



*TRAINING PROGRAMME  
IN PERSON-CENTRED & FOCUSING-ORIENTED  
COUNSELLING & PSYCHOTHERAPY*

# Syllabus

*Athens, 2011*

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# 1. Identity and Structure of the Hellenic Focusing

## 1.1 Identity

The Hellenic Focusing Centre (HFC) was established and is directed by Pavlos Zarogiannis and Anna Karali, who are psychotherapists-counsellors, trainers, and supervisors in Person-Centred Approach and in Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy, as well as Certified Coordinators of the New York International Focusing Institute.

In 2001, the HFC began its training activities in Athens, having as an initial aim the training in the experiential Focusing method. In 2003, the HFC established legal foundations to extend its activities to cover a wider and more integrated psychological health field, always having as a main objective the development, promotion and establishment of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy in Greece.

The main activities of the Hellenic Focusing Centre are:

- Representation in scientific and professional bodies of Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches, both in Greece and abroad
- Training in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy, Focusing Method, Trauma Therapy, Counselling and Communication Skills
- Personal and group therapy
- Supervision
- Workshops and Seminars
- Lectures
- Elaboration of research studies and training courses
- Translation of documents significant for the training courses of the Centre
- Editing and publishing books relevant to the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches
- Collaboration with Greek and foreign bodies, both public and private (institutes, psychological health bodies, universities)
- Research
- Participation in seminars, meetings and conferences

## 1.2 Structure

Directors	Anna Karali Pavlos Zarogiannis
Trainers and Training Committee	Anna Karali Pavlos Zarogiannis Ireni Davleri Emmanuel Vantarakis Giorgos Tsoukalas
Trainers in training	Pat Foster
Associates	Campbell Purton Ph.D (U.K.) Dieter Mueller (Germany) Greg Madison Ph.D (U.K.) Michael Seibel Zafiria Detoraki Lousirena Papadopoulou
Supervision Administrators	Pavlos Zarogiannis Anna Karali
Financial Administrators	Pavlos Zarogiannis Anna Karali
Ethics Committee	Anna Karali Zafiria Detoraki Nikolaos Kypriotakis
Administrative Secretariat	Jenny Anagnostopoulos
Web Administrator	Nikolaos Kypriotakis

## 2. Course Timetables

### 2.1 Person-Centred & Focusing-Oriented Counselling Training

The whole training course is completed within three (3) years, as follows:

<b>Group Training</b> (theory, encounter groups, practice, labs, exercises)	1 <sup>st</sup> year	8 (weekends) x 13 hours	104 hours	170 hours
		2 (5-day intensive courses) x 33 hours	66 hours	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	8 (weekends) x 13 hours	104 hours	170 hours
		2 (5-day intensive courses) x 33 hours	66 hours	
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	8 (weekends) x 13 hours	104 hours	170 hours	
	2 (5-day intensive courses) x 33 hours	66 hours		
<i>Total</i>		24 (weekends) x 13 hours	312 hours	510 hours
		6 (5-day intensive courses) x 33 hours	198 hours	
		<b>Reading and written assignments</b>		300 hours
		<b>Personal or group therapy</b>		50 hours
		<b>Supervision</b>		70 hours
<b>Practice</b>		<b>Clinical Placement</b>	450 hours	570 hours
		<b>With clients</b>	120 hours	
<b>Total hours of programme</b>				<b>1500 hours</b>

### 2.2 Person-Centred & Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy Training

The whole training course is completed within four (4) years, as follows:

<b>Group Training</b> (theory, encounter groups, practice, labs, exercises)	1 <sup>st</sup> year	8 (weekends) x 13 hours	104 hours	170 hours
		2 (5-day intensive courses) x 33 hours	66 hours	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	8 (weekends) x 13 hours	104 hours	170 hours
		2 (5-day intensive courses) x 33 hours	66 hours	
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	8 (weekends) x 13 hours	104 hours	170 hours	
	2 (5-day intensive courses) x 33 hours	66 hours		
<i>Total</i>		24 (weekends) x 13 hours	312 hours	510 hours
		6 (5-day intensive courses) x 33 hours	198 hours	
		10 (monthly meetings - theory, supervision) x 5 hours	50 hours	
		<b>Reading and written assignments</b>		350 hours
		<b>Personal or group therapy</b>		100 hours
		<b>Supervision</b>		100 hours
<b>Practice</b>		<b>Clinical Placement</b>	450 hours	650 hours
		<b>With clients</b>	200 hours	

Total hours of programme 1760 hours



## 2.3 Additional Information

**Training Year:** December-November

### Semesters:

Winter/Spring: 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th  
(December, January, February, March, April)  
Summer/Autumn: 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th  
(May, June, September, October, November)

### Weekend Courses:

Saturday  
Sunday

10:00 - 14:00 and 15:00 - 19:00  
10:00 - 15:00

### 5-day intensive course:

Friday  
Saturday  
Sunday  
Monday  
Tuesday

17:00 - 21:00  
10:00 - 14:00 and 17:00 - 21:00  
10:00 - 14:00 and 17:00 - 21:00  
10:00 - 14:00 and 17:00 - 21:00  
10:00 - 14:00

**Note:** The duration of a training-hour is equivalent to 45'

## 2.4 Detailed tables

### 2.4.1 Person-Centred & Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy Training.

	Counselling	Psychotherapy	Aims
	hours	hours	
1 <sup>st</sup> year	Group Training 170+	Group Training 170+	<b>Introduction</b> to the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy
	Study, Assignments 100+	Study, Assignments 100+	
	Personal Therapy <u>15+</u>	Personal Therapy <u>15+</u>	
	285	285	
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Group Training 170+	Group Training 170+	<b>Main course</b> in the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling
	Study, Assignments 100+	Study, Assignments 100+	
	Personal Therapy 20+	Personal Therapy 20+	<b>Basic Training</b> in Focusing- Oriented Psychotherapy
	Practice: Clinical placement 50+	Practice: Clinical placement 50+	
	Clients 20+	Clients 20+	
Supervision <u>20+</u>	Supervision <u>20+</u>		
	380	380	
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Group Training 170+	Group Training 170+	<b>Training completion</b> in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling
	Study, Assignments 100+	Study, Assignments 100+	
	Personal Therapy 15+	Personal Therapy 25+	<b>Main Training</b> in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy
	Practice: Clinical placement 400+	Practice: Clinical placement 100+	
	Clients 100+	Clients 90+	
Supervision <u>50+</u>	Supervision <u>30+</u>		
	835	515	
	<b>Total</b> <b>1500</b>		

4 <sup>th</sup> year	Theory, Supervision	50+	
	Study, Assignments	50+	
	Personal Therapy	40+	
	Practice: Clinical placement	300+	
	Clients	90+	
	Supervision	50+	-
		570	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1760</b>	

**Training completion in  
Person-Centred and Focusing-  
Oriented Psychotherapy**

## 2.4.2 Person-Centred & Focusing-Oriented Counselling Training

Counselling		
1 <sup>st</sup> year	hours	
	Group Training	
	170+	
	Study, Assignments	
	100+	
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Personal Therapy	
	15+	
	285	
	Group Training	
	170+	
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Study, Assignments	
	100+	
	Personal Therapy	
	20+	
	Practice:	
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Clinical placement	
	50+	
	Clients	
	20+	
	Supervision	-
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	20+	380
	Group Training	
	170+	
	Study, Assignments	
	100+	
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Personal Therapy	
	15+	
	Practice:	
	Clinical placement	
	400+	
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Clients	
	100+	
	Supervision	-
	50+	835
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1500</b>

### 2.4.3 Person-Centred & Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy Training

Psychotherapy		hours
1 <sup>st</sup> year	Group Training	170+
	Reading and Assignments	20+
	Personal Therapy	<u>15+</u>
		285
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Group Training	170+
	Reading and Assignments	100+
	Personal Therapy	20+
	Practice:	
	Clinical placement	50+
Clients	20+	
	Supervision	<u>20+</u>
		380
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Group Training	170+
	Reading and Assignments	100+
	Personal Therapy	25+
	Practice:	
	Clinical placement	100+
Clients	90+	
	Supervision	<u>30+</u>
		515
4 <sup>th</sup> year	Theory, Supervision	50+
	Reading and Assignments	50+
	Personal Therapy	40+
	Practice:	
	Clinical placement	300+
Clients	90+	
	Supervision	<u>50+</u>
		570
<b>Total</b>		<b>1760</b>

## 3. Course Contents

### 3.1 General Information

The *Hellenic Focusing Centre* has created an integrated professional training programme specialised in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy. This implies that this training programme offers the general framework which enables the trainees to cultivate and develop all the essential theoretical, practical and personal skills in order to be able to work as independent Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counsellors and Psychotherapists.

