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RESEARCH INTO WORKING CONDITIONS OF GESTALT THERAPISTS IN UKRAINE IN MODERN CONDITIONS

Vynohradov, Oleksii, Beliaeva, Karina. Research into working conditions of Gestalt therapists in Ukraine in modern conditions.

Introduction. In modern conditions, it is important to provide timely psychological services, taking into account approaches that have proven effective in dealing with crisis conditions. Gestalt therapy is one of such approaches. The study of the working conditions of Gestalt therapists allows predicting the activities of these specialists as well as the possibilities for their effective training to provide quality services to Ukrainians who need psychological support in times of war.

Aim: To study the working conditions of Gestalt therapists for a clear understanding of the market of Gestalt therapeutic services, its prospects, taking into account the specifics and problems of training Gestalt therapists.

Methods: To conduct the study, a toolkit for an online survey of Gestalt therapists was developed (Vinogradov, O., Sikorska, O.).

Results. Gestalt therapists who moved abroad had difficulties with building an individual practice. It was shown that basic education affected the pricing of psychotherapy services. Thus, 90% of therapists in our survey had a complete higher education, and the average cost of their session was UAH 1,200. Those who have a scientific degree (6% of the respondents) charged one and a half times more - 1,900 UAH. The number of clients a Gestalt therapist had did not depend on whether the therapist visited their personal supervisor. The psychotherapists who visited a supervisor earned significantly more per month (50,000 UAH) than those who did not (35,000 UAH). That was probably due to the fact that seeing a supervisor had a positive impact on the quality of work, because clients were more likely to make appointments with such therapists. The average median cost of Gestalt therapy in Ukraine and abroad does not differ. The average cost of therapist services in Ukraine varies greatly depending on the region.

Conclusions. Studies of the working conditions of Gestalt therapists show that specialists in this field are competitively paid. Given the favorable working conditions (the ability to work online, free schedule), as well as the significant public demand for psychotherapeutic services because of the traumatic experience caused by the full-scale war, more people are choosing the specialty of a Gestalt therapist. We believe that there are currently certain conditions for this trend to continue (and even grow) in the coming years.

Keywords: Gestalt therapy; supervision; setting; client; Gestalt therapist

Виноградов Олексій, Беляєва Карина. Дослідження умов праці українських геїштальт-терапевтів в сучасних умовах.

Вступ. У сучасних умовах важливим є своєчасне надання психологічних послуг з урахуванням підходів, які довели свою ефективність у роботі з кризовими станами, одним з яких є геїштальт-терапія. Вивчення умов праці геїштальт-терапевтів дозволяє спрогнозувати розвиток діяльності цих фахівців та можливості їхньої подальшої ефективної підготовки для надання якісних послуг українцям, які в умовах війни потребують психологічної підтримки.

Мета: вивчення умов праці геїштальт-терапевтів для чіткого розуміння ринку геїштальт-терапевтичних послуг, його перспектив, урахування специфіки та проблем підготовки геїштальт-терапевтів для надання ними якісних психологічних послуг.

Методи: для проведення дослідження було розроблено інструментарій для онлайн-опитування геїштальт-терапевтів (О. Виноградов, О. Сікорська).

Результати. Загалом на основі отриманих результатів можна дійти таких висновків. Геїштальт-терапевти, які виїхали за кордон, мають складнощі з побудовою індивідуальної практики. Досліджено, що базова освіта також впливає на цінову політику послуг психотерапії.

Так, 90% терапевтів у нашому опитуванні мають повну вищу освіту, і середня вартість їхньої сесії – 1 200 грн. А ті, хто мають науковий ступінь (таких фахівців 6%), отримують у півтора рази більше – 1900 грн. За результатами опитування встановлено, що кількість клієнтів у гештальт-терапевта не залежить від того, чи відвідує він свого особистого терапевта чи супервізора. Встановлено, що психотерапевти, які відвідують супервізора, заробляють у місяць помітно більше (50 000 грн), ніж ті, хто не звертається до послуг супервізії (35 000 грн). Ймовірно, це пов'язано з тим, що звернення до супервізора впливає позитивно на якість роботи, а отже, до такого психотерапевта частіше записуються клієнти. Середня медіанна вартість послуг гештальт-терапевтів в Україні і за кордоном не відрізняється. А середня вартість послуги терапевтів в Україні сильно різниться в залежності від місця проживання.

