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An Architectural Educational Approach Based On The Awareness Of Oneself In One'S Environment

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AN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATIONAL APPROACH BASED ON THE AWARENESS OF ONESELF IN ONE'S ENVIRONMENT

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AN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATIONAL APPROACH BASED ON THE AWARENESS OF ONESELF IN ONE'S ENVIRONMENT

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an architectural educational approach based on the awareness of oneself in one's environment. It is an awareness-based, existential and experiential approach to architecture. It draws upon the works of Gestalt Therapy and Confluent Education, an educational adaptation and application of Gestalt Therapy. It is presented in four chapters:

I. An Introduction;

II. An Analysis Of Gestalt Therapy;

III. An Educational Approach Based On Gestalt Therapy;

IV. An Architectural Seminar Based On The Awareness Of Oneself In One's Environment.

This thesis states architectural education can be improved by using educational methods which integrate student's intellectual capacities with their emotional capacities. Learning in this educational approach begins with personal experiencing and it moves outward into interpersonal knowledge. Self-awareness is at the root of this educational approach. Learning is defined as the discovering and becoming aware of that which already exists, but which was not previously known or understood.

The seminar presented in this thesis is a prototypal application of this educational approach. It consists of fifteen lesson plans, each consisting of several learning structures or "games". These "games" are intended to create relevant learning events; learning events in which students make discoveries about themselves in their environment.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Content Of This Thesis

This thesis is my development of an awareness-based, existential and experiential approach to architectural education. I draw upon the works of Gestalt Therapy and Confluent Education, an educational adaptation and application of Gestalt Therapy. I present this thesis in four chapters:

I. An Introduction;

II. An Analysis Of Gestalt Therapy;

III. An Educational Approach Based On Gestalt Therapy;

IV. An Architectural Seminar Based On The Awareness Of Oneself In One's Environment.

B. Thesis Statement

I believe many architects are not exercising their full creative potential. I attribute this to an educational and professional overemphasis of cognitive patterns of intellectualism, rationale, analysis, overview and objectivity. In overemphasizing these modes of thought, many architects tend to ignore the personal, experiential, affective and subjective potentials of themselves in approaching design problems and design solutions. This results in a less creative, less human and less personal architecture.

Philmore Hart, an architect and a Gestalt educator, refers to this problem and its remedy in his article, "Humanizing Architects: Feeling Versus Object." He states:

> Our architecture has progressively become more inhuman in both context and form. One possibility is that we have been pursuing the wrong object in trying to find the source of the human living scale. We have been looking at the thing itself or at the process of developing the thing. It may well be more fruitful to deal directly with the person most involved: the architect himself. It may well be that the first step toward humanizing architecture is to humanize the architect. Not to study him, or criticize him, or control or program him, but to open him up to his feelings, his creativity, his senses, his relationship with other people, his own space needs, in short to expose him to his own humanness.
>
> I do not wish to imply that architects are as a species nonhuman but that we are, by and large, thing-oriented. We respond by producing large stationary buildings that tend to be monuments and that also tend to be counter productive to the need for people to contact each other. As behavioral scientist Edward T. Hall has pointed out, "We seek to heat buildings, somehow forgetting that the intent is really to heat people." Our form determinants are mostly derived from technical or architectural criteria rather than people criteria. We spend much time, energy and creativity on building form and pay little attention to human relationship forms.[1]

Hart, referring to the education of architects, continues:

> We, as architects, have been trained to concern ourselves with objects, their shapes and their forms--a rewarding and beautiful education. We have developed our visual senses and refined our tastes. I do not regret my education, but I believe that in the process we have distorted our senses in practice. We need to restore our balance by merging our sense of object with our sense of ourselves and others. Along with finely developed exterior senses we need to heighten our interior senses, our emotions and our feelings toward awareness. What is involved is for us to apply the same amount of energy and devotion to our human qualities as we have done in the past to objects.[2]

In his introduction to The Live Classroom, George Isaac Brown, the originator of Confluent Education, points out two conspicuous ways in which affective human qualities in the form of emotion and feeling unite

with the intellect to prepare the individual for creative action. He states:

> The first example is the creative process itself, which relies not only on hard work in many cases, but also relies on essentially intuitive processes in all cases. Intuition is a subtle thing and, in contrast to rational thinking, is strongly rooted in emotions. The second example is how emotional components motivate and sustain the pursuit of knowledge and truth. Although sometimes subtle, there is always present the passion of the scholar, the passion of the inventor, the passion of the explorer. All who move into the unknown in order to make it known have a passion, whether this be to grow, or to make, or even to become. Whatever the roots or manifestations of this passion, there it is.[3]

By encouraging a balanced union of intellect with intuition, passion, feeling, emotion and the other affective components of the student in our educational approach, I believe we can develop learning processes which exercise the synergistic potentials of this union. I believe an architectural educational approach which stresses this balanced union of human qualities, this balanced union of intellect and affect, can lead to a more creative, more human and more personal architecture. I believe an architectural education approach based on the theories and practices of Gestalt Therapy and Confluent Education can provide this balanced union of intellect and affect.

C. Goal Statement

The goal of this thesis is to develop an architectural educational approach based upon the theories and practices of Gestalt Therapy and Confluent Education which stresses a balanced union of intellect and affect, and to demonstrate this approach in a seminar entitled "The Awareness of Oneself In One's Environment."

D. Method Of Investigation

I first became aware of Gestalt Therapy several years ago when I worked as a social worker. As a part of my job, I was required to take part in training workshops with a Gestalt therapist. The aims of these workshops were to teach us Gestalt awareness techniques to use with our clients. During this training I became intrigued with the potential of A Gestalt-based educational approach.

Several years later as a graduate student and teaching assistant in architecture, I became interested in an architectural educational approach based on Gestalt awareness techniques. In response to this interest, I investigated the literature of Gestalt Therapy and Confluent Education for theories and practices which were applicable to my goals. I then investigated architectural literature for similar examples of work and participated in a workshop in which some Gestalt techniques were used in an architectural mileu. I then researched applicable sources, developed an architectural educational approach based on this research and experimented with it in a seminar which I taught. Since I felt this seminar and educational approach proved to be worthwhile, I then compiled my research and wrote this thesis.

E. Contribution

This thesis makes two contributions to the field of architecture. First it explains the values of an architectural education based on a balance of intellect and affect. And secondly, it develops a curriculum for a seminar from which students and teachers alike can learn.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I

[1]Philmore Hart, "Humanizing Architects: Feeling Versus Object," American Institute of Architects Journal, (January, 1973): p. 41.

[2]Ibid., p. 43.

[3]George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans, ed., The Live Classroom (New York: Viking Press, 1975), p. 8.

II. AN ANALYSIS OF GESTALT THERAPY

A. Introduction

Gestalt Therapy is the term applied to the theories and techniques of psychotherapy which Fritz Perls, a psychoanalyst, formulated from Gestalt Psychology as a reaction to traditional psychoanalysis.[1] It is an unconventional, humanistic, holistic and person-centered psychotherapy which is based on primary experiencing of present space and time. It stresses wholeness, openness, uniqueness, responsibility, flexibility, creativity and the awareness of oneself in one's environment.

The basic aim of Gestalt Therapy is to help individuals develop satisfying and creative lives within their present environments. It accomplishes this by stimulating an integration of affective and intellectual experiencing into a unified experience through awareness. In this way, Gestalt Therapy is a holistic approach based on the unification of all of the individual's feeling, sensing and thinking for creative and satisfying action. Gestaltists see the awareness of experiencing as the basic unit for psychotheraputic change. The psychotheraputic focus is on whatever surfaces in the individual at a given moment; the individual learns from what he/she is doing and from how he/she is doing it.

Thomas Yeomans, a Gestalt educator, explains how this awareness of experiencing works towards the individual's growth and development.

He states:

> Gestalt Therapy . . . draws upon existential phenomenology for its philosophical bases, and works to develop a person's awareness of his present experience. It holds that all clues to a patient's cure lie in here-and-now behavior, and that by accepting, exaggerating, and exploring this behavior and experience, a person can get in touch with, and work through, emotional conflicts or blocks that are preventing his growth and further development.[2]

It is this process of integrating affectual and intellectual experiencing into a single experience and becoming aware of this experiencing which is important in this thesis. Gestalt Therapy is a drawing out of the individual's capacities, experiences and uniqueness--a drawing out of that which already exists in the individual--into whole possibilities.[3]

B. The Concept Of "Gestalt"

Perls adopted the concept of "gestalt" from the Gestalt Psychologists. It is a German word meaning a whole or a configuration. It may be defined by the phrase, the whole is equal to more than the sum of its parts. The Dictionary of Psychology defines it as "an integration of members as contrasted with a summation of parts."[4] This integration of members or parts implies that a meaning, pattern, relationship, completeness and synergy exists between member parts which would not exist if these parts were just placed together randomly. This integration is the difference between members which form a whole functioning unit and parts which are unrelated and do not work together. A pair of scissors can be used as an example. The two halves of a pair of scissors are useless for cutting paper if they are randomly placed together. However, if they are arranged in their special configuration and relationship, they become a

whole functioning unit, a gestalt. These two parts do not take on meaningfulness until they are arranged as a functioning unit.

Perls used this concept of "gestalt" to develop his theory and practice of psychotherapy. He emphasized the individual as an integration of physiological and psychological processes which can be studied only as a whole, a "gestalt". He also emphasized individuals as a synthesis of many experiences, feelings, thoughts, perceptions, behaviors, needs and motivations, and that individuals cannot fulfill their potential if any of these aspects are ignored or excluded from expression and use. In other words, if individuals overuse either their affective or intellectual capacities to the detriment of the other, they will not achieve the potential they could achieve if they developed a balanced expression of the two.