The training programme is certified by

- a. The International Focusing Institute of New York, U.S.A.
- b. East Anglia University, Norwich, U.K.

and recognised by

- a. The National Organisation of Psychotherapy in Greece (NOPG)
- b. The Greek Association for Counselling (GAC)
- c. The Network of European Associations for Person-Centred and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counselling (NEAPCEPC)
- d. The World Association of Person-Centred and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counselling (WAPCEPC)

The trainees, having successfully completed the training programme and fulfilled the additional required criteria, can:

- a. Be recognised as Counsellors and/or Psychotherapists by NOPG and GAC, which represent the corresponding European bodies in Greece.
- b. Obtain the Focusing Oriented Therapy (FOT) Certificate from the International Focusing Institute, New York, U.S.A. (membership required).
- c. Obtain a Post-Graduate Diploma and/or a Masters Degree in Focusing-Oriented Therapy (FOT) by the East Anglia University, Norwich, U.K.

## 3.2 Person-Centred & Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy

The Person-Centred & Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy signifies a creative combination of two practically parallel approaches: Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented. Although these two approaches share a common background and a partly common present, after some point they followed parallel paths, which sometimes appear to be complementary, competitive or even opposite.

Always taking into account the differences and particularities of these two approaches, in the Hellenic Focusing Centre we intent to focus on their common and complementary points, on-going communication, interactions, development and evolution by means of training, therapeutic activities and supervision.

The theoretical framework of the training programme is influenced by the Phenomenology and Existentialism philosophical schools of thought. Moreover, it is based on the scientific principles of Humanistic Psychology, since both the Person-Centred and the Focusing-Oriented approaches belong to the wider field of Humanistic Psychology, the so called “third path” of psychology. This path appeared and was developed after the Second World War as an alternative approach to the dominant schools of thought in these days, i.e. psychoanalysis and behaviourism.

As mentioned, Humanistic Psychology has its theoretical origins on Phenomenology and Existentialism. In the core of these two philosophical schools of thought of the 20<sup>th</sup> century lies the unique and always individual human being with a very personal, subjective and, thus, an unprecedented perception and meaning of the world and himself.

It is exactly this subjective truth, with all its facets, shadings and nuances, as well with its denials and distortions that the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy aims to understand.

Hence, this special psychotherapeutic approach does not attempt to give a technocratic, one-directional scientific explanation of any human condition, but its full comprehension with all its potentials and limits. It is this profound respect towards the human being per se that inspires this specific attitude contrary to any other alternative.

Therefore, Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy does not define and develop diagnostic tools and therapeutic techniques that would implicitly use the individual as a research object or an object for interpretation and analysis. On the contrary, the main objective of this approach is to develop attitudes, views and qualities that enable the counsellor/psychotherapist to approach clients as unique and distinct persons. Through this encounter, the client in turn is given the chance to meet with their own self, to accept their individuality, to relate with themselves and to be able to relieve themselves from undesirable behaviours and/or unpleasant and hurtful symptoms.

Similarly, the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented approach understands and takes into account its role and position among the rest of the therapeutic approaches. It by no means considers that it possesses the absolute truth for the human being, but that it offers to the individual a special, unique and different theory with potential as well as limitations.

### **3.3 The Person-Centred Approach**

#### **3.3.1 Historical Background**

The founder of the Person-Centred Theory is Carl R. Rogers, the first psychologist who stated and developed a distinct psychotherapeutic approach. During its evolution, the Person-Centred Approach has gone through several phases before reaching its final form:

- a) Non-directive approach ('40s)
- b) Client-Centred approach ('50s)
- c) Person-Centred approach ('60s until today)



### **3.3.2 The Core of the Person-Centred Approach**

The Person-Centred Approach considers the individual as a unique, complex, organic whole, which is ruled by an intrinsic and dominant force, or energy, the so-called “actualising tendency”. This actualising tendency guides the organism, through development, improvement and differentiation, towards the actualisation of its potential and its eventual integration.

### **3.3.3. Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy**

Within this theoretical framework, the person-centred counsellor/psychotherapist is asked to support and facilitate the client to connect to this actualising tendency, and allow it to be developed and cultivated.

In order for this to be accomplished, the person-centred counsellor/psychotherapist is required to create and maintain a genuine therapeutic relationship with the client, which is to be sustained by means of safety, respect and trust. This relationship should be based on three therapeutic conditions, which Carl Rogers considered to be necessary and sufficient for a therapeutic change: empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence.

Summarising, the main characteristics of the Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy are:

- The counsellor/psychotherapist should create a safe, respectful and trustful relationship with the client.
- This relationship should be based on three necessary and sufficient therapeutic conditions:
  - Empathy
  - Unconditional Positive Regard
  - Congruence

If the person-centred counsellor/psychotherapist manages to create a relationship with the client under these three conditions, then there is a great possibility for the client to broaden their internal frame of reference, resulting to a better understanding of their self and a greater self-acceptance, which will promote their further development and psychological health.

### 3.3.4 Basic Terminology of the Person-Centred Approach

- Organism
- Actualising Tendency and Self-Actualising Tendency
- Self
- Conditions of Worth
- Organismic Valuing Process
- Internal Frame of Reference
- Locus of Evaluation
- Perceptual Field
- Phenomenological Field
- Empathy
- Unconditional Positive Regard
- Congruence
- Presence
- Symbolisation
- Congruence/Incongruence
- Defensive Mechanism of Denial
- Defensive Mechanism of Distortion
- Defensive Mechanism of Introjection
- Person
- Totally Functional Person
- Encounter
- Therapeutic Relation
- Encounter Group
- Non-directivity
- Client-Centred Psychotherapy
- Person-Centred Psychotherapy

## 3.4 The Focusing-Oriented Approach

### 3.4.1 The Beginning: Focusing as a technique

Focusing was developed in the '70s by the philosopher and psychotherapist Dr. Eugene T. Gendlin, a professor at the University of Chicago, as the result of clinical research and psychotherapeutic experience.

Specifically, Carl R. Rogers asked his close colleague, E.T. Gendlin, to investigate the factors that would positively influence the outcomes of psychotherapy.

The starting hypothesis to be examined was “how is it that psychotherapy helps some people more than others.” E.T. Gendlin and his colleagues studied hundreds of taped psychotherapeutic sessions and they reached an important conclusion: “The improvement of the psychological condition of those clients that completed a psychotherapeutic cycle was independent of the psychotherapeutic approach used by the therapist, as well as the ‘content’ of the therapeutic sessions.” The success of the therapy seemed to depend on the clients who shared some common characteristics such as:

- The clients were talking in a more experiential way rather than analytic and rational.
- They had a better contact with their body and their feelings.
- They used to turn their attention to their body.
- They tried to decode the signs of their body.

All these characteristics proved to be the most important “tool” for a successful psychological change, which seemed to occur naturally for some of the clients while for others was totally absent.

It was this “absence” that E.T. Gendlin tried to cover by creating and developing Focusing as a skill that could be used by most of the clients to benefit from the psychotherapeutic process.

In 1978, E.T. Gendlin published his book titled “Focusing”, in which he described in detail the *Focusing Process*, as a technique of discrete steps that can be followed by both specialists and lay persons as a process of self-awareness and self-therapy.

It is emphasised that the Focusing Process is not a mere technique. Based on Focusing, a distinct philosophical view as well as a scientific approach has been developed over the years, which can be applied to many different fields, such as:

- Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Health Psychology
- Arts
- Business

#### 3.4.2 Development: The Focusing-Oriented Approach

The core of the Focusing-Oriented Approach is the **direct** and **continuous experiencing**, i.e. all that we experience in every moment (which flows and changes constantly) as well as the **way** we relate to it.

We are not usually open to our direct and continuous experiencing. We have not learnt to be open to it, to accept it and to symbolise it appropriately. Most of the times, our relation with our experiencing is limited, distorted, sometimes solid, constraining inflexible, and thus, repeated. Consequently, our lives consist of commonly repeated events that lose their experiential depth, and are not transformed into experiences. As a result our personal development is impeded, and does not advance according to our deepest needs and desires; it may even get traumatised -to a larger or smaller extent- depending on our personal path.