Висновки. Дослідження умов праці гештальт-терапевтів показують, що спеціалісти в цій сфері мають конкурентну оплату. Враховуючи сприятливі умови праці (можливість працювати онлайн, вільний графік), а також у зв'язку зі значним суспільним запитом на психотерапевтичні послуги внаслідок наявності травматичного досвіду, спричиненого повномасштабною війною, спеціальність гештальт-терапевта обирають дедалі більше людей. Вважаємо, що наразі є певні умови для того, щоб ця тенденція зберігалась (і навіть збільшилась) у найближчі роки.

Ключові слова: гештальт-терапія; супервізія; сетінг; клієнт; гештальт-терапевт; психотерапія

Introduction. Today, in Ukraine, there is a public demand for psychotherapy, which has grown significantly since the beginning of the full-scale war. According to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, 15.7 million people in Ukraine will need psychological assistance (Ministry of Health of Ukraine). Gestalt therapy has been developing rapidly in Ukraine over the past twenty years. This is confirmed by the active training of Gestalt therapists. The need for high-quality Gestalt therapy programs is due to the difficult living conditions of Ukrainians, on the one hand, and the need for effective training and good working conditions for certified and accredited Gestalt therapists, on the other.

Today, the exact number of active Gestalt therapists in Ukraine is unknown. The website of the National Association of Gestalt Therapists of Ukraine lists over a thousand accredited specialists (Natsionalna asotsiatsiia heshtalt-terapevtiv Ukrainy). The website of the Kyiv Gestalt University states that they have more than 1000 students (Kyivskyi Heshtalt Universytet). It is worth noting that the majority of the practicing Gestalt therapists are not listed on official websites, meaning that there are actually many more of them. Estimating the exact number of Ukrainian Gestalt therapists is an important prospect for further research, as such statistics will allow predicting the need for Gestalt therapists' training programs given the specifics of Gestalt therapists and their effectiveness in dealing with traumas and giving psychological help.

Research Aim. The aim of this study was to examine the working conditions of Gestalt therapists in Ukraine and abroad within the social context of war, to analyze the factors influencing the establishment of individual practice, income levels, forms of professional activity, and participation in supervision, as well as to outline current trends in the development of the profession.

Analysis of previous research and publications. The basics of Gestalt therapy and its strengths in working with clients in modern conditions have been the subjects of many scientific studies. Gestalt therapy is understood by modern researchers as a popular area of modern psychotherapy, which is based on the principles of the integrity of the human personality and self-regulation and which uses a wide range of techniques and methods (Budnyk & Savishchenko, 2024). Besides, Gestalt therapy is a leading psychotherapeutic method (Kyrylyshyna, 2023). Gestalt therapy is distinct from other methods due to its use of the principle of personality integrity which implies individual's awareness of their thoughts, feelings and behaviors "here and now".

In recent years, many scientific works have appeared analyzing the possibilities of Gestalt therapy and the effectiveness of its methods in dealing with various problems, in particular: restoring the client's personal resource in crisis situations (Volodarska, 2016), developing the

personality of a law enforcement officer (Petrova, 2021); overcoming clients' psychological difficulties (Zaborovska & Turynina, 2021); optimization of management and staff productivity (N. Nestoruk, V. Roshkova). A number of studies compared the effectiveness of Gestalt therapy and other approaches (e.g., cognitive-behavioral approach) (Kuzo, 2017) as well as analyzed the relationships between the personal characteristics of Gestalt therapists (Yavorska, Krupelnyska, 2023).

Analysis of publications on the work and roles of psychologists found an increased demand for psychological services (Vasylenko, Shevchuk, 2023) and psychological help in crisis situations (Ordatii, Anhelska, Humeniuk, 2024), the increased role of Gestalt therapy in war-affected children and family counseling (Panok, Tkachuk, 2019) and in helping cancer patients (B. Pleskach). At the same time, there are no systematic studies on identifying the working conditions of Gestalt therapists in the context of the growing demand for high-quality psychological help in crisis periods.