Further, Perls emphasized that individuals exist only in context with their environment; that no perception or behavior of an individual could be understood, except in relationship to that individual's environment. Perls considered the individual as an integral part of an organism-environment field; and all of his/her behavior as a reflection of his/her relatedness within that field.[5] He states:

> No individual is self-sufficient; the individual can exist only in an environmental field. The individual is inevitably, at every moment, a part of some field. His behavior is a function of the total field, which includes both him and his environment. The nature of the relationship between him and his environment determines the human beings behavior. If the relationship is mutually satisfactory, the individual's behavior is what we call normal. If the relationship is one of conflict, the individual's behavior is described as abnormal. The environment does not create the individual, nor does the individual create the environment. Each is what it is, each has its own

particular character, because of its relationship to the other and the whole.[6]

This organism-environment field is another "gestalt"; a whole and a configuration which includes all of the manifestations of the individual; it includes all of the individual's experiences, feelings, thoughts, motivations, perceptions and behaviors, plus all of the manifestations, qualities and forces of the individual's environment. It is this organism-environment gestalt which provides the content for awareness and theraputic change. The Gestalt Therapy process is a manipulation of the organism-environment gestalt--the individual in relationship to the environment--to create awarenesses in the individual which help him/her to develop a satisfying and creative union with his/her environment, as opposed to having a random interaction with it.

C. The Fundamental Bases Of Gestalt Therapy

In his article, "Gestalt Theory And Practice And The Teaching Of Literature," Thomas Yeomans identifies several fundamental bases of Gestalt Therapy. I have adapted these bases by changing their focus and by adding and deleting information based on its relevancy to this thesis. The following descriptions of them explain how the Gestalt approach helps the individual to develop a satisfying and creative interaction with his/her environment. The bases are:

1) The Figure-field Phenomenon;

2) Person-centeredness;

3) Individual Responsibility;

4) Present-centeredness;

5) Appropriate Response To Present Reality;

6) The Organism-environment Gestalt;

7) Differential Thinking;

The first fundamental basis of Gestalt Therapy is the figure-field phenomenon. Gestaltists view perception as response organized by the individual to fulfill a need; an active and selective ordering of information in which a need directs the individual's attention to that element in the organism-environment gestalt which will fulfill the need.[7] This directing of attention and ordering of information causes one element of the organism-environment gestalt to stand out from all of the other elements. Perls explains this phenomenon stating: "We do not look at the world as though our eyes were the lenses of a photographic camera. We select objects according to our interests, and these objects appear as prominent figures against a dim background."[8] In other words, individuals structure their perceptions into a figure on a field; the figure demanding attention and action which will change the state of need into a state of no-need.

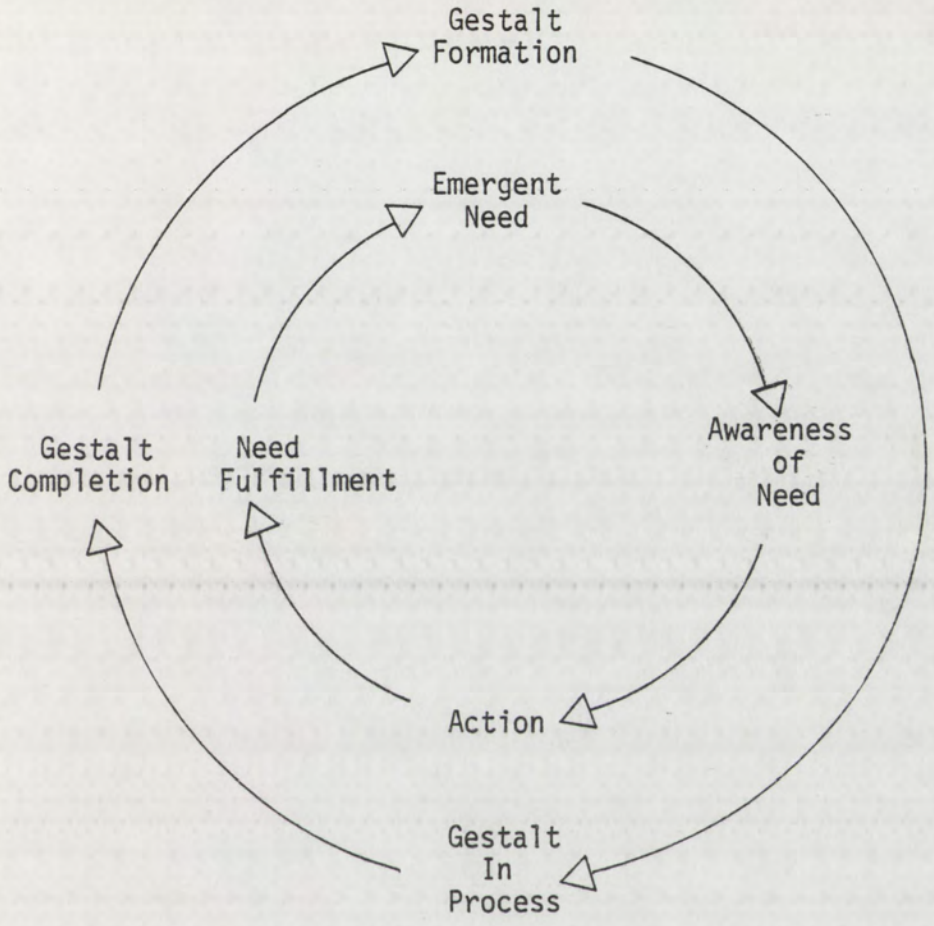
Gestaltists state that this figure-field phenomenon of structuring information occurs both perceptually and conceptually; that the need structures the individual's attention so that the need-fulfilling element stands out against all others whether it is perceived or conceived. Thus, if an individual has a need and scans the environment visually, that element which will fulfill the need will stand out visually from all others. However, if this need-fulfilling element is not present, then the individual

will scan his/her memory until the concept of a need-fulfilling element emerges, standing out from all other concepts. An example of the figure-field phenomenon will illustrate how it works.

A woman is reading. The book is figural and the rest of the environment including her body is background. As she reads, she perspires which decreases the moisture in her body. After a while, she perceives dryness in her throat which she conceives of as thirst. This perception and conception of thirst now emerges as figure and the book recedes into the background. She realizes a drink of water would quench her thirst, and so, she drinks some water and satisfies her need. Her need to read then re-emerges and she returns to her book.

In this example, an emergent physiological need organizes a configuration or gestalt so that thirst becomes figural, and all else becomes field. Through an awareness of this need, the woman takes an action which fulfills and completes this need configuration or gestalt of thirst, creating a state of no-need and allowing a new need, a new gestalt and a new figure to emerge. Perls states: "The most important fact about figure-background formation is that if a need is satisfied, the situation changes."[9]

This is a cyclical process in which recurring sequences of gestalt formation and completion occur as needs emerge and are satisfied. The following diagram will clarify this process:



In a person who is functioning satisfactorially within his/her environment, these recurring sequences occur naturally. As a need is satisfied, the gestalt is completed and no longer exerts an influence, allowing a new gestalt to form. In a person who is not functioning satisfactorially, this process of gestalt formation and completion is blocked or rigidified at some stage, resulting in unmet needs and incomplete gestalts which clamor for attention and interfere with the formation of new gestalts.[10] This blocking or rigidification inhibits the emergence of new figures from the field, thus decreasing the available sources for need fulfillment.

In the example of the woman reading, if she had been unable to complete the gestalt of thirst either through a lack of water or a lack of awareness, she would have tried to continue reading with thoughts of thirst and water interrupting her concentration on the reading. These interruptions would become more and more pronounced as her need became stronger, and as thirst gained more and more figural prominence.

Gestalt Therapy uses awareness to help the individual work towards the fluidity of gestalt formation and completion, need and need-fulfillment, figure and field. The gestalt awareness process is the tool which is used to stimulate changes in focus, allowing what is in the field to emerge as figure, so that the figure is a function of present needs rather than a function of unmet needs and incomplete gestalts. It is this stimulation of awareness which is the theraputic element of Gestalt Therapy. Perls puts it succinctly when he states: "Awareness per se--by and of itself--can be curative."[11]

The second fundamental basis of Gestalt Therapy is that it is a person-centered and self-centered theraputic approach. The method of implementing theraputic change is to direct the individual's awareness towards what he/she is doing and experiencing. The arrangement of the classical Gestalt session reflects this focus; the therapist sits beside the individual, watching what is happening and directing the individual's awareness to this, while the individual works with these awarenesses and any learnings or discoveries which may result from them. Learning is discovery which individuals gain by themselves for themselves, not instruction.[12] And, learning is primary; it is an integration of

personal experiencing--an integration of sensing, feeling, thinking, perception and behavior--into awareness and discovery which can lead to a more satisfying and creative existence. Individuals are at the center of this process, and its aim is to adjust individuals to themselves--to what they are and can be, rather than to a societal standard.[13] In the Gestalt approach the individual's uniqueness and his/her personal attributes are valued as the primary resources for the development of the individual's potential.