In order to be able to remove these blocks, and to facilitate our personal development, what is needed, according to Gendlin, is to improve our relation with our experiencing or to restore it in case it has been interrupted. For this reason, Gendlin suggests Focusing as a facilitator to connect or reconnect with the experiencing.

With Focusing we turn our attention to our body -as we feel it inside- in order to obtain a *felt sense* of the situation we experience.

At this point, it must be emphasised that according to the Focusing philosophy *body, environment, situation* and *experiencing* are in constant interaction, and form an inseparable whole. The body is not just a machine with certain functions but the primary organ with which we *meet* the world and *relate* to it. The body is in constant interaction with the environment and carries implicit information, not yet symbolised, relevant to what it experiences here and now. In that sense, the body implies the experiencing and for this reason the body knows.

### 3.4.3 The Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy

The main characteristics of Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy are:

- The creation of a safe and trustful environment for the client by the therapist.
- The *presence* of the therapist as dictated by the 3 therapeutic conditions of the Person-Centred approach.
- The interaction between the therapist and the client.
- The reflection of the therapist, which is addressed to the *experiencing process* of the client aiming at its *improvement and development*.
- Facilitating the client to focus on, relate to and maintain their own *experiencing process*.

Additionally, a core concept in the theory and practice of the Focusing-Oriented Approach, and consequently of the Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy, is the term *felt sense*.

Through Focusing, the client comes in contact with a special form of *bodily* knowledge. This knowledge is referred to as felt sense. It must be noted that the *felt sense* does not exist in advance, but is being formed during focusing, i.e. when

the clients turn their attention to their body, which implies information related to the situation or the problem it experiences.

The felt sense bears the following characteristics:

- It differs from the emotions which are usually culturally defined and hence easily recognisable.
- It is *physically, bodily* experienced.
- It is holistic, vague and pre-verbal
- It refers to a non-symbolised whole experiencing, of which it is the initial expression.
- It is the “*entrance*” to the implied, intricate side of the whole experiencing, from where new “*material*” can be derived for further processing.

This material enhances the current emotional and intellectual knowledge, and comprises the basis for therapeutic change. The client, having the bodily-felt sense as a “compass,” can gradually be connected or reconnected to their experiencing, obtain access to it, derive information and find new meanings related to it, and finally be led to possible changes in their lives.

#### 3.4.4 Basic Terminology of the Focusing-Oriented Approach

- Environment
- Organism
- Body
- Direct experiencing
- Interaction
- Process
- Experiencing
- Experience
- Focusing
- Implicit
- Explicit
- Carrying forward
- Edge of awareness
- Creation of free internal space
- Felt sense
- Felt shift
- Skipping process
- Crossing
- Dipping
- Zig-zag process
- Structure bound
- Experiencing scale

## 4. Training Course Objectives

### 4.1 General

The HFC offers a training programme that aims at preparing professionals to practice Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy.

The main objective of this programme is the adequate and complete training of future Counsellors and Psychotherapists, who will be capable of exercising the relevant professions with self-awareness, accountability and scientific background. For this reason, the personal development of the trainees is considered an integral part of the training process, which is implemented under supervision by combining this personal development with counselling/psychotherapeutic skills and theoretical knowledge.

Hence, the training programme is based on the following main components:

- Personal development
- Group training
- Clinical practice
- Supervision

### 4.2 Main

The main objective of the training programme is the personal development of the trainee so that they can obtain the professional status of a Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counsellor/Psychotherapist, based on:

- The theoretical training and understanding of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented approach.
- The development of counselling/psychotherapeutic skills for establishing as well as maintaining a counselling/therapeutic relationship with a wide range of people.
- The ability of the trainee for thinking over and reviewing their clinical practice, initially under supervision, and the ongoing of their



counselling/psychotherapeutic practice.

- The acceptance of the necessity to act within, and apply their counselling and psychotherapeutic practice under, a strict ethical framework.

## 4.3 Specific

### 4.3.1 Personal

- To become aware that the most important counselling/therapeutic tool is the self of the therapist and not academic, theoretical knowledge. For this reason, the personal development and cultivation of the therapist is absolutely necessary.
- To search for continuous self-awareness, which implies awareness of their self-image, of their conditions of worth and their perceptual field.
- To be aware of the way the person symbolises their experiences and is related to them.
- To be aware of their defense mechanisms with which they distort and/or deny their experiences with the consequence to sidestep their experiencing process.
- To cultivate their ability to focus on their experiencing process, whether this refers to own issues or issues which interact with their clients.
- To gradually obtain confidence and acceptance of their selves.
- To be aware of their “blind spots” (experiences, knowledge, thoughts, emotions, values), which can negatively affect their counselling/therapeutic practice.

### 4.3.2 Theoretical

- To reach a higher level of theoretical knowledge and understanding of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches.
- To understand in depth the theory of Personality of the Person-Centred Approach, as well as the theory of Personality Change of the Focusing-Oriented Approach, in order to be able to describe the psychological world of their client, for scientific, research and supervision reasons.
- To cultivate their ability for critical study, research and review of the bibliography of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approach as well as the bibliography of Counselling/Psychotherapy in general.

- To cultivate their critical thinking as well as the comparative understanding of the main therapeutic approaches, including their own.
- To understand the personal, cultural and social factors that affect personality development and psychological disorders.

#### 4.3.3 Skill-Related

- To cultivate their communication skills.
- To cultivate their counselling/psychotherapeutic skills.
- To further develop the ability for personal as well as group study and essay writing.
- To develop the ability of reviewing their counselling/psychotherapeutic practice.
- To take constant care of their personal and/or group supervision, as much as for their own benefit as for their clients'.
- To develop the ability for communication with other people in general, via the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approach principles.

#### 4.3.4 Clinical

- To develop their ability to create and sustain safe and respectful counselling/psychotherapeutic relationships.
- To cultivate their empathy ability.
- To be aware of their unconditional positive regard.
- To develop their congruence, and to be able to express it.
- To develop the ability to focus on their experiencing, and to obtain the appropriate information for their relationship with the client.
- To cultivate their quality of presence.
- To seek for the appropriate reflection while respecting the individuality of each client.
- To provide a smooth, safe, unimpeded engagement into the counselling/psychotherapeutic process.
- To recognise and respect the limits of the counselling/therapeutic practice.

- To recognise and respect personal limits.
- To provide, when necessary, referral of clients to other therapists.
- To maintain good relations among colleagues.
- To be aware of the therapeutic process stages.
- To be aware of the idiosyncratic way with which the client is related to their experiencing and to facilitate the reconstitution of the experiential process.
- To provide and maintain the external frame of counselling/psychotherapeutic work (place, time, duration).
- To ensure the continuous supervision of their counselling/psychotherapeutic practice.

#### 4.3.5 Professional

- To develop their professional status as Counsellors/Psychotherapists.
- To individually and independently exercise their counselling/psychotherapeutic profession to either prevent or solve problems.
- To obtain the ability to cooperate with colleagues public or private institutions.

## 4.4 Potential Applicants

The training programme is offered to individuals of various professions and interests, such as:

- Professionals of psychological health, who intend to work as counselors/psychotherapists (psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers)
- Professionals of health, such as doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, who wish to develop counselling skills and apply counselling principles within their working environment.
- Teachers, educators, tutors, who are interested in applying counselling principles.

- School Counsellors
- Managers
- Consultants, business administrators and human resources staff
- Artists
- People who wish to develop personal and inter-personal skills and to improve their communicational skills.

## 5. Main Training Course Components

### 5.1 Personal Development

The personal development is the cornerstone of the training programme, since in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy a substantial, if not the main, tool of the future counsellor/psychotherapist is their own selves, without placing their theoretical expertise, the laboratory work and the skill training in a less important position.

The personal development can be achieved in many ways. However, within the programme framework, the experiential training is considered as the most important way for achieving the personal development, and this is absolutely related to the philosophy of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches.

For this reason, each trainee is primarily facilitated to experience, in both personal and interpersonal levels, the theory and philosophy of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches. Without the experiential training, and the subsequent personal development of the trainee, the training programme would be solely academic and would not follow the distinct principles of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches.

The personal development of the trainee consists of the following:

- Self-awareness
- Awareness of the personal conditions of worth, personal values, prejudices and stereotypes.