The experience of private discussions, conducting supervision groups, Gestalt conferences, and other professional events indicates that there is a need for a clear understanding of the material side of the profession of a Gestalt therapist, namely: how to calculate and what factors affect the cost of Gestalt therapy as well as how much Gestalt therapists actually earn, etc.

The aim of the study was to study the working conditions of Gestalt therapists to form a clear understanding of the market of Gestalt therapy services and its prospects given the peculiarities and problems of Gestalt therapists' training.

Research methods and organization. Between June 19 and July 15, 2024, an online survey was conducted with 194 participants using Google Forms. The respondents indicated that they were practicing Gestalt therapists (either studying or having completed their training). The survey was conducted in Ukrainian and addressed Gestalt therapists of Ukrainian origin (living in Ukraine or abroad). Gestalt therapists from different institutes, of different ages and genders, with different work experience were interviewed.

I would like to thank the National Association of Gestalt Therapists of Ukraine (NAGTU) and Kyiv Gestalt University (KGU) for posting information about this study on the institute's official social media and helping to recruit respondents.

The research was conducted by Oleksiy Vinogradov (organizing and managing the research, conducting the survey, writing the final article), Olha Sikorska (creating the survey questionnaire), and Pylyp Dukhlii (consulting).

Research sample. A total of 194 people took part in the online survey, 87% of whom were women and 13% men. Among the respondents, 138 people permanently live in Ukraine (71%) and 56 people live abroad (29%). Among those who live in Ukraine, the majority live in Kyiv - 68 people (49%), in regional centers - 26 people (19%), in other cities - 36 people (26%), in a village or urban-type settlement - 8 people (6%).

Among those who are abroad, only 20% lived there before the full-scale invasion, 80% started living abroad after the start of the great war. The overwhelming majority of respondents have higher education (99%), and 6% also have a scientific degree, 1% have secondary education. Only 10% do not have academic psychological education, 78% do, and 12% are in the process of obtaining it. As for marital status, 74% of Gestalt therapists are either married (52%) or in a civil partnership (22%). With regard to Gestalt therapy education, namely the distribution by certification level, it was analyzed that the majority of students study at the second level (30%), which implies that specialists have a basic knowledge of psychological counseling and psychotherapy using the Gestalt approach, and the appropriate skills to organize therapeutic sessions (Fig. 1).

Only 1% of the respondents graduated from or are currently studying at the 1st-level Gestalt therapist training.

