

Lithuania

About Lithuanian Group Analytic Society

Lithuanian Group Analytic Society was founded on 15th of April, 1999 as a voluntary association of the Lithuanian citizens, unifying psychologists, psychotherapists, psychiatrists and other specialists, working in the field of group analysis and designed to answer and implement the mutual needs and tasks of the Society members, which are coherent to the Lithuanian Constitution and law.

Main aims of the activities in Lithuanian GAS are to unite the specialists of group analysis in Lithuania, to protect their rights, to support their professional learning and development, and to provide the evaluation of the specialists of group analysis in Lithuania and to participate in their accreditation.

Lithuanian GAS members constantly meet in different events, provide group analytic training, organize yearly local and every three years international conferences of group analysis, recently have established the Film Club where every month members watch and analyze an interesting movie. At the moment we have 36 members and also 5 honorary members: Steinar Lorentzen, Tore Sorlie and Vivi Maar, our teachers from Scandinavia, and Eugenijus Laurinaitis and Erna Petkute - from Lithuania.

From the year 1995 initiative group of Lithuanian GAS has started Group Analytic training in Lithuania with the Scandinavian teachers and for now together with Vilnius University organizes and provides training for Psychodynamic Group Psychotherapy and Group Analysis for Lithuanian students.

Lithuanian Group Analytic Society is a member of the European Federation for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, EFPP, and European Group Analytic Training Institutions Network, E.G.A.T.I.N.

Organizing Group Analytic Events in Lithuania

One of the goals of the Lithuanian GAS is to organize international and local events to provide possibility to meet, discuss and collaborate on the professional base. Some of the international events we have held are:



- E.G.A.T.I.N. Study Days “Group Analysis in Different Cultures – Training and Practice” in Vilnius, 1992.
- E.G.A.T.I.N. Study Days “Authority and Leadership in Group Analytic Training” in Vilnius, 2000.
- Summer Workshop „Group Analysis in Eastern Europe“ in Dubingiai, 2003.
- International Symposium "Group Analysis in Different Cultures: Diversities and Tolerance" in Dubingiai, 2006.
- International Summer Workshop “Language in the Group, of the Group, by the Group” in Dubingiai, 2009 with the local pre-conference seminar in Kaunas “Addiction and Time-limited Group Therapy: the GRF (Group for Psychological Functioning Restoring)”.
- International Summer Conference “Different Homes for Group Analysis” in Dubingiai, Lithuania, 2012.

Our guests who had made a fruitful contribution into our conferences are prof. Steinar Lorentzen (Norway), Malcolm Pines (UK), John Schlapobersky (UK), Ivan Urlić (Croatia), Andrea Giannelli (Italy), Dr. Chris MacGregor (Scotland), MJ Maher (UK), Ase Sviland (Norway), Anvor Lothe (Norway), Anna Chesner (UK), Christopher Scanlon (UK) and others.



In summertime we enjoy having the local group analytic conferences to discuss the actual themes of the time.

Starting from the theory – practical conference “Authority and Team in the Medicine. Group Analytic Approach” in Vilnius, 1999, we continued with the theory seminars “Using Psychotherapy Groups in the Treatment and Rehabilitation”, Ziegdzriai Mental Hospital, 2003 and Siauliai University, 2004.



In the year 2010 we celebrated the 10 year’s anniversary of the Lithuanian GAS and 15 years of the Group analytic Training programme with the History Conference “Group Analysis in Lithuania: Past – Present – Future”.

This year, 2013, we had a Conference about the application of the group therapy in the mental health institutions and will discuss diversity of the groups in clinical settings.

More information about our organization and upcoming events can be found on our colorful website www.lgad.lt

The Development of Group Analytic Training in Lithuania

The first group analysts who presented Group Analysis and introduced this method of psychotherapy to Lithuanian professionals were Raymond Blake and Rita Lynn from London. They have conducted the first theory and practical workshops and influenced an establishment of the Group Analysis section in the Association of Lithuanian Group Psychotherapy, and members of it for a few years have independently and persistently studied theory, literature, and organized group supervisions.