- Awareness of the personal way of consciousness, expression and behaviour.
- Awareness of the subjective perceptual-phenomenological field
- Awareness of the subjective frame of reference
- Past experiences
- Confidence and self-acceptance
- Development of congruence, originality and transparency
- Awareness of the subjective way of relating to the experiences
- Awareness of the subjective way of symbolisation
- Awareness of the subjective way of relating to other people
- Awareness of the personal defense mechanisms
- Awareness of the subjective blind spots of sensitive areas that can influence the counselling/therapeutic relationship.
- Activation and facilitation of the organismic actualising tendency

Personal development is achieved through the following:

### 5.1.1 Encounter Groups

The encounter groups:

- a) Represent an important activity of the training programme, through which the trainees learn to deal with personal issues as well as relation issues.
- b) Comprise the main space where trainees encounter themselves, other trainees and their trainers. The term “encounter” is a core term of the Person-Centred Approach with many historical, theoretical and philosophical references. It is used mainly to introduce the objective of these groups, which is initially to introduce individuals and ultimately to lead to *personal bonding*.
- c) Provide to the trainees the possibility to exercise their Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapeutic skills.

At the same time, encounter groups enable the role of trainers as facilitators, who, through trusting the process and by the power of interaction, aim at facilitating:

- 1) The personal development of each trainee. The trainees learn to observe themselves, their reactions, their behaviour, their way of expressing themselves, the effects and consequences their words and actions have on others.
- 2) The communication between the trainees. The trainees learn to focus on *here* and *now*, to listen to the other person, to express themselves directly and to communicate authentically and originally, without the need of acting and disguising or defence mechanisms and behaviours.
- 3) The development of the whole training group, as the personal development of the trainees and the facilitation of their communication influence the dynamics of the whole group, which -as a living organism- develops its own actualising tendency, and therefore, its own development, integration and wisdom.

Moreover, the trainers participate as members in the encounter groups, whenever this is necessary for further facilitation and development. At the same time, they act as role models for the trainees, expressing Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented presence, attitude, response and communication.

The duration of the encounter groups is determined in advance. They usually last 1:30 to 2:00 hours. The frequency of the encounter group meetings is determined during weekends or 5-day intensives by the entire training group depending on the needs and wishes of the trainees.

### 5.1.2 Support Groups

The support groups are formed to cover certain needs of the trainees. These needs may arise during a training weekend or a 5-day intensive and cannot be dealt with by the encounter group.

In such a case, a small support group is formed, the participants of which discuss in depth the issue raised by the trainee who asked for the specific support group within a safe, respectful and trustful environment. The procedure of a support group is no different than that of an encounter group, besides the fact that

it focuses on the issue of the specific member.

The support groups are not formed in advance. Their composition is derived based on the raised issue and the willing participation of the members of the training community. A facilitator usually participates in a support group as well.

### **5.1.3 Community Meetings**

The whole training community meets at least once during a training weekend or a 5-day intensive, and as many times as necessary in order to discuss practical and organisational issues.

The community meeting provides the opportunity to the participants to discuss practical matters and to proceed with decisions concerning the dates of the training meetings, the venue of the 5-day intensives, the duration of the training meetings and possible future plans and desires relevant to the training programme. The trainees have the opportunity to express their views and/or needs concerning the training programme and its flow, to express possible concerns, doubts, criticisms or any other matter related to their training.

During the community meetings, information is also provided concerning recent publications, forthcoming lectures and scheduled conferences. Specifically, the Centre's activities are announced and the trainees are informed on events in counselling and psychotherapy.

Although the community meetings deal with technical, practical and administrative issues, they comprise an important training activity. Their aim is not simply addressing these issues but also communicating, demanding, decision-making and mutual understanding, under the philosophy and the values of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches. It is therefore evident that even at community meetings the interaction is most important along with the trust

on the group procedure.

## **5.2 Laboratories - Skills Development**

In the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches, the term “skills” does not express what the trainee is asked to cultivate, develop and advance (i.e. the three therapeutic conditions and the experiential listening). The term “skills” reflects “ways of establishing a relation,” “personal characteristics,” “qualities” or “presence”; i.e., the necessary conditions for the establishment of a safe therapeutic environment, respect and trust, aiming at communication and experiential understanding.

The following laboratories and exercises offer to the trainees the chance to exercise such skills in addition to the training activities.

### **5.2.1 Empathy and Active Listening**

The empathy/active listening laboratories can be viewed as a simplified simulation of a counselling/psychotherapeutic session. They are aiming at the gradual familiarisation of the trainees with the therapeutic sessions, as well as their training in active listening, which comprises a basic therapeutic condition in the Person-Centred approach, known as “empathic listening” or “empathy.”

Although the empathy labs are focused on the empathic understanding training (its expression and communication), the other two conditions (unconditional positive regard and congruence) are also taken into account.



However, since it is difficult for the trainees to apply all three conditions (the three conditions “coexist” and cannot be separated from one another) at the beginning of their training, the initial stages of the laboratories are called “empathy labs”. Gradually, the trainees learn to apply and develop the other two conditions during their active listening.

Usually, three trainees participate in the empathy labs; they undertake (in rotation) the three roles of the “therapist/counsellor”, the “client” and the “observer”.

The “client” talks about a personal matter and the “therapist/counsellor” tries to listen, understand and communicate their empathic understanding by empathic reflections. The “therapist” is responsible for keeping time.

At the end of each therapeutic session, the “client” and the “therapist” express their experience. Usually, the feedback from the “client” comes first and then that of the “therapist”.

The feedback from the “client” is mainly focused on how they felt about their contact with the “therapist/counsellor”, whether they felt that they were actually listened to, whether they were helped and whether they recognised, symbolised and accepted something new related to their issue (in general, whether they were able to make a step forward).

The “therapist” is focused on the degree they achieved the following:

- To listen to their “client” accurately, with respect and attention.
- To apply their empathic understanding.
- To express and communicate their empathic understanding to the “client” with clarity, simplicity and efficiently.
- To become aware of the emotional state the client is in.
- To “meet” their “client” exactly where they are.
- To refer to the difficulties faced, their defects and weaknesses, the emotions revealed and their thoughts that arose, which possibly blocked the procedure.

Finally, the “observer” expresses comments about the “session” with

respect to the “therapist” and the relation between the therapist and the “client” (i.e., the communication flow, the coordination, the harmony or disharmony, the verbal and non-verbal communication, the presence quality and the quality of the reflections).

Note that during this feedback, there is always the danger of a critical evaluation; for this reason, the trainees should bear in mind that the aim of the laboratories is exclusively the exercise, training and education of the empathy (and afterwards the three conditions), and not the problem solving of the “client.

The outcome of the session and the feedback, such as questions, comments, problems etc., form the basis for further processing and study, which could take place during the encounter groups, but mainly during the Supervision Laboratory.

### **5.2.2 Focusing-Oriented Listening**

During the 4<sup>th</sup> semester, the trainees are introduced to *Focusing*.

In Focusing Laboratories, the trainees learn the technique of Focusing and its particular steps. The main characteristic of this process is the experiential listening, which enhances the active listening.

Note that while the active listening - empathic understanding has to do with the therapist and their attitude towards the clients, the experiential listening has to do with the client and in particular with their relation to their experience. The trainee, therefore, is trained to exercise on how to develop and cultivate this attitude, which would facilitate the client to turn towards their experiential process.

Usually, two trainees participate in these laboratories. They interchange the roles of the focuser and the guide. Sometimes there is a third trainee participating as an observer. The duration of the focusing laboratories may last from 1 hour to 2 hours.

### 5.2.3 Counselling and Psychotherapy

After the completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, the trainees can start participating in counselling/psychotherapy laboratories, which may also take place aside from the scheduled training programme. Two trainees participate in these labs by interchanging the roles of therapist and client (there is no observer). The duration of the “session” is pre-arranged by the participants and may vary between 45 and 55 minutes.

The trainees in these labs are required to develop their ability to establish, cultivate, develop and sustain a therapeutic relationship with their client, initially under the Person-Centred Approach principles (the three therapeutic conditions and active listening), and later by applying the Focusing-Oriented Approach principles (experiential listening).

Hence, the counselling/psychotherapy labs are not only focused on the empathic understanding of the “therapist” and the improvement of the “client’s” experiential process, but also on the ability of the “therapist” to establish and sustain a therapeutic setting, a therapeutic relationship and a therapeutic atmosphere.

During these labs, the two trainees may either keep the same roles or interchange them. It is suggested, however, that the trainees keep the same roles (for the sake of continuity) for a certain number of sessions. After an adequate number of sessions (e.g. 5), a change of roles may take place.