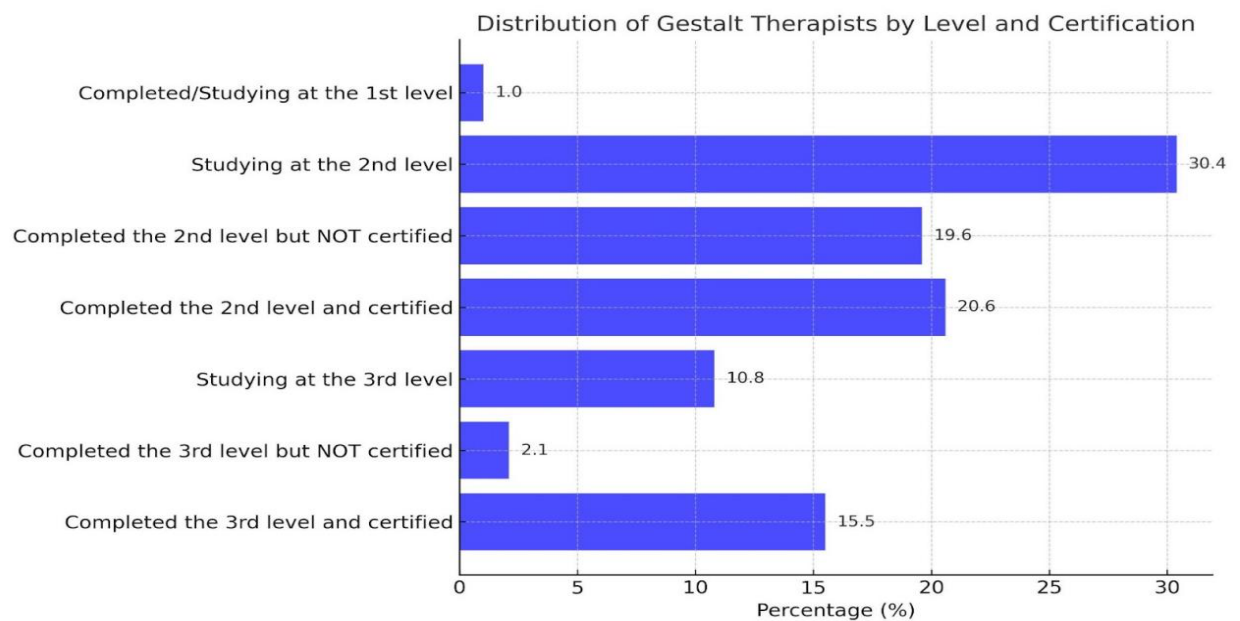


Figure 1. Certification Level of Gestalt Therapists

Specialists who completed the 2nd-level Gestalt therapist training and were certified as Gestalt therapists - 21%; those who completed the 2nd level of Gestalt therapist training but were not certified as Gestalt therapists - 19%; are studying for the third degree - 10%; those who completed the 3rd-level Gestalt therapist training, but were not certified as supervisors - only 2%. Also, 37% indicated that they had at least one additional psychotherapeutic education in another method of psychotherapy and 6% were in the process of obtaining it.

Results of the study. Let's start by analyzing the duration of a session conducted by Gestalt therapists. The majority of respondents indicated that it is either 50 minutes (45%) or 60 minutes (40%), 15% of respondents conduct a session of 55 minutes. As it turned out when analyzing the results, those therapists whose session lasts 50 minutes receive more for their work compared to those who spend more time on a session. 73% of therapists indicated that they work either only online (43%) or mostly online (30%). 92% of the respondents indicated that they provide individual psychotherapy; 8% of Gestalt therapists do not provide individual psychotherapy consultations (probably, they work with groups or provide other psychotherapeutic services) (Fig. 2).

Among the respondents, 22% provide individual supervision services, 40% conduct couples counseling, and only 11% of therapists work with children. 36% of respondents work with groups (24% lead therapy groups, 8% - supervision groups, 11% - basic training groups, 7% - specialization groups).

58% of therapists, in addition to the basic conditions, also provide individual psychotherapy on preferential terms. Accordingly, 42% do not work on preferential terms.

In the process of studying the working conditions of Gestalt therapists, it is important to take into account the possibilities for restoring their resources, namely the internal need to receive psychological services through individual or group psychotherapy.

90% of respondents said that in the last 3 months they had visited a personal psychotherapist, most of them once a week (70%). On average, people pay UAH 1,600 (\$40) for their own therapy, which is more than Gestalt therapists receive on average for their own sessions (UAH 1,200, or \$30).