The third fundamental basis of Gestalt Therapy is that individuals are responsible for all of their actions, perceptions, behaviors and experiences; for what they do and do not do; for what they pay attention to and do not pay attention to; for what they learn and do not learn; for what they need and what they do not need; and for who they are and who they are not. This approach views individuals as creators of their own experience. And, in the process, it works towards their awareness of this responsibility. The therapist's role is to assist individuals in becoming aware that they are responsible, and to assist them in becoming aware of what this responsibility is, because as individuals become more aware, they can and may become more responsible. Once individuals realize they are responsible for what their experience is, they can exercise the power to change their experience; the responsibility for an action and the power to continue or change that action go hand in hand. Perls referred to this as response--ability, the ability to choose one's responses.[14]

The fourth fundamental basis of Gestalt Therapy is present-centeredness, the ability to be aware of and to learn from the present. Earlier I stated that Gestalt Therapy is an existential psychotherapy. This means it is grounded in the here and now, present space and time. The Gestalt view is that the only relevant reality is the individual's present reality and that it is the only reality from which the individual can learn. "Getting in touch with what is and staying with what is, brings one closer to the only reality one can experience, the reality of the moment."[15] And so, in this approach,

> "The therapist or trainer does not interpret but instead is directed toward helping an individual to be aware of his here and now in feeling and sensory terms; . . . toward what he is doing and how he is experiencing it. Central to Gestalt Therapy is the goal of helping the individual move from moment to moment, experiencing the freshness of each."[16]

Once the individual is aware of the moment, of what is happening, and of present needs, he/she can then respond to what emerges in the present,[17] and make a satisfying and creative connection within his/her environment to fulfill those present needs. If individuals are aware of themselves, they can be creative and resolve their present needs.[18]

The fifth fundamental basis of Gestalt Therapy is the importance of the individual's ability to respond appropriately to the present reality of his/her organism-environment gestalt. An appropriate response in this approach is any action, perception, behavior or experience which the individual uses in recognizing and fulfilling needs. Gestaltists view reality as an ever-changing phenomenon and emphasize the development of the individual's ability to respond to change in a satisfying and creative

way. In developing this ability, the individual frees up the gestalt formation and completion process, breaking through rigid responses and becoming more able to respond appropriately to this reality which is constantly changing and never the same again.[19] This ability grows from present-centeredness and requires flexibility as traditional, safe and accustomed responses may prove inappropriate to a particular context.

The sixth fundamental basis of Gestalt Therapy is that individuals' define themselves in terms of their organism-environment gestalt, and that every response is a response to their organism-environment gestalt.[20] In this view all meaning and relevancy stem from the relationship of the individual and the environment. Consequently, meaning and relevancy change if either the individual or the environment changes. This occurs even if one remains constant. Thus, the individual is a function of the environment, and vice versa, as the figure is a function of the field. In therapy this means the environment is as important as the individual in affecting change, and that either can be changed to satisfy needs.

The seventh and final fundamental basis of Gestalt Therapy is differential thinking. Differential thinking means to think or perceive in such a way as to select what something is, out from what it is not; thinking and perceiving in opposites.[21] Gestaltists state the concept of hot achieves meaning and relevancy only in relationship to cold, and that light stands out only in relationship to dark. They find an opposite for every situation or feeling and work to achieve a balance at a point where the two become integrated;[22] a point from which the underlying common nature of the two can be understood. Once this underlying common nature

is understood, an individual can begin to understand all that is between and connects the opposites. Gestaltists assume that the opposite of a usual attitude, perception, feeling or behavior is a lesser developed part of that usual attitude, perception, feeling or behavior,[23] and that it can be developed to expand possibilities and choices for satisfying and creative responses through differential thinking. Simply stated, "One can attain clearer understanding if he can see both sides of a situation rather than only one."[24] Gestalt Therapy implements differential thinking by stimulating changes of awareness through reversals of figure and field, thus increasing the variety of the individual's experience and opening up new avenues of expression.

At this point, an example of Gestalt practice will show how these seven fundamental bases work together to help an individual develop a satisfying and creative organism-environment gestalt.

D. An Example Of Gestalt Theory In Practice

A man is in therapy, and as he and the therapist speak, the therapist notices the man is grinding his teeth. The therapist asks: "Are you aware of what you are doing with your teeth?" This question directs the man's awareness to the action of his teeth, causing this action to emerge and become the figure of his attention. He responds: "They are grinding." The therapist repeats this statement as a question, putting emphasis on "They" to make the man aware he has not taken responsibility for his action: "<u>They</u> are grinding?" Becoming aware of his responsibility he

answers: "I am grinding my teeth." The therapist then asks him to exaggerate this action by grinding his teeth as hard as he can, and asks: "What are you aware of?" He answers: "I am aware my jaws are tight and hurt, and I am aware my chest is tight and my breathing heavy and fast." The therapist asks him to exaggerate all of these feelings and, as the man does so, asks: "What are you experiencing?" With this answer, he integrates his sensings and feelings with thoughts into an awareness: "Anger! I feel angry! I'm mad!" This process continues until an awareness of anger towards someone or something emerges. Working towards a resolution of this anger, the therapist asks questions like: "How does this person or thing anger you?" and "How does this person or thing make you feel good?" This continues until the man reaches a state of balance, completion or discovery. At this point, the session ends.

Each of the seven fundamental bases of Gestalt Therapy is evident in this example. The figure-field phenomenon and contextual basis are used to stimulate awareness and create new figural formations by directing the man's attention to his organism-environment gestalt. Person-centeredness and present-centeredness provide the content for the theraputic session as the man's attention and activity is focused on the experience of himself in present space and time. This experience is made more relevant and meaningful as the man accepts the responsibility for this experience and gains the potential to affect that experience. The concept of appropriate responses is exercised as the therapist nurtures and encourages responses from him which seem to lead towards awareness and resolution. And, differential thinking is used at the end as the therapist

asks questions which cause him to experience one attitude and then another.

In concluding this analysis of Gestalt Therapy it is important to add one last point. This is; Gestalt Therapy is a learning approach. It is a learning approach based on training people to be aware; aware of themselves in their environment. It begins with primary experiencing and moves outward through expanded levels of awareness until individuals discover something which changes the configuration of their organism-environment gestalt to one of resolution. Perls referred to this discovery as the "aha" experience, and as learning.[25] The implications of Gestalt theory and practice as a learning theory and practice are addressed in the following chapter.

II. FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

[1]Thomas Yeomans, "Search For A Working Model: Gestalt, Psychosynthesis, and Confluent Education," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 138.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., p. 151.

[4]Howard C. Warren, Dictionary of Psychology (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), p. 77.

[5]Fritz S. Perls, The Gestalt Approach and Eyewitness to Therapy (Ben Lomand, California: Science and Behavior Books, 1973), p. 25.

[6]Ibid., pp. 15-16.

[7]David McCarthy, "Gestalt As Learning Theory," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 47.

[8]Fritz Perls, Ego, Hunger and Aggression (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 41.

[9]Fritz Perls, "Theory and Technique of Personality Integration," American Journal of Psychotherapy Volume 2 (1948), p. 571.

[10]G. M. Yontef, "A Review of the Practice of Gestalt Therapy," (Unpublished paper, Trident Shop, California State College at Los Angeles, 1969), p. 3.

[11]Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy Verbatim (Lafayette, California: Real People Press, 1969), p. 17.

[12]Thomas Yeomans, "Gestalt Theory and Practice and the Teaching of Literature," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 84.

[13]John O. Stevens, Awareness: Exploring, Experimenting, Experiencing (Moab, Utah: Real People Press, 1971), p. 3.

[14]Fritz Perls, The Gestalt Approach and Eye Witness to Therapy, p. 78.

[15]George Isaac Brown, "Awareness Training and Creativity Based on Gestalt Therapy," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 31.

[16]Ibid., p. 24.

[17]Steven R. Bogad, "Process in the Classroom," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 161.

[18]Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy Verbatim, p. 3.

[19]Thomas Yeomans, "Gestalt Theory and Practice and the Teaching of Literature," p. 85.

[20]Ibid., p. 86.

[21]Fritz S. Perls, Ego, Hunger and Aggression, p. 26.

[22]Ibid., P. 19.

[23]Claudio Naranjo, The Techniques of Gestalt Therapy (Berkeley, California: The S.A.T. Press, 1973), p. 38.

[24]Robin D. Montz, "Five Ultimate Goals to Education: A New Approach Based on the Implications of Gestalt Therapy," (Unpublished paper, University of California at Santa Barbara, 1969), p. 1.

[25]Fritz Perls, The Gestalt Approach and Eye Witness to Therapy, p. 67-68.

III. AN EDUCATIONAL APPROACH BASED ON GESTALT THERAPY

A. Introduction

This educational approach is developed from the theories and practices of Gestalt Therapy and Confluent Education, an educational application of Gestalt Therapy. It is an unconventional, humanistic, holistic and learner-centered educational approach based on personal experience of present space and time. It stresses wholeness, openness, uniqueness, responsibility, flexibility, creativity and the awareness of oneself in one's environment.

The basic aim of this educational approach is to help individuals develop their abilities to live satisfying and creative lives. This is accomplished by structuring learning events in such a way that feelings and emotions integrate with thought through awareness into whole learning experiences. The focus for learning is whatever surfaces in the individual; individuals learn from what they are experiencing and from how they experience it. As in the examples I gave earlier of the woman reading and the man in therapy, the awareness of personal experiencing is the basic unit for learning as the individual integrates this experiencing with thoughts and concepts through awareness.

I believe all learning behavior must be understood as a function of individuals' relationship with their environment--their organism-environment gestalt. This includes all of the individual's experiences, needs, feelings, perceptions, emotions and thoughts, plus all of the

intrinsic aspects of their environment. I define learning as the discovery of something which already exists in the organism-environment gestalt, but which had not previously been known, recognized or understood. And, I see the manipulation of the individuals' awareness of their experiencing of their organism-environment gestalt as the route to this discovery and learning. In this approach, education is the drawing out into fuller understanding of that which already exists. It is a creative act of bringing understanding, meaning and knowledge into existence through a synthesis of presently available experiences.

This educational approach stresses how to learn--the process and form of learning--and the ability to learn, rather than the accumulation of information, the content of learning or what to learn. I believe individuals who know how to learn can acquire any necessary content for learning readily and easily since they have a tool which they can use at any time. Someone who has stressed the acquisition of information may never have developed the ability to learn readily and easily.

Further, this approach stresses that individuals who actively experience their environment--perceptually, emotionally and intellectually--can learn more and can learn faster, and that this learning will be more profound and relevant. In this approach, learning results from actual experiences of actual events with relevance emerging as a function of the individual's involvement. This is an experiential approach which is designed to lead to rewarding learning experiences which will sustain and multiply themselves, making the awareness of experiencing a valuable part of the individual's learning process. Once individuals explore their awareness and

become aware of other realities and possibilities, they can begin to include these in their repertoire for learning.