The supervision is an integral part of pondering, exploration and elaboration for the “therapist”, who, following the lab, collects all the relevant material (taped sessions, notes, questions, theoretical clarifications, criticisms, comparisons, congruence issues, presence quality issues, etc.) and brings it up for discussion.

### 5.2.4 Therapeutic Reflections

In therapeutic reflection exercises, the attention is less focused on the therapeutic relationship and the therapeutic atmosphere. The centre of attention is shifted to the “successful therapeutic reflection” and its characteristics, i.e. how it is expressed and communicated, its effectiveness, its consequences on the client, its brevity/efficiency, its inventiveness, its creativity, its imagination, its precision, its conciseness and its appropriate tone and flow.

It is important to underline that Counselling and Psychotherapy, particularly in the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches, do not in any sense function as a series of typically correct/appropriate (therapeutic) reflections. The sense and nature of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches, as has already been underlined, are the therapeutic relation, the quality of presence and the therapeutic atmosphere, not the successful technique and skills. However, the precise, concise, brief and clear therapeutic reflection is a skill which, when developed and appropriately communicated, helps to establish a concrete therapeutic relationship.

The reflection exercises are usually conducted in small groups of 4-8 people and a trainer. Their duration is usually 1 to 1½ hours. Initially, a trainer (and, towards the end of the training, possibly a trainee) plays the role of the “client” and brings up an issue to the therapeutic group. The trainees-“therapists” write down their reflection, and each reflection is then discussed separately by the “client”-trainer with the participation of the whole group.

#### **5.2.5 Encounter Group Facilitation**

Following the 4<sup>th</sup> semester and during the 3<sup>rd</sup> training year, and after the trainees have gained sufficient experience in Empathy Laboratories, in Therapeutic Reflections Exercises and in Focusing Laboratories, they can start acting as facilitators in the encounter groups.

In an encounter group, a trainee and a trainer, or two trainees, take the role of facilitators, while the trainers act either as members or supervisors of the process. The trainees, which act as facilitators, are required to facilitate the encounter group process and help the communication among the members of the

group, trying to listen with empathy, and enhance the experiential process of each member and the whole group.

The duration of this lab is the same with that of an encounter group, i.e. 1½ to 2 hours. After the lab, an elaboration takes place (comments are expressed, notes and ponderings are exchanged) as a kind of supervision of the encounter group, and feedback is provided to the trainees-facilitators.

### **5.2.6 Demonstration of Therapeutic Sessions**

In this laboratory, a trainer demonstrates a therapeutic session along with a trainee who offers to act as the client. The therapeutic session takes place in front of the training group and lasts as long as a regular session, i.e. about 50-60 minutes. This therapeutic session serves as an example of a therapeutic meeting. It is in no case used, nor should it be, as a rule or as an example to follow or compare, because each therapeutic session is unique, special and unrepeated.

The trainees are given the chance to attend how an experienced trainer-therapist is able to establish (within the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented framework) a therapeutic relationship using their own personal and distinct way. The objective, however, in the Person-Centred and Focusing Oriented Approach, as already stated, is that each trainee has to develop and cultivate their own special, unique therapeutic profile, not to copy or imitate the profile of somebody else.

Hence, the demonstrations of the therapeutic sessions should serve as an incentive for pondering and searching for the personal profile of the trainee.

### **5.2.7 Exercises**

During a training weekend or a 5-day intensive, and following a suggestion by a trainer or a trainee, the training group may decide to work on a particular exercise in order to i) clarify or approach an issue, a problem or a situation, ii) allow a member to address an issue, iii) facilitate the group process, or iv) to resolve a dispute or an argument.

For this reason, the exercises are not pre-defined, but suggested and decided according to the needs of the training group.

The exercises usually suggested are:

- Role playing
- Empty chair
- Two-chair technique
- Forms of artistic expression (collage, drawing, etc.)
- Family constellation

### 5.2.8 Total Laboratory Training Hours

The minimum number of laboratories required by the trainee in order to complete the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy training is as follows:

#### 5.2.8.1 Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling training

number: Minimum

- Empathy.....(10)
- Reflections.....(25)
- Focusing.....(10)
- Counselling.....(15)
- Supervision.....(35)

#### 5.2.8.2 Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy training

Minimum number:

- Empathy.....(18)
- Reflections.....(35)

- Focusing.....(18)
- Psychotherapy.....(20)
- Supervision.....(50)

## 6. Theoretical Foundations

It has already been emphasised that the training programme of the Hellenic Focusing Centre is mainly experiential. This also applies to the theoretical foundations of the trainees are not built by mere theory teaching, but are personally experienced.

### 6.1 Four-year programme

#### *1st year*

1st Semester: Introduction to the Person-Centred Approach

2nd Semester: The three therapeutic conditions: Therapy Theory

#### *2nd year*

3rd Semester: The Theory of Personality in the Person-Centred Approach

4th Semester: Introduction to Focusing: Focusing technique (6 steps)

#### *3rd year*

5th Semester: Introduction to Focusing-Oriented Therapy (FOT):  
Therapy Theory

6th Semester: Theory of Personality change in FOT

**4th year**

7th Semester: Present trends in Person-Centred Approach

8th Semester: Elaboration on the Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy

In more detail, the theory readings include:

### 6.1.1 1st year

**1st semester: Introduction to the Person-Centred Approach**

- Historical Evolution of the Person-Centred approach
- Carl Rogers
- Encounter Groups
- Person, Encounter, *Here and Now*, Presence

**2nd semester: Therapy Theory (the Three Therapeutic Conditions)**

**a) Empathy**

- Definition, empathy dimension, identification
- Understanding the subjective world of the client via empathy
- Internal frame of reference
- Empathy expression, communication
- Situational empathy
- Blocks

**b) Unconditional Positive Regard**

- Definition
- Conditional regard, unconditional regard
- The need for positive regard



- The need for positive self-regard
- Self-value
- Blocks (personal values, stereotypes, prejudices)

**c) Congruence**

- Definition (authenticity, honesty)
- Recognition, precise symbolisation
- Clarity (precise expression)
- Blocks

At the end of the semester, the three therapeutic conditions are reviewed, and a comparative evaluation takes place.

## 6.1.2 2nd year

**3<sup>rd</sup> semester: *The Theory of Personality in the Person-Centred Approach***

- ***Organism***
  - Phenomenological, perceptual field
  - Actualising Tendency
  - Organismic Valuing Process
- ***Self, self image, self structure***
  - Motives
  - Needs
  - Experiences
  - Subjective Perception
  - Symbolisation
- ***Environment***

- The significant others
- Conditions of worth
- Stereotypes, Prejudices
- Family, School, Society
  
- ***Psychopathology***
  - Self
  - Experience
  - Congruence/Incongruence
  - Stress
  - Defense Mechanisms (Denial, Introjection, Distortion)
  - Person-Centred Psychopathology
  
- ***Therapy***
  - Self-empathy
  - Self-acceptance
  - Congruence, authenticity
  - Appropriate symbolisation
  - Living in the present
  - Personal Development (broadening of internal frame of reference)
  - Fully Functioning Person
  
- ***The Therapeutic Process***
  - Therapeutic Frame
  - Ethical Issues
  - Development of Therapeutic process
  - Stages of Therapeutic process
  
- ***The Therapeutic Relationship (difficulties & blocks)***
  - Power issues
  - Transparency issues

- Sexual issues
- Dependence issues
- Cultural issues
- Competition issues
  
- ***Applications of the Person-Centred Therapy***
  - Pre-therapy (G. Prouty)
  - Group Therapy
  - Child Therapy
  - Art-Therapy

The Person-Centred Approach is reviewed at the end of the semester.