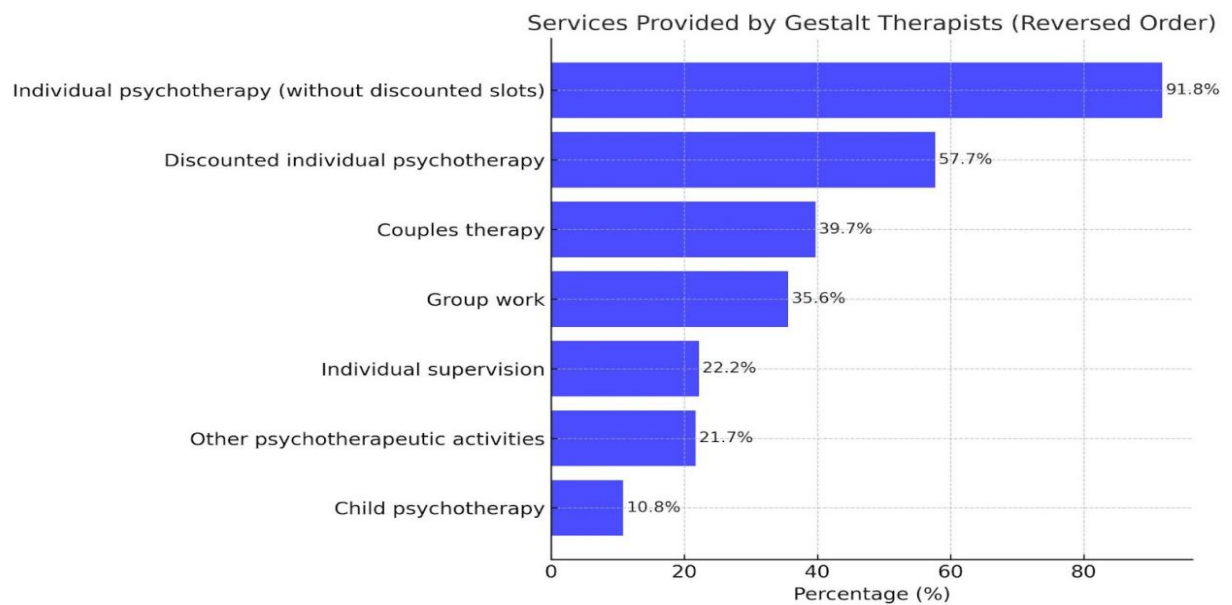


Figure 2. Types of Services Provided by Gestalt Therapists

In addition, it was found that individual supervision is also frequently attended - 86% of respondents have attended it in the last 3 months. Most often, such meetings are attended 2 times a month (55%). On average, one supervision session costs a therapist 1,800 UAH (\$45), which is more than the average therapist charges for providing supervision (1,500 UAH or \$38).

The survey results showed that the number of clients a Gestalt therapist has does not depend on whether they visit their personal therapist or a supervisor. However, the quality of work is likely to differ significantly. A characteristic feature of this sample of Gestalt therapists is that those who visit an individual therapist earn less per month on average than those who do not (45,000 UAH and 60,000 UAH, respectively). This is an interesting fact that requires further research. As for the cost of a session, we obtained the following trend in the results: those who visit a personal therapist and those who do not visit a personal therapist receive the same amount of money per session on average (1,200 UAH), and those who do not visit a supervisor receive less (1,000 UAH) than those who do (1,200 UAH). It was found that psychotherapists who visit a supervisor earn significantly more per month (50,000 UAH) than those who do not (35,000 UAH). This is probably due to the fact that seeing a supervisor has a positive effect on the quality of work, which means that clients are more likely to make appointments with such a psychotherapist.

As for determining the amount of remuneration for Gestalt therapists, it should be noted that all amounts in the survey were indicated in UAH. In this article, we will indicate the hryvnia value (as indicated by the respondents), as well as the approximate value of this amount in dollars (for convenience, we will take the exchange rate of 40 hryvnia for 1 dollar). We decided to indicate the dollar value to ensure that this data does not lose its relevance if the hryvnia exchange rate changes. This is also due to the fact that a significant number of psychotherapists peg the cost of their consultations to the dollar or euro.

The average salary of the surveyed psychotherapists is 49,500 UAH (\$1,240). At the same time, 50% of respondents earn between 20,000 (\$500) and 86,000 UAH (\$2,150). This is the total income, which includes all types of income from psychotherapeutic activities: both individual and group. The majority (73%) of respondents indicated that psychotherapy is their main type of income.

We also determined the average cost of individual counseling services with Gestalt therapists. Thus, it was found that the average cost of an individual psychotherapy session (excluding discounted places) is 1,200 UAH (\$30). On average, Gestalt therapists have 10

sessions per week. Supervision is more expensive - 1,500 UAH (\$38). On average, colleagues provide 2 supervision sessions per week. The average cost of pair psychotherapy is 2,150 UAH (\$54) and is provided once a week. It should be noted that such a session usually lasts 90 minutes.

As for the cost of children's psychotherapy, it amounts to 950 UAH (\$24) and most often lasts 50 minutes. Therapists indicated that on average they provide 2 counseling sessions for children per week. The average cost of children's counseling is cheaper than the average cost of individual psychotherapy for adults. Also, there are quite a few Gestalt therapists working with children (only 11% of respondents). It seems that this service is not popular enough, which necessitates a special study and the potential for its further development within child psychotherapy.