B. The Gestalt Awareness Process As A Learning Theory

This educational approach induces the creation of awarenesses to create other awarenesses until discovery and learning occur. I also define learning as the association of one awareness with another to create a new awareness which explores the potential of present space and time. It begins with the awareness of personal experiencing, and moves outward into more conceptual and complex awarenesses. It is a two-part process as an internal awareness becomes an external knowing;[1] and, as a perception becomes a conception. It occurs as an individual gives experience a new form composed of symbols and concepts in awareness or conscious realization. This new form of experiencing becomes part of the individual's organism-environment gestalt as a discovery, meaning, understanding, knowledge and learning. An example will illustrate this process.

A boy sees an object (experiencing) and, through prior experience, realizes it is safe (symbolization, conceptualization and awareness). He touches it (experiencing) and recognizes it to be hard, cold and smooth rock (symbolization, conceptualization and awareness). He picks it up, throws it and watches it skip across a pond (experiencing). He repeats this action several times, discovering flat rocks skip farther than round rocks (symbolization, conceptualization and awareness). He then picks up a flat rock, skips it across the pond and verifies this discovery (learning).

Awareness plays an essential part in this learning process. Although experiencing can occur without awareness, learning cannot.[2]

"Just as the body cannot assimilate food without chewing it, so the mind cannot assimilate experience without integrating it into awareness."[3] Awareness provides the possibility for learning by providing the content for learning. It is an active and dynamic tool with which individuals scan their experiencing for valuable relationships and interconnections which can be joined synergistically as learning. In terms of the figure-field phenomenon, learning is the emergence of new meaning, understanding and knowledge into figural prominence. Learning events which are structured to stimulate a student's awareness can provide this student with greater access to his/her organism-environment gestalt, thus providing him/her with a more fertile ground for figural formation, and for learning.

C. Learning Environment And Curriculum Design Determinants

In the analysis of Gestalt Therapy, I discussed seven fundamental bases. I have incorporated these bases into this educational approach. They are important design determinants for the learning environment and curriculum of this educational approach. These design determinants are:

1) The Figure-field Phenomenon;
2) Learner-centeredness;
3) Individual Responsibility For Learning;
4) Present-centeredness;
5) Appropriate Response To Present Reality;
6) The Organism-environment Gestalt;
7) Differential Thinking.

As I mentioned at the end of the preceding section, learning is the emergence of new meaning, understanding and knowledge from the field into figural prominence. I also mentioned that figural emergence for learning can be induced by the stimulation of awareness. For these reasons, the ability to shift between figure and field is important in this educational approach. A basic aim of the learning environments and curriculums of this approach is to facilitate this process. This is done by providing learning events and learning structures which teach individuals that they can shift their focus and change their awareness. These learning structures help individuals develop new figures from the field of their organism-environment gestalt, thus increasing content for learning by bringing previously unknown, unrecognized or not understood phenomena into their awareness. An example of this in an architectural curriculum is to ask students who have been sketching the facade of a building--the positive spaces--to sketch the spaces surrounding the building--the negative spaces--which give the building boundedness and clarity; or, to ask the students to imagine and to sketch the structural lines of the building. These instructions cause the students to shift their focus and change their awareness to include something which they may not have seen. These learning structures can not only increase the content of the organism-environment gestalt which is made available for learning, but they can also increase the student's ability to be aware; thus increasing his/her ability to learn.

The second design determinant for these learning environments and curriculums is also mentioned earlier. It is; all learning begins with

personal experiencing; individuals focus on themselves as the legitimate object of learning[4], to initiate the learning process. The individual then can link this personal experience and knowledge with interpersonal and public knowledge for learning;[5] the creation of concepts and abstractions occurs only after the personal experiencing.[6] This means the learning environment and curriculum must be responsive to learner-centeredness, and to the inclusion of an individual's uniqueness, feelings, needs, perceptions, behaviors and experiences. This approach attempts to accentuate personal experiencing for learning. An example of using learner-centeredness in an architectural curriculum is to ask students to visit a space in which they feel uncomfortable and a space in which they feel comfortable, and to record their feelings and experiences of each. These experiences can then be integrated into learning by asking them to design two spaces; one in which they feel uncomfortable, and one in which they feel comfortable. In this way, the student's personal experiencing of comfort is used to stimulate learning about human comfort in architecture.

The third design determinant for these learning environments and curriculums is; students are responsible for their own learning. Since learning begins with personal experiencing, this approach views students as the creators of their own learning, and works toward their awareness of this responsibility. The teacher's role is to assist students in becoming aware that they can instigate, affect and control their own learning. Hopefully, once students become aware they have power over their own learning, they will begin to use that power to learn on their

own. Self-learning requires a learning environment and curriculum in which students can assume responsibility for their own learning; a consensual and flexible structure between student and teacher which responds to personal experiencing. An example of a learning environment which fosters self-learning is one in which students are allowed to leave a group activity when it is irrelevant to them to pursue something which is relevant to them; or, one in which students evaluate their own learning progress. Students ". . . who are involved in and excited about their learning are going to learn more and better, and what they learn is going to stick and be useful and relevant to them."[7]

Present-centeredness is the fourth design determinant which is accomodated in these learning environments and curriculums. Since learning begins with personal experiencing in this educational approach, it occurs only here and now in present space and time. This means we must relate learning to the moment and tap the resource of present relevance. The learning environment and curriculum must be responsive and flexible enough to include whatever is going on at the moment, and to whatever a student's relevant experiencing is. Or, it must be responsive and flexible enough to create a relevant experience for the student. An example of a learning structure which does this is to ask a student who is not responding to a class activity to express his/her feelings in a drawing or a design; or, to ask the student to create his/her own learning activity. Another example of using present-centeredness for learning is to ask students to express their feelings about the classroom they are

in, and to redesign it to make it a better learning environment. In each case, the student takes relevant and present experiencing and gives it a form in expression. Hopefully the student will learn from this expression.

The fifth design determinant in this educational approach is to encourage students to respond appropriately to the realities of their organism-environment gestalt. Reality is in a continual flux and, as a consequence, students must learn to experience themselves from moment to moment.[8] Since the purpose of education is to develop student's abilities to live satisfying and creative lives, then they must also learn to respond satisfyingly and creatively to this flux from moment to moment. Students can expand the available content for learning by responding in new ways to new stimuli. This is closely linked with learner-centeredness and present-centeredness, and it requires students to abandon traditional, safe and rigid responses for new and, hopefully, creative and educational responses. This approach requires a learning environment which values unique and spontaneous responses--responses which are in continual flux. And, it requires a learning environment within which students can respond to create relevant learning experiences. An example of such a learning environment is one in which a student's response which diverges from the class trend is supported and explored so the others are exposed to a different response. An educated individual in this learning environment is one who responds freshly and creatively, and one who learns from his/her own responses.

The sixth design determinant for these learning environments and curriculums is; learning is a function of student's interrelated conditions with their environment; and, learning is the discovery of that which already exists in the student's organism-environment gestalt, but which has not previously been known, recognized or understood. All learning is a response to these interrelated conditions, and it occurs only when extrinsic concepts and abstractions are relevant to the student's intrinsic experience. This requires content which is relevant to, or which can become relevant to, the student. The criterion for selecting content for a curriculum then becomes the degree to which the content can be made relevant to the student.[9] One fact or event may be relevant to one student, and irrelevant to another. To accomodate this potential, these learning environments must support individual choice, and these curriculums must develop relevancy for learning. For example, a curriculum can be designed to create learning needs, which hopefully, will move towards resolution; or, a parallel can be drawn between the student's experiencing and the content; or, a learning structure can be designed to induce students to handle and use the content, thus making it part of their experience. An example of such a structure in an architectural curriculum is to ask students how their designs are representative of who they are, or how their designs are like themselves.

The seventh and final design determinant for these learning environments and curriculums is differential thinking. As I mentioned earlier in the analysis of Gestalt Therapy, there is an opposite for

everything. Once students can achieve a balance where two extremes become integrated, they gain a viewpoint from which an underlying common nature can be understood. This is a learning event in itself, but it also creates more potential for learning as all that is between and connects the extremes--the underlying common nature--becomes available. Students can learn more and gain deeper understanding if they see more than one aspect of a phenomenon. These curriculums implement differential thinking by stimulating changes of awareness through reversals of figure and field, thus increasing the variety of the student's experiencing and opening up new avenues for learning. An example of an exercise which uses differential thinking in an architectural curriculum is to ask students to design a space for somberness and a space for joy, and to record the elements of the designs which create these effects.

D. Gestalt Educational Techniques

All of the educational techniques used in this educational approach are adaptations of Gestalt Therapy techniques. Every one of these techniques may be understood as a structure for a learning event in which personal experiencing is brought into awareness for discovery. These techniques serve both as preparatory or training exercises in awareness, and as valid learning events.[10] These techniques are seperated into two categories, "rules" and "games".[11] Before discussing these techniques, it is important to discuss the primary modes of structuring experiencing so it is integrated in awareness.

There are two modes of structuring experiencing so that individuals become aware of their experiencing; these are the suppressive mode and the expressive mode.[12] The suppressive mode includes techniques which inhibit anything which diminishes the awareness of experiencing. The expressive mode includes techniques which intensify the awareness of experiencing through a change in its form of expression. Each of the "rules" and "games" of this educational approach exhibits the characteristics of at least one of these modes. Many exhibit both. An example will show how these modes work.

A woman is reading. The radio is on and the lighting in the room is diffused. She finds reading difficult due to the noise and poor lighting. She turns the radio off and focuses a light on her book. She then finds her reading easier to attend to and more rewarding.