**4<sup>th</sup> semester: Introduction to Focusing (The technique and its 6 steps)**

- Historical evolution
- Eugene Gendlin and the '60s
- Focusing (focusing process, experiential listening):
  - 6 Steps:
    - Clearing the space
    - Felt sense
    - Symbol/Handle
    - Resonance
    - Internal dialogue
    - Felt shift

**6.1.3 3rd year**

**5<sup>th</sup> semester: Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy I**

1. Anthropological model and philosophical foundations
  - 1.1. Distinct Levels of Life (plant, animal, human)
  - 1.2. Organism and Environment (interaction, perception, response, behaviour, language)
2. Personality Change Theory
  - 2.1. Perception, symbolisation
  - 2.2. Experiencing, direct referent (felt sense, carrying forward)
  - 2.3. Explicit and Implicit experience, intricacy
    - Experiencing and language
    - Body = Situation = Environment

**6<sup>th</sup> semester: Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy II**

3. Theory of psychological disorder
  - 3.1. Psychological disorder (skipping of experiencing)
  - 3.2. Forms of psychological disorders
4. Therapy Theory (reconstitution of experiencing)
  - 4.1. Interaction (relation, presence)
  - 4.2. Active listening (the three conditions of the Person-Centred Approach) Therapist-Client
  - 4.3. Experiential listening (focusing, presence, dis-identification). The *client's client* (connection or reconnection with experiencing and appropriate symbolisation of the experience)
  - 4.4. Avenues of therapy

**6.1.4 4th year**

**7<sup>th</sup> semester: Present trends in Person-Centred Approach**

- The self concept

- Self Configurations I
- Self Configurations II
- Relational-in-depth therapy and “multiple self”
- Critical evaluation of the “self” concept

***8<sup>th</sup> semester: Advanced Concepts in Focusing-Oriented Counselling & Psychotherapy***

- The client’s client
- Experiential Response
- Three Assertions about the body
- Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy by Neil Freidman
- Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy by Campbell Purton

## **7. Reading and Assignments**

### **7.1 Personal Diary**

It is suggested that the trainees, as they start their training, keep a personal diary, which they enrich during the entire training with thoughts, ideas, views, notes, findings, comments, concerns, needs, questions, symbolisations, future issues, perspectives or whatever else they think is important for them.

Keeping such a diary will be useful at the end of their training, particularly for composing their self-evaluation assignment. Using this diary, the trainees will be helped to keep track of their personal progress, their changes, fluctuations, possible backslides, blocks, difficulties, new ideas and everything they experienced during their training.

This diary is strictly personal and cannot be read by the trainers (and thus not be evaluated, discussed or processed).

## 7.2 Written Assignments

The trainees are required to submit written assignments during the entire training programme right after a particular topic has been introduced, discussed and processed.

The written assignments have two goals:

- a) The trainees are required to demonstrate that they have understood, in depth, the theory, philosophy and their applications, and that they are generally capable to develop their thoughts and ideas on theoretical issues based on bibliographic references. Finally, the trainees demonstrate through these assignments their ability to conduct comparative studies and critical evaluations.
  
- b) The trainees are required to demonstrate an experiential awareness of their assignment topics.

Therefore, the aim of the written assignments is not simply a presentation of knowledge and theory, but the manifestation of the very personal and subjective views of the trainees: how, and to what extent, they are influenced by the theory (personally, socially and professionally).

In this way, the trainees are led to further symbolisations and possibly to a differentiation of their self-image. Thus, the written assignments act as tools for the personal development of the trainees.

Note that these assignments are not evaluated and graded according to typical academic criteria. If an assignment does not serve the aforementioned goals, it is returned to the trainee who is required either to correct it or to rewrite it.

The assignments are read by one or more trainers, and an individual meeting is arranged with each trainee separately, where the assignment is handed back to the trainee with feedback through discussion, processing and comments.

### **7.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> assignment: The three therapeutic conditions of the Person-Centred Approach (1500-2000 words)**

The central theme of this assignment is the three therapeutic conditions as they have been stated by the founder of the Person-Centred Approach, Carl Rogers. The trainee is requested to describe the three conditions, both at theoretical and experiential level, i.e., through the relation with their experiencing during the training program as well as their personal and professional lives.

### **7.2.2 2<sup>nd</sup> assignment: The theory of Personality according to the Person-Centred Approach (1500-2000 words)**

This assignment's topic is related to the theory of personality, as processed, described and stated by Carl Rogers in his 19 propositions. The theory of personality is a useful and necessary tool for the comprehension of psychopathology within the Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapeutic framework.

### **7.2.3 3<sup>rd</sup> assignment: The theory of personality change according to E.Gendlin (1500 - 2000 words)**

In this assignment, the trainee is requested to present the basic principles of the theory of E. Gendlin on personality change. E. Gendlin quits trying to describe one more personality theory, as he considers that there are already too

many. What he is really interested in is to focus on the conditions that allow/enable the personality change; these conditions are no different than those that facilitate the reconstitution of the experiential process. The trainee is required to demonstrate that they have apprehended, to an adequate extent, the theory by illuminating its aspects through clinical and/or personal examples.

#### **7.2.4 4<sup>th</sup> assignment: Comparison and critical evaluation of the theories of the Person-Centred & Focusing-Oriented Approaches (1500-2000 words)**

In this assignment, the trainee is required to compare the two approaches by presenting their similarities and differences, their possibility to complete each other and their contradictions. Moreover, the trainees are asked to demonstrate the weaknesses, drawbacks and possible dead-ends of the two approaches, and the criticisms exercised by representatives of either approach or any other approaches.

#### **7.2.5 5<sup>th</sup> assignment: Case Study (2000-3000 words)**

In this assignment, the trainee is required to present a clinical case, as well as the way which they worked with a particular client for a considerable period of time. The trainee is required to describe the stages of their therapeutic work, the therapeutic relationship they developed with their client, the therapeutic process - as it evolved - the interaction with their client and how this influenced aspects of their supervised work, difficulties and blocks, or whatever else they considered necessary towards their therapeutic work.

#### **7.2.6 6<sup>th</sup> assignment: Self-evaluation (4000 - 6000 words)**

This assignment is written towards the end of the training programme.



Here, the trainee is required to record the route they followed during the training programme, their personal development - at all levels and mainly at the professional one - and the influence the training programme had on them.

This assignment can be thought as an invitation/challenge to the trainee: invitation for thoughts, concerns, reflection, pondering, etc., i.e. an attempt to assess their training route. The trainees are required to face and assess themselves, judging whether and to what extent they have accomplished their training goals (theoretical, personal, skills) and whether they feel ready to exercise with responsibility and consistency the counsellor or psychotherapist profession.

For this assignment the trainees can use material from their personal diary, their previous assignments and their personal therapy and supervision, notes on discussions with the trainers and their colleagues, as well as new material that has been symbolised during the writing of this assignment. The self-evaluation assignment can be considered as a form of “therapy” and self-awareness.

#### **7.2.7 7<sup>th</sup> assignment: Thesis (4000 - 5000 words)**

In this last assignment, the trainee is required to present a topic of their own interest, which can be either theoretical or practical yet related with their own work and/or specialisation.

This assignment reflects to a large extent the trainee’s needs. For this reason the topic is decided by each trainee separately after consultation with the trainers. Initially, this assignment is usually presented by the trainee during the last 5-day intensive. The discussion, processing and feedback that follow provide the trainee with additional material which can be incorporated into their assignment, which is then submitted in final written form.

#### **7.2.8 Special Assignments**

Such assignments cover possible weaknesses in the performance of the trainees. These assignments do not have a certain structure and are determined depending on the current “weaknesses” of each trainee.

### 7.2.9 Deadlines

**1<sup>st</sup> assignment:** end of 2<sup>nd</sup> semester

**2<sup>nd</sup> assignment:** end of 3<sup>rd</sup> semester

**3<sup>rd</sup> assignment:** end of 5<sup>th</sup> semester

**4<sup>th</sup> assignment:** end of 6<sup>th</sup> semester

**5<sup>th</sup> assignment:** end of 7<sup>th</sup> semester

**6<sup>th</sup> assignment:** end of 8<sup>th</sup> semester

**7<sup>th</sup> assignment:** end of 8<sup>th</sup> semester

## 8. Personal Therapy

The personal therapy is considered necessary for the future counsellors/psychotherapists, who need to look inside themselves, become aware of their self-image, reveal their own defense mechanisms, their denials, distortions and the ways of their idiosyncratic symbolisation (the way they are related to their experiences and their experiential process), the way they are related to other people, their behaviour, expression, way of communication before they decide to get involved as counsellors/psychotherapists into the counselling/psychotherapeutic process. Besides the processing within the training programme, further processing is necessary to account for thoughts, feelings, concerns and ideas that are often revealed during the training programme.

The starting time of the personal therapy is an absolutely personal matter. Each trainee is required to acknowledge their need for personal therapy and start it whenever they feel ready.

Note that although the training programme in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy is experiential, and in that sense it provides the trainees with many opportunities through various training activities for personal development, it cannot by any means replace the personal therapy, which the trainee is required to undertake outside the training programme.

For this reason the Hellenic Focusing Centre provides the trainees with a list of suggested therapists, who have been trained in the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches. This means that it is suggested that the personal therapy should be conducted by therapists of the approach that the trainee is being trained in, except cases where the trainee is already under therapy of a different approach. Moreover, it is suggested that the trainers do not act as therapists at the same time.