We studied the remuneration for conducting group meetings. It has been established that the amount of remuneration for conducting a particular group is influenced by many factors, such as the cost of the group, its duration, the number of participants, whether the group is conducted with or without a co-therapist, whether there are advertising/office expenses, etc. Therefore, our question was not intended to explore all of these factors. The emphasis was placed on the amount of money a Gestalt therapist receives for conducting one particular group. Average earnings are indicated among those respondents who provide the following services, namely: 35% of respondents (69 people) indicated that they provide group psychotherapy; 24% of specialists conduct psychotherapy groups. A Gestalt therapist receives UAH 3,500 (\$88) for one psychotherapy group conducted, conducting 3 group meetings per month.

As for supervisory groups, they are conducted by 10% of the surveyed professionals. A group leader earns an average of UAH 6,000 (\$150) per group meeting, conducting 2 groups per month. A trainer who conducts basic training groups earns an average of 30,000 UAH (\$750) per group, conducting 1.5 groups per month (most often these groups are three-day or two-day classes). Such groups are conducted by 11% of Gestalt therapists. The basic training in the study means working with groups of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd stages of obtaining a Gestalt therapist certificate. We also took into account the fact that earnings from groups of different levels can differ significantly.

The highest amount of money paid to host specializations is UAH 39,000 (\$975), with an average of 1 specialization per month. However, the number of hosts of specializations is also the smallest - 7% of the total number of respondents. Let's focus on other types of income for Gestalt therapists. Thus, we have studied that 8% of Gestalt therapists make a profit from psychotherapeutic activities due to the ability to provide services online. For example: conducting webinars, selling psychotherapy courses, online marathons, and other similar commercial psychotherapy activities on the Internet. The average income from such activities is 10,000 UAH (\$250). Also, a quarter of Gestalt therapists (25%) indicated that, in addition to the above services, they earn an additional 20,000 UAH (\$500) on average from other psychotherapeutic activities.

The leaders of Gestalt therapy programs in our survey are trainers who conduct the first, second, and third levels of Gestalt therapy training or specialization.

They stand out among the other categories of Gestalt therapists, so we will talk about them separately. This group usually consists of experienced psychotherapists with an average of 14 years of psychotherapeutic practice (from 5 to 30 years). The average age is 46 years.

The average cost of a psychotherapy session with trainers is 2,200 UAH (\$55), and the average cost of supervision is slightly lower, 1,900 UAH (\$48). This may be due to the fact that coaches often provide supervision to participants of training programs and offer them a discount. The vast majority of trainers work only online or mostly online.

The overall average monthly earnings of coaches are 123,000 UAH (\$3,075), with those who specialize earning slightly more - 135,000 UAH (\$3,375). The minimum amount of earnings is 50,000 UAH (\$1,250) per month, and the maximum is 300,000 UAH (\$7,500).

On a five-point scale, the average level of satisfaction with their earnings among trainers is 4.2 points (more details will be provided in the analysis of Gestalt therapists' satisfaction with their earnings).

It is also worth noting that the percentage of men among the presenters of training programs is much higher (34%) than among Gestalt therapists in general (13%).

Payment methods for Gestalt therapy services vary: 57% accept payment by bank card, 55% - to a private entrepreneur's account, 30% - in cash, and the rest (7%) receive money in other ways (it is important to note that more than one answer could be selected). There is also a logical pattern: therapists who earn more money are more likely to accept payment to a private practice.

When asked to evaluate their satisfaction with their earnings on a 5-point scale (where 5 points is completely satisfied), the respondents answered: 40 percent of Gestalt therapists are either completely or almost completely satisfied (11 and 29 percent, respectively); 30 percent are either completely dissatisfied or just not satisfied (11 and 19 percent, respectively); and 30 percent gave a score of 3, meaning their satisfaction is at an average level.

According to the survey, there is a direct correlation between a psychotherapist's satisfaction with his/her earnings and the cost of his/her individual session and earnings in general (Table 1).

Table 1

Satisfaction of the psychotherapist with his/her earnings, taking into account the cost of his/her individual session and earnings in general

Satisfaction with your earnings (from 1 to 5)	Average cost of a session, UAH	Average earnings per month, UAH
1	800 (\$20)	6 000 (\$150)
2	1 000 (\$25)	24 000 (\$600)
3	1 200 (\$30)	50 000 (\$1 250)
4	1 500 (\$38)	70 000 (\$1 750)
5	1 500 (\$38)	100 000 (\$2 500)

In the course of the study, we compared three groups of psychotherapists and compiled a generalized profile of a Gestalt therapist (Table 2).