In this example, turning off the radio is a suppressive mode of restructuring the reading event so the experience of reading is made more prominent. The focusing of the light is an expressive mode of intensifying the reading event so the experience of reading is made more prominent. These two actions can be understood in terms of figure and field. If we treat the book as the figure, and all else as the field or background, then each of these actions serves to increase the prominence of the figure over the field. This allows the figure, in this case the book, to emerge more clearly and with less competition for attention and awareness. This allows the woman to direct her full attention and awareness towards her experiencing of the book. These modes work in other ways.

The suppression of phenomena which diminish the awareness of experiencing does more than just remove the diminishing element. It creates a confrontation in which the diminishing element is brought into awareness.[13] This can be a learning event in itself. This suppressive action can also create a void, an empty background or field, upon which a new figure can emerge as the diminishing element is no longer there; the choice is one of emptiness or new figural formation.[14] This new figural formation may lead to a new discovery and learning. The suppressive mode encourages learning by removing distracting actions and elements.

The expressive mode encourages learning by intensifying the awareness of experiencing through expression. It stems from the existential statement, "we are what we do". We are aware of ourselves largely through our expressions.[15] Expression gives form to and brings to realization some aspect of an individual's organism-environment gestalt. This aspect becomes explicit and can take on figural prominence. Since I define learning as the realization of something which exists, this new figural prominence may lead to discovery and learning.

Expression may not always result in learning, but learning will not occur without expression, even if the expression and learning is only the giving of words to the sensation of heat: "I am hot." This expression gives form to the experiencing of heat as an awareness. If the individual were not aware of the heat, it would not be part of his/her presently perceived reality. This may seem elementary, but we as humans are often not aware of what is present. We can become more aware of what is present through learning structures which cause us to take

what is around us and express it in a new form. The "rules" and "games" of this educational approach are these learning structures.

The "rules" and "games of this educational approach manipulate the relationship of the figure and field to stimulate awareness for learning. Each "rule" and "game" attempts to restructure or create a gestalt in which presonal experiencing is made more prominent. Each also attempts to develop student's abilities to be aware as well as to develop significant events of awareness.

The "rules" of this educational approach are guidelines for learning. Each combines the suppressive and expressive mode to direct students towards active involvement in their personal experiencing. And, each is designed to lead to the integration of feelings and thoughts into awareness for learning. There are three of these rules. They are introduced to the students at the beginning of a semester. The students are asked to abide by the rules for the duration of the semester.

The first rule is, "Stay in the now." This rule is designed to orient students to their present experiencing. Students are asked to express themselves in the present tense, and when they deviate, they are asked what their present experiencing is, what they feel or what is their now.[16] Even fantasies, memories and anticipations are asked to be put in the present tense; this energizes them with the impact of immediacy.[17]

The second rule is, "Refer to personal experiencing in the first person, I." People often refer to <u>what</u> they experience, the phenomenon of experience, rather than to their experiencing. Consequently, they are not as responsible for or involved with this experiencing. Often

the semantic mode of this disassociation takes the form of object oriented statements like, "It is cold," rather than subject oriented statements like, "I am cold." In the second statement, the individual expresses more responsibility and involvement with the experiencing than in the first. Students are asked to speak in the first person, and as they do this, it is hoped that they will realize themselves as active agents in their experiencing and learning. This rule induces students to change their focus of attention from outside of themselves to inside themselves, thus involving themselves in their experiencing.

The third rule is, "Stay with your experiencing and do not explain, evaluate or interpret it." The purpose of this rule is to allow experiencing to remain in a raw and natural state so it may develop to its full potential. Thinking about and intellecturalizing experiencing diminishes its impact by draining energy, involvement and attention from it. Questions which ask "why" of experiencing are discouraged as they direct attention from the experiencing to the cause of the experiencing. Evaluation also diminishes the awareness of experiencing as attention is focused on determining the value of the experiencing. Interpreting diminishes experiencing by restricting it to a previously held concept or meaning, rather than allowing it to flourish and possibly become a new concept or take on new meaning. This rule requires all questions to probe the "how" and "what" of the student's experiencing. These questions redirect energy, involvement and attention back to personal experiencing where learning can begin.

The "games" of this educational approach are structures of activity to bring personal experiencing into awareness for learning. The "games" are played by the "rules". They are open-ended structures which allow students to begin with personal experiencing and to end with personal learning. They can be designed around almost any human experience; their possibilities are unlimited. The following discussion describes the major types of games used in the architectural seminar presented in the next chapter.

The first category of games is the awareness continuum. It is an expressive structuring of personal experiencing. Students fill in the open-ended statement, "Now I am aware. . .," with some aspect of their present awareness. Perls and Levitsky state:

> The awareness continuum has inexhaustible applications. Primarily, however, it is an effective way of guiding the individual to the firm bedrock of his experiences and away from the endless, thin verbalizations, explanations, speculations, interpretations. Awareness of body feelings, of sensations and perceptions, constitutes our most certain--perhaps our only certain--knowledge.[18]

The awareness continuum is a semantic structuring of experiencing in which "now" directs attention to the present, "I" establishes responsibility and involvement, "am" creates an association with the experiencing, and "aware" focuses attention on the reception of the experiencing.[19] This basic exercise can be expanded into any terms which direct attention towards personal experiencing, such as "Now I feel. . ." or "Now I see. . .," or by rephrasing these statements as questions, such as "What are you doing?" and "What do you feel?".[20] Responses to the awareness continuum usually begin with simple sensory awarenesses, and

evolve into integrations of feelings and thoughts as awareness and learning. It is a useful game to implement often, as it awakens students' awarenesses of their experiencing and provides content for learning.

The second category of games are the intensification games. These include concentration, repetition and exaggeration. These games can lead to learning by accentuating moments of personal experiencing, thus moving the student through awareness to expression and closure.[21] Closure in this case, is learning.

The technique of concentration can intensify a student's experiencing by gathering all his/her energy and attention, and focusing it on one aspect of his/her organism-environment gestalt. If the student reaches a new depth of awareness of this experiencing, it can result in the uncovering of something previously unknown or unrecognized, and it can result in learning. Concentration causes the figure to gain more clarity in relation to the field.

Repetition, the simple act of repeating an action, feeling, throught or expression, can intensify experience by uncovering nuances of meaning. It can bring students into closer contact with the object they are experiencing, and it can lead to a variety of different responses which, if they are new, will be learning events. Repetition can lead to learning by helping students discover that something new is possible.

Exaggeration can intensify experiencing by developing students' feelings, thoughts and expressions to their full potential where they can discover something new.[22] This discovery is learning. As in the example of the man in therapy who was asked to exaggerate his feelings,

discovery can lead to learning by bringing partial experiencing to full experiencing.

The third category of games are the games of transformation. In these games students take one form of experiencing and express it in another. One form of transformation is "explicitation", a term used by Gestalt Therapists meaning the verbalization and giving of words to experiencing. The other form of transformation is enactment, the giving of actions to feelings, thoughts and experiencing.[23]

In explicitation games students transform feelings, sensations, gestures or mental images into words, making explicit something which was implicit.[24] An example of explicitation in an architectural curriculum is to ask students to give words to their hands as they draw, or to ask them what their hands are expressing as they move. This can lead to learning in two ways: first, students may realize what they are experiencing; and second, they may find a new way of expressing it. This process of learning parallels the creative process of a poet who translates a feeling or visual image into words.[25]

In enactment games students transform feelings, thoughts or experiencing into an action. This action enlivens the original experiencing and gives it a new form in dramatization. Enactment can also be used by students to experience something outside of their normal experiential framework. This can broaden their experiential ground and give them more content for figural emergence and new behavior. Two examples of enactment in an architectural curriculum are to have students act out what a design of theirs expresses, and to roleplay a client who wants a

particular type of design. In the first example, students can bring one form of expression into fuller realization by expressing it in another form. In the second example, students can experience a role outside their normal experience. Both offer opportunities for learning.

Explicitation and enactment can be used in combination to shuttle back and forth between verbalization and action. Students may thus experience different levels or parts of one experience. For example, in a drawing exercise students can be asked to shuttle between their experiencing of drawing and the images drawn; transforming the experience of drawing into dance, and giving words to the images they draw. Shuttling has unlimited applications.

Polarity games are the fourth category of games. These games are structured to make students experience awarenesses and behaviors outside their accustomed role or response pattern. They work by having the students do the opposite of something they do, or might ordinarily do. For instance, stduents can be asked to design in a style opposite to their own. Or, they can be asked to visit a space and record things they would normally not be aware of. These games can help the students connect the accustomed with the unaccustomed, and consequently, open up new possibilities for action and learning.

Games of imagery make up the last category. These games help students become aware of and explore their more imaginative and less reality restricted fantasy lives. They are designed to develop student's creative imaginations. They are both illusory, as they are free of the limitations of physical reality, and real, as they are images of a student's inner

life.[26] They evolve from the Gestalt theory that there is a continuum between fantasy and reality; fantasy exhibiting much mental imagery and little physical activity; and reality exhibiting much physical activity and little mental imagery.[27] This connection allows students to experience something in imagery which they have not experienced in reality, or which cannot be experienced in reality. Imagery never attains the intensity of reality, however it can give insight to reality, and it can go beyond the restrictions of reality.

Imagery is flexible. Students can imagine they are an object or another person and take on those unique characteristics; they can invent environments, events, people, objects and even a solution to an unsolved problem. Often though, the most significant imagery develops from the present. For example, students can be asked to design a space in their imagination which would best support their present mood.

We as humans often anthropomorphize inanimate objects, and give them life with emotional messages.[28] This is an unconscious process of expressing imagery which, if it is brought into awareness, can work in two ways for learning. First, images we have endowed on a person, place or thing can be brought into awareness to help us learn what impressions this person, place or thing conveys to us. And second, we can create images for a person, place or thing to help us become aware of our feelings about the person, place or thing. As an example, students can be given a photograph of a building with strong visual impact and asked to write down what animals, colors, type of weather, time of year, and so on, the building reminds them of. Or, they can be asked to create a story about

this building. Their stories are likely to convey their feelings about the building.