## 9. Practice

Following the third semester, the trainees who are interested in working as counsellors or psychotherapists and do not have prior professional experience or have not worked in a psychological health field, can start their practice, which should include the following:

a) **Practice sessions in clinical placement:** (psychiatric field, psychological health centres, counselling stations, psychotherapeutic centres, institutes, hospitals, asylums, hostels, help at home, etc.) For this purpose, the Hellenic Focusing Centre cooperates with various institutions. The choice of the clinical place, however, is made by each trainee, since the clinical place should be chosen according to their needs, knowledge, abilities and aims.

b) **Practice sessions with clients:** Concerning the practice session with clients, the

Centre cannot provide the trainees with clients; it will, however, support and facilitate them, with all means, to achieve this goal.

The above two activities are definitely accompanied by constant and continuous supervision.

The practice sessions are one of the 4 principal components of the training programme, and indicate the beginning of the trainees' professional activity as counsellors/psychotherapists. In this sense, the practice sessions can be viewed as a "path" to a new role and consequently a new identity. Thus, the practice sessions aim at gradually leading the trainee, through the protected environment of the training programme, to the application of counselling and psychotherapy.

In this way, the practice sessions are not simply additional training hours but also an experiential process. For this reason, it is suggested that the trainees start their practice sessions after the completion of the third semester of their training, provided that they feel ready to walk on this "path".

## 10. Supervision

Supervision is the fourth principal component of the training programme in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy, along with group training, theory and practice sessions.

Supervision is not simply an additional compulsory training activity, but it also contributes, in its special way, to the personal development of each trainee. For this reason, it may start during the training programme, but for the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counsellor/Psychotherapist it is an ongoing process throughout their entire professional practice.

During the first levels of training, supervision is frequently necessary, depending on the counselling/psychotherapeutic hours that each trainee conducts, and according to their needs. As time passes by, each trainee establishes his/her own personal rate of supervision. What is initially suggested is one hour of supervision for 4 hours of work with clients. This frequency is indicative, not

obligatory, as it corresponds to the minimum possible level.

Supervision, as mentioned above, is an integral part not only of the training, but also of the professional activity of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counsellor/Psychotherapist. Its function is multi-faceted and complex:

- It reflects the counselling/psychotherapeutic practice, and becomes the “mirror” of the counsellor/psychotherapist
- It comprises a supportive frame
- It is an area of training and education
- It comprises an area for search, inspection and processing of theoretical issues relevant to working with clients
- It is an area of pondering
- It comprises an area where recognising difficulties of being empathic, having unconditional positive regard and being congruent can take place
- It is an area where difficulties, blocks, weaknesses and limitations can be resolved

In that sense, supervision is an experiential process of personal and professional development.

## 11. Study Groups

The trainees can form study groups, in order to exchange views and probe into, study and elaborate on theoretical issues, analytically and thoroughly, concerning the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Approaches as well as Counselling and Psychotherapy in general.

These groups can be formed during the training programme and the meetings can take place either in or outside the training programme. A study object of the study group may be a theoretical issue, an article, a book, a case study, a written assignment or the preparation of a presentation or a talk.

Provided that all group members agree, a study group can present the results of its work to the Training Group.

## **12. Other Training Activities**

### **12.1 Lectures, Workshops and Conferences**

Within the frame of personal development as much as that of theory, the trainees are called to participate in lectures, workshops, and conferences organised either by the Hellenic Focusing Centre or other institutions.

The exposure and participation in such activities is necessary for widening the horizon of the trainee towards other approaches. The participation provides the trainee with incentives for pondering and thinking, widens their critical thought and their ability to compare and contrast, establishes their subjective perception and gradually lays the foundations towards a professional identity.

In any case, the participation in lectures, workshops and conferences is necessary for the continuous training of a Counsellor/Psychotherapist, in order to renew their participation to various professional associations regularly.

### **12.2 Special Interests Groups**

These groups are formed during a training session when a special interest issue is raised that needs further elaboration, but does not interest the entire group. In this case, a so-called special interest group is formed, which deals with the issue raised under the facilitation of a trainer. Obviously, the participation to such a group is optional.

## **13. Withdrawals**

Withdrawals from the training programme are undoubtedly unpleasant and possibly painful. This cannot always be avoided as it may sometimes be necessary.

The decision to withdraw may come from:

- a) the trainee's side
- b) the trainers' side

In any case, as every withdrawal is an unpleasant and painful experience, the trainers of the Centre are prepared to offer their help and support to every trainee being in this situation.

### **13.1 By the trainee**

There is the possibility that the trainee wishes to end, for some reason, their education. In this case, they are required to inform, orally and in writing, the course director, who, in turn, transfers the request of the trainee to the Training Committee and the Centre Directors. At the same time, the trainee is required to personally inform the training group (during a community meeting). If for some reason the trainee is not able to do so, the course director announces the decision of the trainee at the next meeting of the training group.

In any case, the trainee is invited, if they wish so, to inform their reasons of withdrawal, to discuss and possibly elaborate them to the course director and/or the entire training group.

### **13.2 By the Training Committee**

Possible reasons for the trainers to propose the end of the training programme for a trainee include the following:

- Unethical behaviour
- Many absences that cannot be covered
- Inability to satisfy the programme requirements.

- Inability to satisfy the requirements of the counselling/psychotherapy profession

Specifically, if during the training programme a trainee exhibits any of the above, then the trainers or the directors have the right to ask the trainee to withdraw from the programme.

Before announcing such a decision to the trainee, the Centre Directors and the Training Committee meet in order to thoroughly discuss and elaborate on the overall state of the trainee. Then, the trainee is asked to be present at one of the Training Committee meetings, in order to present their point of view as well as to discuss this issue with the trainers.

The final decision for a withdrawal, when deemed to be necessary and unavoidable, it is subsequently announced to the trainee and the training group by the course director.

## 14. Graduation and Evaluation

### 14.1 Graduation

The completion of the training programme leads to graduation and award of:

- a) **Certificate of attendance**, in the case where someone participated in the programme for their personal development only. This certificate is issued by the Hellenic Focusing Centre.
- b) **Diploma of training in the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling**, in the case where the trainee participated in the programme for training purposes.
- c) **Diploma of training in the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy**, in the case where the trainee is eligible for the profession of psychotherapist (degree in psychology or human sciences required)

The above diplomas are issued by the Hellenic Focusing Centre. However,



following a recommendation of the Hellenic Focusing Centre, the New York International Focusing Institute can issue to those trainees that are interested a Diploma of Training in Focusing Oriented Therapy, provided that the trainees are members of the New York International Focusing Institute. (For this reason, it is suggested that the trainees enroll with the New York International Focusing Institute at the beginning of their education).

The requirements for the award of a Diploma are as follows:

- Sufficient attendance of the programme\*
- Submission of all assignments
- Completion of the required hours of working with clients
- Completion of the required hours of supervision
- Fulfillment of all training requirements
- Self-evaluation of the trainee and recognition of their training integration for the Diploma award
- Having no outstanding financial balances.

\* In case of absences, the trainee is obliged to cover them as suggested by the course director.

## 14.2 Evaluation

The evaluation of the trainee consists of three principal components:

- a) Self-evaluation
- b) Evaluation by co-trainees
- c) Evaluation by trainers

The following sections provide more details on these three components.

### a) Self-evaluation:

The trainee is required to evaluate the effect that the training programme has had on their personal development, the development of their counselling/psychotherapeutic skills and abilities, their professional expertise through the practice sessions and the supervision and the formation of their

professional profile as Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counsellors or Psychotherapists in general. They are also asked to evaluate how ready and able they feel to work as professional counsellors/psychotherapists.

#### **b) Evaluation by the co-trainees**

The co-trainees are requested to express their opinion for each trainee and provide proper feedback based on their common experience during training, while acknowledging the personality and professional skills of their co-trainees.

#### **c) Evaluation by the trainers**

The trainers are required to ensure the completion of the training of the trainee, taking into account the personal development, training progress, quality of presence, professional ethics, achievement of training goals and the completion of the training requirements of the trainee.

## **15. Prerequisites for Professional Recognition**

### **15.1 Membership in the International Focusing Institute (New York)**

At the beginning of their studies, the trainees should be registered members of the New York International Focusing Institute. After the completion of the programme they are awarded the Diploma of Focusing-Oriented Therapy (FOT) by the Institute.