This growing interest had stimulated us to invite an E.G.A.T.I.N. Study Days in Vilnius in year 1992 where significant representatives of Group Analysis were participated. After this event the possibilities to study Group Analysis regularly were searched and in year 1993 two members from Lithuania Eugenijus Laurinaitis and Erna Petkute got an opportunity and successfully finished studies in the project of Rashtow (Warsaw) and Heidelberg (Germany) GA institutes.

At the same time the intense search of the financial recourses was performed to organize similar training project in Lithuania. For a few years the idea was discussed with the Norwegian GA Society, members of which dedicated to start the training. The Committee of Norwegian Psychiatry and Psychotherapy Association approved the application from Lithuania for the group psychotherapy basics level teaching programme implementation. Later the applications were submitted also by Latvian and Estonian societies. Finally the contract for collaboration between Norway and Lithuania were signed and started with the support from Lithuanian Health Ministry, Vilnius University, Lithuanian Medicine and

Psychiatry Society, Baltic States Committee in the Norway Medical Society, and also the joint Committee of the Psychiatry in North Countries.

The international GA training programme with the 30 candidates from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia started in year 1995. Initially three members of Institute of Group Analysis (Norway) - Kjersty Lyngstad, Steinar Lorentzen and Tore Sorlie started working as teachers and later Vivi Maar from Institute of Group Analysis and Family Therapy of Copenhagen, Denmark joined the teachers' team. From the year 1998 Eugenijus Laurinaitis and Erna Petkute were approved by Institute of Group Analysis (Oslo) as affiliated teachers in the project and started their activities in the course. And gradually the Scandinavian teachers were replaced by the Lithuanian students qualified as group analysts, and from the year 2003 entire programme was fully run by the local teachers.

From the year 2010 the programme has become a part of the Vilnius University post-graduate studies in Medical Department and at the moment it has about 30 students on all levels. The programme is designed to train in Psychodynamic Group Psychotherapy (4 years) and to qualify in Group Analysis (2 additional years).

Participating in other Trainings in Lithuania

Lithuanian GAS and its members are actively involved in the developing of different psychotherapy training programmes in Lithuania:

- Individual Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Training.
- Individual and Group Counseling of Risk Group Children and Teenagers.
- Training for the Health Professionals in Archangels, Russia.
- Estonian Programme for Group Analytic Training.
- Children Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Training.
- School Psychologists' Training.

In this area group analysts offer the specific attitude towards the work with groups in different settings, starting from the training group it-self to the groups of the clients and other target persons. The most specific contribution into various trainings is the work with the personal experience of the trainees in the group.

Here the experience in some of these training programmes is presented.

The Use of Group Analysis in the Individual Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Training Program

by Daina Natkeviciene

IPTP holds the oldest psychotherapy training traditions in Lithuania. It has been organized by the Faculty of Medicine of Vilnius University since 1992 and approved by Lithuanian Psychotherapy association. The period of the program – 6 years: 5 study years of contact training and 1 year for preparation of diploma thesis and its defense. Trainings are carried out in the form of extended weekends (Thursday - Saturday), with total of 7 training units per year.

In more than 20 year period, around 230 students were participating in the program, 85 of them successfully completed the program and gained the qualification degree of psychodynamic psychotherapist.

The structure of the program is specific, since during first 3 years the personal therapy and supervisions of the students take place in small groups, and only later, during 4-6 years of the training program in individual setting. Moreover, every weekend the whole course participates in two of 1,5 hour sessions of large group.

The idea to bring group experience to IPTP came with the purpose. In Lithuania, the group psychotherapy has always had strong positions. Soon after the program had started, the GA training program, brought by Institute of Group Analysis from Norway, began. Many of the members of the training staff participated and later graduated GA training. They experienced the group work, which means that they understood the possibilities of group psychotherapy and its strong points.

During IPTP slow-open group type has been adapted for all forms of groups: small and large groups; group supervisions; interventions. It means that new group members enter the group which has already become a mature one and has developed a culture of the course.

The application of GA model in our program helped us to prevent some traumatic experiences seen in different psychoanalytic training institutes with traditional training model. I mean authoritarianism as the consequence of unresolved problem of narcissism and domination of close groups of “super teachers” and according to Otto Kernberg (1986) their “strict doctrines”, power games and intrigue.

