Energy, interests, needs, vitality

My wife and I took our four-year-old granddaughter to the zoo; she rushed around excitedly and was particularly wide-eyed and captivated by the meerkats, having never seen one before. Whilst delighted by our granddaughter’s enthusiasm, my wife and I walked around at a more leisurely pace and although we found them interesting, we had both seen meerkats before.

We see energy, interest and vitality on the surface of the other. The brightness of a person’s eyes, the quality of their voice, the nature of their movements, the way they hold their body all reflect the quality of contact with their environment. Our energy, interest and vitality are stimulated and increased when we encounter the novel. When energized we can move more freely to contact our environment to meet our needs. If sufficiently supported in our life situation we are able to invest in constructively aggressing upon our environment (see Point 76). Contact with the novel will generate excitement and energy. We become motivated to satisfy our needs and to follow our interests. Change becomes possible through the aggressive action of deconstructing fixed gestalts, completing unfinished business – to follow a contact sequence through (see Points 13 and 14). If supportive field conditions are absent, or perceived as being absent, fluidity is lost. The energy that creates excitement in the well-supported person creates anxiety or depression in the under-supported person. In the well-supported person it leads to expansion of their perceived lifespace, in the under-supported person contraction.

When a person feels unsupported in journeying beyond their familiarity boundary, through fear and anxiety they restrict themselves in relation to their environment. In the absence of sufficient support, even minor challenges can seem daunting and may be avoided. Self-belief can be lost as the choice is made to live life in shades of grey leading to stagnation and a deadening of any vibrancy. Energy might appear to be absent but can be directed inwards or invested in moderations to contact that work to
substitute the known for the unknown even though the known is incongruent with the present situation.

When working with clients the gestalt therapist needs to pay attention to the client’s energy flow. We might begin by noticing where energy appears to be present or blocked in the client’s body; noticing what level of energy and vitality is co-created in the session between therapist and client. Noting when energy drops and when it increases and noting energy patterns in response to fulfilling needs (and what sort of needs) can give indications of areas for attention. Structured awareness experiments exploring bodily energy fields can also be useful in making a process diagnosis upon which to base interventions.

As therapists we need to pay attention to our own flow of energy. Treat a loss of interest as information in considering its meaning and view any variations in interest or vitality as a function of the field to explore either with the client or in supervision. One way in which we can stifle the life out of therapy is by becoming dogmatic about our theories. Let us learn our theories well but have the wisdom to let go of them when they block inventiveness and vitality.

Awareness and dimir

The moment one gis blade of grass, it becomes a magnificent word

Just as we are always in the quality of our contact the degree and quality the ways in which we did our work with our environment the novel can stimulate.

To illustrate a health awareness let me return to the discussed in the last piece on the way of the awareness; my wife and I ground. When she ever turned towards us to her awareness with the returned home and she did so she was aware of her contact with the richness of her own life and contact with her mother. These two types of awareness.

When our awareness process an integration of separate elements of the I can result in a complete field, their old tried and are thrown into questic