If we compare the data of all 194 respondents, we can draw up a conditional average profile of a Gestalt therapist. These are mostly women in their 40s who have a degree in psychology, have completed training as a Gestalt therapist, and have been practicing for 5 years. This is their main source of income. On average, they see 10 clients a week, charging UAH 1,200 for one appointment, plus 2 privileged clients who receive a 20 to 50 percent discount. They also provide other types of psychotherapeutic services, 2 sessions per week (it can be supervision, couple therapy, children's therapy, etc.).

In addition, they hold 3 group meetings a month, earning a total of UAH 3,500 per meeting. Thanks to these activities, they earn UAH 49,500 per month. They also visit their own therapist once a week and a supervisor once every two weeks. They are paid more than they charge for their services: UAH 1,600 for therapy and UAH 1,800 for supervision.

Table 2

Three profiles of a Gestalt therapist, depending on work experience and salary

	Beginners (0-3 years of practice)	Practitioners (3-8 years of practice)	Experienced (8 or more years of practice)
Age	38	40	45
Total earnings for the month	22 000 UAH	60 000 UAH	80 000 UAH
The cost of ind. therapy	975 UAH	1 300 UAH	1 800 UAH
Therapy sessions per week	6,5	10	15
The cost of ind. supervision	1 250 UAH	1 400 UAH	1 600 UAH
Supervision per week	1	2	3
The cost of couple therapy	1 500 UAH	1 800 UAH	3 000 UAH
Couple therapy sessions per week	1	1	1
The cost of pediatric therapy	800 UAH	950 UAH	1 500 UAH
Pediatric therapy sessions per week	2	3	1
Earnings from one therapy group	2 200 UAH	2 750 UAH	6 000 UAH
Number of term groups per month	3,5	3	2
Earnings from one supervisory group	-	4 000 UAH	6 000 UAH
Number of supervisory groups per month	-	1	2
Earnings from the basic training group (level 1, 2, 3)	-	24 500 UAH	30 000 UAH
Number of basic training groups per month	-	1	1,5
Earnings from the specialization group	-	16 000 UAH	40 000 UAH
Number of specializations per month	-	2	1
The cost of a session with your own psychotherapist (to whom the Gestalt therapist goes)	1 500 UAH	1 600 UAH	2 000 UAH
The cost of a session with your own supervisor (to whom the Gestalt therapist goes)	1 500 UAH	2 000 UAH	2 100 UAH

It should be noted that this description is too generalized. Therefore, we believe that it is advisable to make several profiles of psychotherapists, depending on the length of their practice.

We have distributed these profiles as follows: psychotherapists (psychotherapists) - beginners (up to 3 years of practice), psychotherapists with medium experience (from 3 to 8 years of practice), experienced psychotherapists (more than 8 years of practice). The table below shows the average values according to our survey.

Thus, analyzing the data from the table, we can see a certain difference in the profiles of Gestalt therapists, taking into account their experience and receipt of monetary remuneration for the provision of psychological services.

We also studied whether there is a difference in practice between male and female Gestalt therapists.

According to our survey, on average, men have slightly more sessions per week (12) than women (10). Men charge slightly more per session (1,300 UAH) than women (1,200 UAH). The percentage of men and women who have 7 or fewer sessions per week and 15+ sessions per week is different. In the first case, 11% of men and 89% of women. In the second variant - 15% of men and 85% of women. In addition, the total earnings from psychotherapy also differ. Men on average earn 2 times more than women - 80,000 UAH versus 40,000 UAH.

To get more information about the working conditions of Gestalt therapists, we have compared the description of the remuneration conditions for Gestalt therapists in Ukraine and abroad (Table 3).