Summarily, games are not put-ons but creations of new realities which have a force of their own and which foster personal involvement. Creativity is encouraged when one is no longer governed by reality and can invent and meet new conditions.[29]

> Surprises occur because they are inherent to the game instead of being determined by another person's characteristics, the nature of society, or practical implications. These creations, as Freud observed about the creation of the dream, are like microcosms which bear on real life but are not limited by its complexities.[30]

Robert Sommer states: "Games and other simulation procedures can be used to teach environmental awareness."[31] He states these techniques work because they motivate students by creating enthusiasm and involvement in learning, because they create an integrated understanding of people and the environment, because they create empathy for real life situations, and because they replace observation with experiencing and participation.[32] He cites several successful examples: teaching children about personal space and seating arrangements in a class; teaching children about architectural styles through dance; sensitizing teachers to the classroom environment; the Halprin workshops which teach awareness of space through dance; and workshops to sensitize Peace Corps volunteers to the use of space in other cultures.[33]

These types of techniques, and others, are also applicable to teaching architectural students. The following chapter is one example of a curriculum based on this educational approach. Each of the games

presented in this curriculum exhibit the characteristics of at least one of these game types, but most exhibit the characteristics of two or more game types.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

[1]David N. McCarthy, "Gestalt As Learning Theory," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 48.

[2]Ibid., p. 50.

[3]Ibid., p. 48.

[4]Stewart B. Shapiro, "Developing Models by Unpacking Confluent Education," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 113.

[5]Thomas Yeomans, "Search For a Working Model: Gestalt, Psychosynthesis and Confluent Education," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 153.

[6]Stewart B. Shapiro, p. 113.

[7]Thomas Yeomans, p. 133.

[8]George Isaac Brown, "Human Is As Confluent Does," The Live Classroom, ed. George Isaac Brown, Liles Grizzard and Thomas Yeomans (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 102.

[9]Stewart B. Shapiro, p. 113.

[10]Erving and Miriam Polster, Gestalt Therapy Integrated (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 5.

[11]Abraham Levitsky and Fritz Perls, "The Rules and Games of Gestalt Therapy," Gestalt Therapy Now, ed. Joen Fagan and Irma Lee Shepard, (Ben Lomand, California: Science and Behavior Books, 1970), p. 140.

[12]Claudio Naranjo, The Techniques of Gestalt Therapy (Berkeley: The S.A.T. Press, 1973), p. 5.

[13]Ibid., p. 31.

[14]Ibid., p. 34.

[15]Ibid., p. 31

[16]Abraham Levitsky and Fritz Perls, p. 141.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid., p. 143

[19]Fritz Perls, The Gestalt Approach And Eye Witness To Therapy (Ben Lomand, California: Science And Behavior Books, 1973), p. 64.

[20]Ibid., p. 74.

[21]Erving and Miriam Polster, p. 226.

[22]Claudio Naranjo, p. 41.

[23]Ibid., pp. 42-45.

[24]Ibid., p. 43.

[25]Ibid., p. 44.

[26]Ibid., p. 57.

[27]Frtiz Perls, pp. 13 & 85.

[28]Robert Sommer, Design Awareness (San Francisco: Rinehard Press, 1972), p. 45, and Steen Eiler Rasmussen, Experiencing Architecture (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1959), p. 37.

[29]Erving and Miriam Polster, p. 244.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Robert Sommer, p. 39.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid., pp. 36-41.

IV. AN ARCHITECTURAL SEMINAR BASED ON THE AWARENESS OF ONESELF IN ONE'S ENVIRONMENT

A. Introduction

This chapter presents a seminar in architecture. This seminar is a prototypal application of the educational approach developed in the preceding chapters. It is only one of the many possible adaptations of this educational approach for architectural education.

The title of this seminar is, "Discovering The Environment Through Self-Awareness". I developed it as an introductory experience for architectural students in this educational approach. It attempts to teach second-year architectural students how to learn about their environment through their awareness of their interaction with their environment.

This seminar is presented in two parts, a seminar description and the lesson plans. The seminar description is a course outline of theory, goals and content which is given to each participating student. The fifteen lesson plans for the seminar are designed for eight to fifteen students, and each consists of a title, a learning goal, a list of materials, a series of learning exercises and a homework assignment. These lesson plans are presented by a learning facilitator. The facilitator's major responsibility is to help students develop their abilities to learn about their environment through an awareness of their present experiencing.

B. Seminar Description

Title:

Discovering The Environment Through Self-Awareness

Theory:

Creative architectural design is a manipulation of space, material and time to create environments which fulfill human needs. A creative architecture designer is an individual who is aware of the environment, and who can express this awareness in space, material and time. Awareness uncovers realities--needs, limitations and opportunities--in the environment and opens up possibilities for creative design. Through the awareness of personal experiencing of the environment, architectural students can integrate their feelings and thoughts of the environment to create significant learning events. Awareness of personal experiencing is a valuable tool for learning how to manipulate space, material and time to fulfill human needs.

Content:

This seminar is a series of fifteen experiential workshops which relate to personal awareness and environmental design. Each workshop consists of several "games" which attempt to stimulate learning about human needs and environments by making students more aware of their experiencing of themselves in their environment. The games are governed by "rules" which are designed to promote personal experiencing and self-awareness. The role of students is to learn from and for themselves by

abiding by the "rules" and by participating in the "games". The role of the instructor is to facilitate experiencing, awareness and learning. If at any time the seminar material or approach becomes irrelevant or ineffective, it is the joint responsibility of the students and instructor to make it relevant. Grading is also a joint responsibility which is based upon the degree to which each student participates in their own learning, and upon what learning skills they develop.

Learning Goals:

1. To develop students abilities to be aware of their present experiencing--feelings and thoughts--of their environment so they can learn from and about all environments, and so they have knowledge to design creative environments.

2. To make students aware that they are responsible for their own learning, and that they have the abilities to develop their own learning.

3. To help students develop and express their unique experiencing into unique and creative awareness, learning and design.

4. To create learning events and learning environments which promote self-awareness, self-learning, individual uniqueness, creativity and learning, and which utilize and respond to unique personal experiencing.

C. Lesson Plans

1. BECOMING KNOWN

Learning Goal:

To meet one another.

Materials:

A blanket, brown wrapping paper, magazines, small paper bags, glue, scissors and pencils.

Game #1:

Nonverbally, and as a group, arrange this room and yourselves so communication and the meeting of one another is impossible. Experience this arrangement for several minutes. Now rearrange this room and yourselves so you can communicate and meet one another easily. Share your experiences and discoveries. (Game type: enactment, polarity, explicitation).

Game #2:

One at a time, introduce yourself and do something with the blanket simultaneously. After everyone has taken a turn, one at a time, repeat each person's name and tell what they did with the blanket. (Game type: enactment, concentration).

Game #3:

On the outside of a paper bag, write down four things anyone in the room could know about you, even though you have just met them. Then on

four pieces of paper, write down four things which no one in the room could know about you, but which you would like them to know about you. Put these in the bag. Pair up with someone you have just met and share these eight things with one another. (Game type: explicitation).

Game #4:

With scissors, glue and magazines, create a collage which is representative of who you are; your interests, desires, fears, moods, etc. You have thirty minutes to complete it. Pass this completed self-portrait around to everyone else. As you look at the self-portraits of others, write down on the back of them what you see or are aware of in this person. Read the responses on the back of your self-portrait. Share how you feel about these responses, and what you learned about yourself and others. (Game type: enactment, explicitation).

Game #5:

Pair up with the person you know least. Describe your home to this person; what it looks like, what it feels like, etc. Tell this person how your home supports who you are. (Game type: polarity, explicitation).

Homework:

In a sketchbook, do a conceptual drawing of the arrangement in which communication and meeting one another was impossible, and one in which they were easy. List five similar environments for each conceptual drawing. State how the five which inhibit communication and meeting could be changed so they promote communication.

2. THE AWARENESS CONTINUUM

Learning Goal:

To learn how to use the awareness continuum.

Materials:

One sensorially interesting object and one apple for each student.

Game #1:

Arrange yourselves in a circle. One at a time, fill in the statement "Now I am aware. . ." with whatever you are aware of in yourself or your environment. Do this over and over until you feel like stopping. When you do, say "Now I am aware I want to finish." After everyone has taken a turn, pair up and do it again. This time, however, expand the original statement to "Now I hear, see, feel, smell, taste, touch, etc." One at a time, do this for two minutes focusing your awareness on the environment. Then do it for two minutes with your eyes closed and focusing your awareness on yourself and your inner feelings, thoughts, etc. Rejoin the group and share your experience. (Game type: awareness continuum, repetition).

Game #2:

Sit silently in a circle with your eyes closed. Explore the object which I give to you with your other four senses, concentrating on its particular sensory characteristics. Explore it for two minutes, then pass it to the person on your left. Explore each new object. When you get the object you began with, put it behind you and begin to explore

yourself. Explore your clothes, your body and your hands. When you are ready, reach out and explore the hands of the two people next to you. With your eyes closed, rise and explore the hands of the others. Rejoin in a circle by finding the hands of the two people who were next to you originally. Sit down and feed an apple to the person on your right. Share your experiences. (Game type: awareness continuum, concentration).

Game #3:

One at a time, finish this statement: "Now I am aware I have one more thing to say. It is. . ." (Game type: awareness continuum, explicitation).

Homework:

Spend fifteen minutes in each of three very different environments recording your awarenesses of yourself in those environments.

With your eyes closed, move around in your bedroom concentrating on your sensory awareness of things you do not normally notice. Open your eyes and do the same. Record your discoveries and write an essay on your perception.

Wear clothes to the next workshop which you can get dirty.

3. SENSORY AWARENESS

Learning Goal:

To experience environments with our senses and to relate and to express this experience in design.

Materials:

One blindfold for each pair of students.

