

*“A Phenomenological Exploration of the Therapist’s Experience of the ‘I-  
Thou moment’ within the Dialogical Relationship in Gestalt  
Psychotherapy”*

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## *Dedications*

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*To my loving husband Malcolm  
for always believing in me*

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## ***Abstract***

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The present study phenomenologically explores Gestalt Psychotherapists' experiences of the 'I-Thou moment' in Gestalt Psychotherapy, in Malta. A Phenomenological Qualitative approach was adopted, whereby a one-on-one, in-depth, open-ended interview was the research tool used. Five practicing Gestalt Psychotherapists (two male and three female) were recruited, and with informed consent, together with the researcher, engaged in a lengthy audio taped interview. The interview was based on each co-researcher's authentic experience of the 'I-Thou moment.' This study attempted to answer the research questions of whether or not Gestalt Psychotherapists recognise and experience an 'I-Thou moment' within a Gestalt Therapy session, and if so, *how* they experience it. It resulted that all co-researchers have occasionally experienced the 'I-Thou moment' with some clients, within a Gestalt Psychotherapy session, whereby the actual experience of the moment is similar for all five co-researchers. Some main experiences are: the uniqueness and rarity of the moment; the willingness to *surrender to the between* for the 'I-Thou moment' to occur; the spiritual aspect of the moment; the healing effect for both the client and the therapist; and the potential of the moment to induce awareness, growth, and change.

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