Table 3

Comparison of remuneration for the provision of services by Gestalt therapists in Ukraine and abroad

Average value	In Ukraine	Abroad
Total profit from psychotherapy	50,000 UAH (\$1,250)	UAH 36,000 (\$900)
Number of sessions per week	10	9
Cost of the session	1 500	1 600
Number of group meetings per month	2,5	4

It is also important to add some interesting facts to this table. Thus, on average, Gestalt therapists living abroad earn 1.5-2 times more from group activities than those in Ukraine. Among those who live in Ukraine, there are more of those who have 15 clients per week (82%). That is, therapists who are abroad are more likely to have up to 7 sessions per week (36%) and up to 14 sessions (35%) than 15 or more sessions (18%). Among those who lived abroad before the start of the full-scale invasion, the percentage of people with a practice of 15 or more clients per week is higher than among those who left after the start of the full-scale war. And the cost of sessions of such "old" emigrants is higher than that of the "new" ones (1,500 vs. 1,165 UAH). This may indicate that two and a half years is not enough for emigrants to build a strong practice abroad. Psychotherapists in Kyiv earn more than in other cities. The average salary in Kyiv is 60,000 UAH (\$1,500), in the regional center - 55,000 UAH (\$1,375), in the city - 45,000 UAH (\$1,125), in an urban village - 49,000 UAH (\$1,225), and in a rural area - 36,500 UAH (\$913).

In general, the following conclusions can be drawn from the results. Gestalt therapists who went abroad after the full-scale invasion have difficulties building an individual practice (they have lower prices for their services and fewer clients). At the same time, those emigrants who run groups feel better off than their colleagues in Ukraine - they have a larger number of groups and higher group income.

We have found that basic education also affects the pricing of psychotherapy services. Thus, 90% of therapists in our survey have a complete higher education, and the average cost of their session is UAH 1,200. Those who have a scientific degree (6% of such people) receive one and a half times more - 1,900 UAH. This connection is also clearly seen in monthly income. Gestalt therapists with a university degree earn an average of 50,000 UAH per month, and those with a PhD - 80,000 UAH. Therapists who indicated their education as secondary (there were only 2 of them, i.e. 1%) earn an average of 26,500 UAH per month. There is a direct correlation between the level of Gestalt therapy education and the number of sessions per week. That is, a 2nd degree student has fewer clients on average (6) than a certified therapist (9) or a 3rd degree student (15).

Certified Gestalt therapists receive an average of UAH 1,200 per therapy session. Those who are studying at the third level earn UAH 1,500, and those who have graduated from it earn UAH 1,800. There is also a direct correlation with total earnings: the higher the level of specialized Gestalt therapy education, the higher the monthly salary.

It was found that the years of practice as a Gestalt therapist also have an impact - the more experience, the more clients per week. On average, up to 3 years - 6 clients, from 3 to 8 years - 10, and more than 8 years - 15 clients.

The average median cost of Gestalt therapists' services in Ukraine and abroad does not differ. The average cost of therapist services in Ukraine varies greatly depending on the place of residence. Predictably, prices in Kyiv are higher (UAH 1,350) than in other cities (UAH 1,200). Moreover, in rural areas, the cost is slightly higher than in cities (UAH 1,250), and the highest cost is observed in urban-type settlements (as much as UAH 1,800). This is probably due to the influence of the factor of forced internal relocation of specialists.

Conclusions. Studies of the working conditions of Gestalt therapists show that specialists in this field are competitively paid. Given the good working conditions (the ability to work online, free schedule), as well as the significant public demand for psychotherapeutic services due to the traumatic experience caused by the full-scale war, more and more people are choosing the specialty of a Gestalt therapist. We believe that there are currently certain conditions for this trend to continue (and even increase) in the coming years.

The number of graduates of Gestalt therapy training programs is quite large, and their number is increasing every year. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind the quality of training, to provide both practical and theoretical levels of training to provide quality services to Gestalt therapists in order to form specialists' readiness to realize their professional skills and qualities, to increase the effectiveness of counseling and therapy using the best practices of this approach.

Prospects for further research. Since there is almost no research related to the organization of work and building a private practice of Gestalt therapists, this creates broad prospects for further research. First of all, it is important to determine the actual number of Gestalt therapists in Ukraine. To study the impact of full-scale military operations on the territory of Ukraine on the work of Gestalt therapists, namely, on the organization of practice, ethical features of work, and therapeutic setting (formal agreements on working conditions between a psychotherapist and a client). There is also a need for further study of how Gestalt therapists cope with their own stressful and traumatic events caused by the full-scale invasion and how this affects the quality of their psychotherapeutic practice.

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