 - b) the Vice-President, authorized to represent the Association jointly as representative of
the President,
 - c) the Treasurer,
 - d) Additional members of the Board can be elected in connection with new tasks.
- 3 The allocation of the current business of the Association shall be regulated by the standing
orders of the Board.
- 4 Each of them has the right to represent the Association alone.
- 5 The Board Members shall be supported in the execution of their tasks by Committees of
Experts established by the Meeting of the Members.
- 6 The individual board members shall be elected by the Meeting of the Members for the duration
of three years by a simple majority of those members present who are eligible to vote. They
shall remain in office until a Board has been re-elected. The election generally takes the form
of an open vote. On the application of a member, the board members can decide to vote by
ballot.
- 7 If there are important grounds for doing so, a board member can be voted out of office by a
simple majority of the members present at the Meeting of the Members, especially when that
member violates the principles of the Association or damages its reputation.
- 8 If a board member resigns prematurely, that member's office shall remain vacant until the next
(ordinary or extraordinary) Meeting of the Members.
- 9 The Board can enlist the support of other persons and working groups in performing its work
and in settling all of the Association's current business and also in performing all its
organisational and technical tasks.
- 10 The Board shall take its decisions with a simple majority and give itself standing orders. The
Board constitutes a quorum if the members have been properly invited to the Board meeting
and at least three members of the Board are present.
- 11 The Board can reach decisions in a written procedure provided that all Board Members approve
of the object of the passing of the resolution.
- 12 The President or his/her representative shall ensure that the Board is convened regularly and, if
necessary, convene an extraordinary board meeting.
- 13 Minutes shall be taken of the results of the Board meetings.
- 14 The representative authority of the board members is limited inasmuch as all legal acts
committing the Association to payments exceeding €500.00 must be authorised by all the
board members. Expenditures exceeding €2.500.00 must be approved by the Meeting of the
Members.
- 15 The main tasks of the Board are as follows:
 - a) to conduct the Association's business and administer the receipts and expenditures.
 - b) to call and chair the regular and extraordinary Meetings of Members (once a year) and
extraordinary meetings as required.
 - c) to prepare an annual report and treasurer's report.
 - d) to implement the resolutions of the Meeting of the Members and
 - e) to admit new members and make decisions on the exclusion of members
- 16 The Board shall receive a reasonable allowance for its time and expenses, the extent of which
shall be set by the Meeting of the Members.
- 17 Board meetings are to be convened, giving a suitable notice, when it is in the interest of the
Association to do so (at least once a year), or if 2 out of 3 of the board members demand that a
board meeting be convened, stating the reasons for doing so.

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§ 10. MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

1. Convening a Meeting of the Members

- a) The ordinary general Meeting of the Members shall take place at least once a year. It is convened electronically by the board of directors with a notice period of 6 weeks and a provisional agenda. Members without an internet connection or email address will receive the invitation in writing (by post).
- b) The general assembly can in cases of force majeure such as epidemic, pandemic, earthquake, fire, flood, acts of war, embargo, riots and other circumstances that are beyond reasonable control be carried out as an online general meeting.
- c) Motions for the passing of resolutions (as provided in Clause 10) that do not require changes to the Constitution are to be submitted to the Board in writing not less than three weeks before the Meeting of the Members is due and announced to the members two weeks before the Meeting of the Members. Exceptions to this shall be decided by a two-thirds majority of the Meeting of the Members.
- d) The Board shall convene an extraordinary Meeting of the Members if the interests of the Association require such a meeting, or if 1/3 of the members apply to the Board in writing for such a meeting, stating the purpose and reasons for doing so. In such a case, three weeks' notice shall be given.

2. The Tasks of the Meeting of the Members

The General Meeting of the Members is responsible for the following:

- a) receiving the Board's annual and treasurer's report, the progress report of the Ethics and Arbitration Committee and the Committees of Experts
- b) formally approving the actions of the Board
- c) setting the annual membership subscriptions
- d) electing new Board members and new members of the Ethics and Arbitration Committee
- e) The Meeting of the Members is entitled to elect members to the individual Committees of Experts.
- f) passing resolutions on the awarding of honorary memberships
- g) passing resolutions on objections to exclusion decisions made by the Board.
- h) setting up Committees of Experts
- i) passing resolutions on changing the Constitution and dissolving the Association.
- i) taking decisions on fundamental issues about the objects and further development of the Association
- k) approving expenditures by the Board that exceed € 2.500.00.
- l) The Meeting of the Members is authorised to decide upon a reasonable time and expense allowance for the board members.
- m) Re-election of the cash auditors
The cash check is carried out by 2 people. They are elected for a period of 2 years. The check is carried out retrospectively for the past financial year.