Game #1:

One at a time, complete: "I am most blind when. . ." (Game type: explicitation).

Game #2:

Choose a partner. One of you is blindfolded and one of you is a guide. The guide leads the blindfolded person to sensory rich environments and experiences. The guide also protects the blindfolded person. All communication is non-verbal and by touch. Guide the person by putting your forearm and hand out as if you were holding a short, squat glass. The other person puts his/her arm over yours so his/her fingers are held in your palm. Explore various sensory environments and kinesthetic experiences. Try running slowly or rolling down a hill. Never make the blindfolded person do anything he/she resists. Reverse roles after thirty minutes. Return to the classroom and share your experiences. (Game type: awareness continuum, intensification, concentration).

Game #3:

Complete this statement: "Now I see. . ." (Game type: explicitation).

Homework:

Using sketches, plans, sections and diagrams, design an environment which stimulates all five senses, plus the kinesthetic sense. Present this on a twenty-by-thirty-inch board in black ink and one accent color. No words are to be used.

Wear some clothes to the next workshop which project a different image than you have of yourself.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Learning Goal:

To experience and become aware of our responses to our environment, including others and our clothes, and to learn how this environment affects our behavior.

Materials:

Slides of stimulating environments and pencils.

Game #1:

The door to the classroom is closed. Spend ten minutes writing down what you will see, hear, smell, feel and taste in this room. Then enter the room and explore it non-verbally and with your eyes closed. Find a seat and, in one or two word phrases, blurt out the objects, colors, experiences, etc. of your discoveries. (Game type: imagery, intnesification, explicitation).

Game #2:

To yourself, do an awareness continuum of how and what you feel where you are sitting. If you are comfortable, remain where you are. If you are not, change your position so that you are. Select the spot in the room which would be most uncomfortable to you. Move there and do an awareness continuum to yourself. Share your experience by describing how you feel and what it is which makes you feel this way. Move to the most comfortable spot for you in the room. Discuss how you feel and what makes you feel this way. (Game type: awareness continuum, polarity, explicitation).

Game #3:

Stand face to face with someone and place your palms together. Non-verbally move your hands together; one person is a leader and the other is a follower. The leader moves his/her hands as close to the follower as the follower allows, gently resisting when he/she feels that the leader is close enough. Do this for two minutes, and reverse roles. Return to the group and sit in as tight a circle as is physically possible. Begin sharing your experiences of sitting this closely. After several minutes, enlarge the circle to the limits of this room and continue to share your experiences. Non-verbally, and as a group, make a circle which feels most comfortable. (Game type: exaggeration, polarity).

Game #4:

Rearrange this room so it is as uncomfortable as possible. Rearrange it again so it is as comfortable as possible. (Game type: exaggeration, polarity).

Game #5:

View these slides of various environments. Imagine you are there. Imagine what activities and behaviors you would feel uneasy about doing or expressing in this environment. Write these down. Now view these slides of environments again and write down what you would feel comfortable doing or expressing here. Share your responses and discuss what elements in these environments determine how you feel. (Game type: imagery).

Game #6:

Share your feelings about wearing clothes which you would not normally wear. Discuss how the environment affects your behavior. (Game type: explicitation).

Homework:

At a scale of one-inch equals one-foot, construct a model of a twelve foot cube in which you could live as comfortably as possible. Use white construction board, and include a replica of yourself. The cube is to have no more than two-hundred square feet of openings for entry, light and air. Include accomodations for all of your most important activities.

5. DESIGN WITH FEELING I

Learning Goal:

To express feelings in design.

Materials:

A record player, chalk and various sizes of paper ranging from two-inches square to a piece covering the wall.

Game #1:

One at a time, create an environment in your imagination which would exaggerate how you now feel. Describe this environment. Afterwords, each other person guess what the narrator is feeling. (Game type: exaggeration, imagery).

Game #2:

Select a piece of chalk and begin moving your hand to the music. Start drawing with this movement on a two-inch square piece of paper. When you have filled this piece up, move to a larger piece exaggerating the scale of your movements. Continue moving to larger sheets of paper and larger movements until you are working on the paper on the wall. Shuttle your awareness between your movements and your feelings. When you are ready, select a size of paper with which you are comfortable and express your feelings of this music in a sketch of an environment or space. Share these sketches and the experience of drawing them with one another. (Game type: enactment, exaggeration, explicitation).

Game #3:

Construct metaphors of this classroom by answering: What color this room reminds you of; what season of the year; what emotion; what fictional character; etc. Discuss these answers. Then answer: What color could a classroom remind you of; what season; what emotion; what fictional character; etc. Make a conceptual drawing and sketches of what a classroom could feel like. Share these feelings and drawings, and select one, or create one, which expresses a consensus of how this classroom could be. If possible, change this room to convey these feelings. (Game type: imagery, explicitation, enactment).

Homework:

Visit a space which could feel better. Create metaphors for how it feels and how it could feel. Express how it could feel in a design. Present this design on a twenty-by-thirty-inch board with black ink and colors. Include a small presentation of the original space. Use no words.

Write an essay about how you can use your awareness of your feelings for design.

6. DESIGN WITH IMAGERY I

Learning Goal:

To develop our imaginations.

Materials:

Sketch paper and pens.

Game #1:

Imagine two restaurants; one which promotes a pleasant dining experience, and one which does not. Imagine you are outside the pleasant restaurant and enter it. Visualize the inside of this restaurant and the people, colors, activities, sounds, furniture, etc. Allow your imagination to move to the place you like best in this restaurant, and imagine how you feel and what you like about this place. Repeat this imagery with the unpleasant restaurant. Afterwards, describe these spaces to others. (Game type: imagery, polarity).

Game #2:

In your mind's eye, create an exciting place to be. Create activities, colors, sounds, people, etc. Do a sketch of this image and show it to others. (Game type: imagery, enactment).

Homework:

In your imagination, visualize an activity you do frequently, and the place in which you do it. Visit this space and pay attention to how this space helps or hinders your activity. Later, imagine you are involved

in this activity in a void, filling that void with an environment which helps you do the activity. Do this four times, each time making a conceptual diagram of the environment.

Write an essay about using your imagination for design.

7. DESIGN WITH FEELING II

Learning Goal:

To transform a feeling into a concept, and then, into a design.

Materials:

Colored chalks, paper and pencils.

Game #1:

In your mind's eye, visualize the outside of your home. Imagine its colors, materials, textures, and forms. Write down a description of it. Choose one word from this description which captures the essence of your home. Then select a word which is the opposite of this first word. Draw the essence of this building; do not try to render it, rather capture its shapes, lines and colors in a quick sketch. Using the opposite word, draw another sketch which expresses an opposite essence. Close your eyes and imagine you are now in your home. Visualize its colors, materials, textures, forms and inhabitants. Again, choose a word which describes its essence, and an opposite word. Express these concepts in sketches. Close your eyes again and imagine you are looking out from inside your home. Select a word which captures the essence of what you see, and an opposite word. Sketch these concepts. Close your eyes once more and imagine you are your home. Experience how you feel as your home. Choose a word which captures your essence, and an opposite word. Sketch these concepts. Share your experiences, drawings and concepts with one another. (Game type: imagery, polarity).

Homework:

Expressing these four essence words, present your home in a drawing. Design another home with the four opposite words. Present these on one twenty-by-thirty-inch board. Do not include the words.

Write an essay about the use of imagery and feeling for design.

8. DESIGN WITH FEELING III

Learning Goal:

To become aware of feelings and to mobilize them in design.

Materials:

Colored chalk and large sheets of paper.

Game #1:

Put your homework designs on the wall. Write down one word under each of the designs of one another which captures the essence of these designs. Discuss this experience. (Game type: explicitation).

Game #2:

In your mind's eye, visualize the space you dislike most in your daily life. Then visualize the space you like most. Imagine you are at the disliked space and begin walking to the liked space. What do you visualize between these two spaces which connect them? Describe these spaces to a partner, and what you like and dislike about them. Also describe what connects them. (Game type: imagery, polarity, explicitation).

Game #3:

Imagine the space in your life which causes or caused you the most fear. Imagine how it looks, its colors, inhabitants, furnishings, activities. Experience its most sinister aspects while paying attention to how you feel and what frightens you. Describe this space and your feelings to a partner. Choose one word which captures its essence, and another which is the direct opposite of its essence. Close your eyes and imagine

a space which accomodates the same activity as the fearful space, but which conveys the feeling of the opposite essence word. Imagine this space is a place of well-being. Sketch this space in colored chalk. Show this sketch to your partner and describe the common characteristics of this imagined space and youre feared space. (Game type: imagery, explicitation, polarity).

Homework:

Write a short play in which your feared space and your imagined space meet and communicate. Give them life and exaggerate their personalities. Give them the chance to become friendly and, if they do not, have them fight to a resolution.

Visit the most pleasant and unpleasant spaces of your daily life. Make a list of neutral characteristics which both spaces exhibit; for instance, temperature, color, etc. Next to these characteristics and below each of these spaces, write down what you find pleasant or unpleasant about this characteristic; for instance, too hot, pleasant temperature, dull, bright, etc. Describe how you could change the characteristics of the unpleasant space so it could become pleasant.

9. DESIGN WITH FEELING IV

Learning Goal:

To become aware of how feelings affect expressions.

Materials:

Cardboard, glue, string and paint.

Game #1:

List the five most important events of your day and how you felt about each of these events. (Game type: explicitation).

Game #2:

Write down how you feel right now in one word. Write down the opposite of this. Design and construct a monument, a lasting memorial, to how you feel, your present mood. Use imagery or metaphors to enact the essence of your mood. When everyone is finished, write down what essence each of the other's designs conveys to you. (Game type: explicitation, enactment).

Game #3:

Read the list you wrote earlier and see if any of these events affected or contributed to the design of your monument. Share your thoughts with others. (Game type: explicitation).

Homework:

Take the word which was an opposite of your mood in the workshop and design another monument. Use any materials you have available.