We also tried to recognize and work on splitting phenomena among the staff members provoked by rivalry impulses. It helped to introduce the culture of communication to our students through the small and large groups and through the meetings with coordinator after every training weekend.

The trainees function in a specially organized social group situation and it helps to overcome isolation and helplessness. Group encourages the process of socialization, helps to diminish the dependency on the group leader and create orientation towards the group.

Project Individual and Group Counseling of Risk Group Children and Teenagers

by Erna Petkute

Project “Individual and group counseling of risk group children and teenagers” had been implemented in years 2004 – 2012 as postgraduate training for school and pedagogical psychological services psychologists in Lithuania. The goal of the project was to increase effective work of school psychologist in school community of Lithuania, to improve psychodynamic understanding of different types of groups in school community and at larger community, to cooperate in multidisciplinary teams, to train skills and give knowledge about work with crisis intervention, conflict resolution facilitation and counseling, detect child abuse, to facilitate self-experience and personal growth.

Administrating bodies of the project were: Center for Special Education and Psychology at Ministry of Education and NGO Children Support Center, later also some logistics company. The project was financed by Ministry of Education and structural funds of EC.

There were two levels of the training: I level and II level.

Number of participants: during I level there was 160 (16 groups X10 persons) participants, during II level there was 80 (8groups x 10persons) participants who had been participating also in I level.

The structure of the training during one year was 6 blocks X 4 days. Total: 204 hours of training. The composition of the block: 5 lectures and seminars, 2 technical seminars, 4 supervisions, 4 small groups, 2 large groups.

Trainers and lecturers were group analysts and individual psychodynamic therapists (children and adult). Many of them work also at school and/or with schools. The project was created and training structure

was composed on the basis of group analytic training principles. Major phenomena of dynamic group issues were observed and used in the training.

Training participants gave evaluation from the highest in descending sequence to: small groups and supervisions, then technical seminars, then theory and seminars, then large group.

Training for the Health Professionals in Archangels, Russia

by Sigita Asvydiene

Since 2003 to 2011 we delivered trainings for the health professionals in Archangelsk psychiatric hospital, regional out-patient department and Archangels University. The training program consisted of 2 fortnight or a week's blocks per year. Participants were: psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, administration staff and later - family doctors. Total number of participants was about 150 and the training hours -1100.

Professor Tore Sorlie from the University of Northern Norway, Group Analyst and our teacher in Group Analysis invited us to take part in the Project in Russia, Archangels psychiatric hospital. The idea was – to implement group therapeutic activities into the daily life of the hospital and to teach staff of cooperation methods and team work in order to change the participants' professional attitudes to their interactions with patients and co-workers, and in treatment routines.

The Project developed in 3 stages. In all stages we were seeking to create and maintain culture of inquiry, mainly by modeling an analytic attitude (Foulkes, 1986).

The 1st stage was a challenge for us and for the participants. We were invited and introduced to the aims which sounded very ambitious comparing to the reality of the hospital. We knew Russian language and we had the tools – Group Analysis (we were just graduated GA training). So the freedom and big responsibility was delegated to us.

The 2nd stage was a continuation of the Project and the new Project. Hospital and regional outpatient service and family doctors joined the training. The aim was to establish multi-professional teams for the treatment of patients with the first psychotic episode. The team was supposed to diagnose the illness in early stages and to follow the patient for the further period of his life and illness, no matter where the patient will appear at that moment – outpatient clinic, hospital, etc.

Third stage started in 2011. The aim was to train future trainers, who will be supervisors for their colleagues.

The common goal for all parts of the project was humanization of the relationship in psychiatry and decreasing the stigmatization of the mental illness. Methods we used, were based upon Group Analytic approach and it's training. The personal experience of being a member of number of group settings, especially in the multi-professional group, was very helpful for the staff starting various group therapeutic activities at their workplace. It also facilitated transfer of the culture of inquiry, to which the model of the Group Analysis trains. According to the evaluation research, outcomes of the program were very positive.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2014!

Prepared by Egle Pauziene in cooperation with the members of LGAS