3. The passing of resolutions by the Meeting of the Members

- a) The Meetings of the Members are chaired by a member of the Board.
- b) The Meeting of the Members generally is definitely quorate if it has been duly convened. If the Meeting of the Members does not constitute a quorum, a new Meeting shall be convened within six weeks.
- c) The Meeting of the Members passes general resolutions by a simple majority of the members who are entitled to vote and present or represented by others. When the vote is taken, only the Yes and No votes are taken into consideration. Abstentions do not count. They are not counted as belonging to the Yeses or to the Noes. In the event of a tied vote, the motion shall be considered rejected.
- d) Resolutions involving changes to the Constitution require a two-thirds majority; if

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- they concern the dissolution of the Association, a four-fifths majority of the members who are entitled to vote and present or represented is required.
- e) At the Meeting of the Members, each full member (individual and institutional memberships) has one vote only.
- f) Whenever possible, the right to vote shall be exercised in person. If a member is prevented from attending, that member's right to vote may be transferred to a proxy authorised as such in writing, provided that said member is a member of the Association with voting rights. However, no member may represent more than five other members. This applies to legal persons and associations of individuals.
- g) Decisions are generally arrived at by an open vote. If a member should so request, the Meeting of the Members can decide to hold a secret ballot.

§ 11. COMMITTEES OF EXPERTS

- 1 For certain tasks and research fields within the scope of the Association's social objects, the Meeting of the Members shall establish special Committees of Experts.
- 2 The Committees of Experts shall support the Board in the implementation and realisation of the Association's objects.
- 3 The members of the Committees of Experts shall generally be appointed by the Board for a period of two years, the board member responsible for the Committee of Experts having a right to submit proposals. Deviating from this, the Meeting of the Members is entitled to elect members to the different Committees of Experts (cf. § 10.2. e)
The Committee of Experts entitled "AAK" (Ausbildungs- und Anerkennungskommission – Training and Recognition Committee) consists of the institute representatives of the member institutes and two full members who do not have a supporting function - e.g. board members, managing directors, course instructors, trainers, shareholders, association members - in an institute. These full members are elected to the committee by the general assembly.
- 3 The Committees of Experts are under obligation to the Board and, if desired, to the Meeting of the Members, to report on their activities.
- 4 All plans for activities external to the Association require the Board's consent.

§ 12 THE ETHICS AND ARBITRATION COMMITTEE (EAC)

The EAC comprises at least 5 persons. They shall be appointed by the Meeting of the Members for a period of two years. The Commission's tasks comprise:

- advising the Board and the Committees of Experts, especially when conflicts arise
- arbitrating disputes (disciplinary committee)
- dealing with members' questions (petition)
- dealing with questions of an especially confidential nature (e.g. staff issues)
- dealing with fundamental issues relating to the development and objects of the Association.

The ECM can also submit proposals to the Association's committees on its own initiative.

§ 13. DOCUMENTING DECISIONS

Minutes are to be taken of the Meetings of the Members, the meetings of the Board, the Training and Recognition Committee and the Committees of Experts, and signed by the respective chairs and keepers of the minutes of the meeting. The minutes are to be delivered to the Board, which can then publish them in summary form, or in full, for the Association members, or hand them over to the Committee of Experts for Publications.

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§ 14. DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 1 The Association can be dissolved only at a Meeting of the Members by a majority vote as laid down in §10.
- 2 If the Meeting of the Members does not appoint specific liquidators, the President and Vice-President shall serve jointly as liquidators with power of attorney to wind up the Association's current business.
- 3 The Association's assets shall be dealt with in accordance with § 3.4. of this constitution.

§ 15. COMING INTO FORCE

- 1 The Constitution dated June 09, 1986 shall take effect after a resolution to this effect has been passed by the constituent assembly.
- 2 If the tax office considers changes to the Constitution to be necessary for the attainment of non-profit status (in the event that an application has been filed for non-profit status), or the registry court demands changes in the Constitution, the Board shall be authorised to make the corresponding changes. It must, however, inform all members of such changes in writing. If no member lodges a written objection with the Board within a period of two weeks, the amendments to the Constitution shall be considered accepted.
- 3 Changes to the Constitution made at a later date shall come into force after having been passed by the respective Meeting of the Members and entry into the registry of associations.

(Frankfurt/Main, June 9, 1986)
(Bad Honnef, May 10, 1991)
(Bad Honnef, May 10, 1997)
(Hermannsburg, May 9, 1998)
(Berlin-Spandau, May 10, 2003)
(Munich, June 3, 2005)
(Fulda, May 8, 2010)
(Fulda, May 2, 2012)
(Pforzheim, May 5, 2016)
(Basel, May 25, 2017)
(Schwerin, May 10, 2018)
(Essen, May 30, 2019)

Frankfurt/Main, June 27, 2020