### **15.2 Membership in the Greek Association for Counselling**

During their education, all trainees should become trial members of the

Greek Association for Counselling.

After obtaining the Diploma in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling (by the Hellenic Focusing Centre and New York International Focusing Institute), the graduates can become full members of the Greek Association for Counselling as well as of the European Association for Counselling, provided that they fulfill the criteria of these associations.

The trainees are provided with article 6 of the internal regulation of the Greek Association for Counselling as it appears on its official website.

### **15.3 Membership in the National Organisation of Psychotherapy in Greece**

Obtaining a Diploma in Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy by the Hellenic Focusing Centre and the New York International Focusing Institute enables the graduates to obtain the European Certificate of Psychotherapy through the National Organisation of Psychotherapy in Greece, provided that they satisfy the relevant criteria and fulfil the necessary requirements.

These requirements are:

- a) Recognised university diploma in medicine, psychiatry or psychology, or higher education degree (of minimum three years) in human sciences (social work, sociology, education, philosophy, theology, anthropology, literature, etc.).
- b) Official four-year training course in a therapeutic approach (in this case, in the person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy).
- c) Professionally supervised psychotherapeutic experience.
- d) Continuous psychotherapeutic education, including participation in workshops, lectures, conferences, etc.

e) Participation in relevant professional associations.

## **16. Postgraduate Study Opportunities (MA in Counselling with TAE)**

The graduates of the Hellenic Focusing Centre, provided they fulfill the prerequisites of paragraph 14.1c, after fully completing their training and having successfully graduated, can register for postgraduate studies at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, in order to obtain 'MA in Counselling with TAE'.

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- 2
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## **17. Admission**

### **17.1 Candidate Evaluation Procedure**

This procedure is as follows:

- Submission of a Curriculum Vitae
- Submission of two reference letters
- Attendance of the introductory preliminary weekend
- Interview with the course director
- Interview with a member of the Training Committee
- Sufficient knowledge of English
- Relevant prerequisite academic degree (depending on type of programme the trainees want to attend)

## 17.2 Prerequisites

- The candidate's personality
- The candidate's motives
- The candidate's ability to attend an experiential training programme of professional expertise in Counselling and Psychotherapy (integration in the group, psychological endurance, theoretical education)
- The candidate's emotional and intellectual maturity
- Life experience
- The academic degrees of the candidate (for obtaining the Diploma in Psychotherapy)
- The adequate knowledge of English language, since the main part of the suggested bibliography is written in English.

The Training Committee, after collecting the above material and processing it thoroughly, selects the final candidates, who are invited and officially informed by the course director.

## 18. Financial Policy

The financial cost of the training is determined on a yearly basis. Trainees are required to pay the necessary fees for an entire year, not individual activities. However, to facilitate the trainees, 1/10 of the total amount of fees can be paid each month during the group meetings (except in July and August).

Concerning the 5-day intensive courses, travel and accommodation expenses must be paid by the trainees.

## **19. Ethics Code**

### **19.1 Principles and Aims of the Hellenic Focusing Centre**

The Hellenic Focusing Centre acknowledges that all people deserve a therapy according to the individuality of their reactions and experiences.

It believes that each person is entitled to a safe, discrete and effective therapeutic approach, which, at the same time, must respect their right to fully control their therapeutic process.

Hence, it trains counselors/psychotherapists according to the humanistic principles and the directions and philosophy of the Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy.

Furthermore, it supports its trainees for the development of their empathy, skills and experiences in order to be able to help vulnerable groups or people in the best possible way, depending on their particular needs at a social or personal level.

It supports its trainees in their attempt to establish Person-Centred and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy in their work environment.

Those in charge of the Centre work within an atmosphere of respect, comradeship, cooperation and good will between all the members, the colleagues, trainers and trainees of the Centre.

### **19.2 Code of Ethics and Counselling Practice**

The trainees are provided with the Code of Ethics and Counselling Practice of the Greek Association for Counselling as it appears on its official website.

## 20. Bibliography

The following bibliography is suggested and provided to the trainees during the programme.

### Books:

#### In Greek Language

- *Προσωποκεντρική Συμβουλευτική - Θεωρία, Έρευνα και Εφαρμογές*, Ανδρέας Μπρούζος, Εκδόσεις Τυπωθήτω, Γ. Δαρδανός, 2004
- *Ένας Τρόπος να Υπάρχουμε*, C.Rogers, Μετάφραση Μάρα Τσουμάρη, Επιστημονική Επιμέλεια Γρηγ. Μουλαδούδης, Εκδόσεις Ερευνητές, 2006

- *Ο Carl Rogers και η Προσωποκεντρική του Θεωρία για την Ψυχοθεραπεία και την Εκπαίδευση*, Αλ. Β.Κοσμόπουλος και Γρηγ. Αθ. Μουλαδούδης, Εκδόσεις Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 2003
- *Carl Rogers Ph.D., Ομάδες Συνάντησης, Μετάφραση* Αθηνά Ντούργα, Δίοδος, 1991
- *Πρόσκληση στην Προσωποκεντρική Προσέγγιση*, Tony Mery, Εκδόσεις Καστανιώτη, Αθήνα, 2002
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- *Θεωρίες Προσωπικότητας, Έρευνα και Εφαρμογές*, L.A.Pervin, O.P.John, Επιστημονική Εποπτεία, Ανδρέας Μπρούζος, Τυπωθήτω - Γ.Δαρδανός, 1999
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- *Συγχρονες Ψυχοθεραπείες*, Εκδόσεις Π. Ασημάκη, Αθήνα 2001

#### In English Language

- *The Person Centred Counselling Primer*, Pete Sanders, PCCS Books, Ross-on-Wye, 2007
- *Person Centred Therapy, The Focusing-Oriented Approach*, Campbell Purton, Palgrave Macmillan Editions, England, 2004
- *The Tribes of the Person-centred Nation*, Edited by Pete Sanders, PCCS Books, Ross-on-Wye, 2004
- *The Focusing Oriented Counselling Primer*, Campbell Purton, PCCS Books, Ross-on-Wye, 2007
- *Focusing Oriented Psychotherapy, A Manual of the Experiential Method*, Eugene T. Gendlin, The Guilford Press, N.York, 1996
- *Focusing-Oriented Therapy (FOT)*, Neil Friedman, Ph.D., iUniverse Books, 2007
- *Humanistic Psychotherapies - Handbook of Research and Practice*, Edited by D.J. Cain, American Psychological Association, Washington, DC. 2002,
- *Person Centred Therapy Today*, D.Mearns & B.Thorne, Sage Publications, London, 2000
- *Person Centred Counselling in Action*, D.Mearns & B.Thorne, Sage Publications, London, 1999,
- *Person Centred Therapy A European Perspective*, B.Thorne & Elke Lambers,



Sage Publications, London, 1998

- *On Becoming a Person*, Carl R. Rogers, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1995
- *Focusing*, Eugene T. Gendlin, Random House/Rider, London, 2003
- *Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning*, Eugene Gendlin, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1962
- *Existential Thought and Therapeutic Practice*, Hans W Cohn, Sage Publications, London, 2002

## Articles:

- *Experiential Psychotherapy*, Gendlin, E.T. (1973). In R. Corsini (Ed.), *Current psychotherapies*, pp. 317-352. Itasca: Peacock.
- *A Theory of Personality Change*, by E.T.Gendlin (1964) Chapter four in: "Personality Change", Philip Worchel & Donn Byrne (Eds.), New York: John Wiley & Sons
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- *Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning*, by E.T. Gendlin, Preface to the Paper Edition, 1997
- *Focusing-Oriented/Experiential Psychotherapy*, by Marion N. Hendrics, in: *Humanistic Psychotherapies*, David J. Cain, Editor, Julius Seeman, Associate Editor, A.P.A., Washington DC, 2002
- *An Experiential Version of Unconditional Positive Regard*, by Marion H. Hendricks-Gendlin PhD, 2001
- *What Difference Does Philosophy Make? Crossing Gendlin and Rogers*, by Marion H. Hendricks-Gendlin, PhD.
- *A felt sense is not an emotion: it is a new human development*, by Marion N.

Hendricks Gendlin, Ph.D., 2001

- *A Philosophical Car for Focusers, 1999 Model*, by E.T.Gendlin, 1999
- *Introduction to Thinking at the Edge*, by E.T. Gendlin, 2001
- *The Three Assertions About the Body*, by E.T. Gendlin
- *The Client's Client: the Edge of Awareness*, by E.T. Gendlin

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