10. SELF-IMAGE IN DESIGN

Learning Goal:

To become aware we express our images of ourselves.

Materials:

Slides of visually stimulating buildings, pencils, paper and a wall covered with paper.

Game #1:

On a sheet of paper, write your name as if you are trying to impress someone and this is your presentation. Repeat this ten times. Then one at a time, go to the paper on the wall and exaggerate the size of your name so that you write it as large as you can while still making it a presentation of yourself. Do this again, but this time write as if you do not care; write as freely and loosely as possible while remaining legible. Repeat this exercise again, this time beginning your name as a presentation and allowing it to evolve into a loose and free scrawl. (Game type: repetition, exaggeration, enactment).

Game #2:

View the slides of these visually stimulating buildings. As you do, write down words which describes their styles. Make up words to describe their styles if you need to. Select a partner and describe your style of design--your shapes, forms, concerns, materials, etc. After describing your style, select one word which best describes it. Also choose an opposite style. After both of you have done this, do sketches which depict

an outhouse in each of these styles. Then sketch one outhouse which would be a graceful combination of these two styles. (Game type: explicitation, polarity).

Homework:

Design a one-room school as if you were the direct opposite of who you are. Use imagery to do this. Present your design on a twenty-by-thirty-inch board in black ink and colors. Write your name on your presentation so it stands out. Also write a paragraph describing how this design is representative of who you are. Attach it to the board.

11. DESIGN WITH IMAGERY II

Learning Goal:

To exercise our imaginations for design.

Materials:

Photographs of visually exciting environments, paper and colored chalks.

Game #1:

Select a partner. Look at the photograph of this visually exciting environment. Create a story around it and tell this story to your partner. Allow your imagination to roam. Discuss who, what, where, when and how. After you have both done this alone, create a story together around a photograph of an environment. (Game type: imagery).

Game #2:

From the varied shapes, sizes and color of papers, choose a piece of paper which represents your environment. Make a mark on this paper with a piece of colored chalk. This mark is to represent where you are in your environment. Begin to extend this mark by transforming your feelings of how you move in your environment to the paper. When you are finished, show this to your partner. Non-verbally, and together, choose a piece of paper which represents you and your partner's present environment. Make marks to represent yourselves and, working together, extend yourselves in this environment. Share your experiences together. (Game type: imagery, enactment).

Game #3:

In your mind's eye, visualize yourself in fifteen years. Imagine where you are, what you are doing, how you spend your time, etc. Share this with your partner. Close your eyes and imagine where you will live in fifteen years. Draw a sketch of this home and tell your partner how this home is representative of who you are now. What characteristics do you have in common with your dream of yourself in fifteen years? (Game type: imagery).

Homework:

Imagine the home you would like to live in when you are fifteen years older. Let this be your dream home. Design this dream home and present it on one twenty-by-thirty-inch board in black ink and colors. Include your most far-flung fantasies of this dream home.

12. EXPANDING AWARENESS I

Learning Goal:

To learn how to expand our awareness.

Materials:

Several sheets of paper and pencils.

Game #1:

Pair up and go to a place which both of you would like to sketch. Sketch this place. Exchange sketches and look at your partner's sketch. See what your partner paid attention to and what he/she ignored. Look at your drawing and see what you paid attention to and what you ignored. Sketch this space again. This time include what you ignored in the first sketch. Now go to another place and sketch a building. Sketch it so that some aspect of it stands out more prominently than any other aspect. This could be its form, negative spaces, texture, scale, feeling, structure, human aspects, etc. After you have done this exchange drawings with your partner. Choose some aspect neither of you chose the first time and sketch the building again, making this aspect most prominent. Exchange drawings and discuss how your drawings are similar and how they differ. (Game type: concentration, polarity).

Homework:

Sketch a space from memory. Visit this space and pay attention to what you ignored. Sketch this space again from memory and then visit it again. Sketch this space once more while you visit it including everything you have previously ignored. Write an essay on expanding awareness.

13. EXAPNDING AWARENESS II

Learning Goal:

To learn how to expand our awareness.

Materials:

A map of the campus, an instruction sheet, a sketch book and a pencil for each student.

Game #1:

On your map you will find six locations marked out. Proceed to the five with dots in any order you choose. Return to the place with the circle in two hours. In the process of your tour, sketch a scene; speak with someone unknown; do something a child would do; close your eyes for ten minutes and listen; list ten new discoveries; list ten different activities of ten different people; collect something which feels nice to you; collect something you would like to keep for a long time; and collect something which is meaningless to you. When you return, redraw this map with your discoveries and experiences as the important places on it. (Game type: awareness continuum, enactment).

Homework:

Explore different areas of the campus, experiencing it as fully as you can. Create a pedestrian route which is sensory rich. Draw a map of it and write a guide to this route which points out the highlights of your exploring. Ask a friend to take this tour. Ask this person to share his/her experiences with you.

14. DESIGN WITH FEELING V

Learning Goal:

To express feelings in design.

Materials:

Various colored sheets of paper and glue.

Game #1:

Select a piece of paper as a background and construct a design which conveys somberness by gluing other shapes, sizes and colors of paper onto it. When you finish, construct a design which conveys joy. Show these to one another. Then construct one design which conveys both somberness and joy, and the transition between them. (Game type: polarity).

Game #2:

Make a list of ten combinations of two activities which do not work together or which conflict. Do a conceptual diagram of each. Then do a conceptual diagram of how these two activities could exist together satisfactorily. (Game type: polarity).

Homework:

Using an 8,000 cubic foot space, design an environment in which a funeral and a Halloween party can take place simultaneously. Each group has fifteen people. You are allowed to add four one-hundred square foot sections of wall or floor space, but no more than half of the opening between these two spaces may be walled off. Make a model at one-half-inch equals one-foot. Include all of the people, chairs, tables and a casket.

15. DESIGN FOR ANOTHER

Learning Goal:

To become aware of another's needs and desires, and to express this awareness in design.

Materials:

Large sheets of paper, colored chalk and pencils.

Game #1:

Select a partner. Describe your favorite place to this person in every detail. Your partner will repeat as much of this description as he/she can. After he/she finishes, tell him/her what he/she left out and have him/her describe it again. Do this until the description is perfect in every detail. Reverse roles. (Game type: explicitation, concentration, repetition).

Game #2:

One of you is a designer, and the other is a client. The client describes an emotion he/she would like expressed in a drawing. The designer executes in shape, line and color what he/she thinks the client wants. The client responds to the drawing, giving the designer feedback. The designer then redraws it. This continues until the client is satisfied. Then you reverse roles. (Game type: explicitation, enactment).

Game #3:

Discuss your lives with one another: your likes and dislikes; your activities; your study habits; etc. Using sections and plans, sketch out

an environment in which you think your partner could live comfortably. Use a twelve-foot cube as the space of this environment. Add no more than two-hundred square feet of openings for an entry, air and light. Show these sketches to your partner. Respond to the environment your partner has sketched with feedback on how it could be improved. (Game type: explicitation, enactment).

Homework:

Using a model at a scale of one-inch equals one-foot, create a comfortable space for your partner. Include all activities your partner enjoys and needs. In your model, show yourself visiting your partner in this space.

Write an essay about satisfying your client.

D. The Experimental Seminar

In the summer of 1975, I experimented with this seminar in the Department of Architecture at the University of New Mexico. This seminar consisted of fifteen workshops which generally lasted about three hours. Ten students participated; seven of these students were majoring in architecture. I believe this experiment showed the value of this educational approach in teaching people about their environments. My belief is based upon student feedback and personal observation.

As a way of evaluating this experimental seminar, I had students fill out a form at the end of each workshop. This form asked the students what they had learned and to what degree they had participated in the workshop. At the end of the sixth workshop, the students decided these evaluations were irrelevant to them in relationship to their actual experience of the workshop, and it was decided to discontinue these evaluations.

I used these evaluations to determine the value and effectiveness of the first five workshops. Overwhelmingly, these evaluations were positive. Most students responded that they had learned and that they had participated fully. As these five workshops dealt with meeting one another and with sensory awareness, most of the student's responses about what they had learned involved human interaction and perceptual awareness. One student stated: "I learned to express my feelings more freely and I feel better doing it in a group;" and, "Through awareness of things around me I see things as they are, whether good or bad, and through this

experience, hopefully I can do something about these things. . ." After an exercise in which he was blindfolded, a student responded: "I don't have to see, to see." Another response to this same exercise was: I experienced a change in my perception of the space nearby. . . The experience of walking blindfolded has made my awareness of the area stronger. I now feel more tuned into the space around me, and more aware of my gift of sight. I know I depend on sight for pleasure and reassurance in space." One other student responded: "Blindwalk--hearing, feeling, sensing things I never felt before--really ! Architectural barriers! Empathy!" Feedback, such as these responses, supports my belief that this educational approach is worthwhile and effective.

As another means of evaluating this experiment, I gave the students a list of the workshops and "games" and asked them to record those "games" in which they had learned, and those in which they had not learned. I used these responses to determine the most fruitful "games". Generally, the most fruitful "games" for learning were "games" in which there were active events of personal experiencing which were brought into awareness through a change in expressive form or through explicitation. Consequently, in revising these "games" so that they were more effective in stimulating learning, I attempted to create "games" which moved through several levels of experiencing, expression and awareness.

This listing of "games" also pointed out a tendency on the part of students towards "games" which involved human contact. This tendency, although wonderful and necessary in itself, sometimes drained energy and awareness from the educational aims of this seminar. This tendency had

two causes: first, the lesson plans of the experimental seminar were more oriented toward human contact than toward environmental contact; and second, the lesson plans were often too open-ended. I changed the lesson plans of the seminar presented in this thesis so that they are more oriented toward environmental contact, and so that they are still open-ended, but also more structured. Several of these lesson plans are the same as they were in the experimental seminar; several are evolvements of lesson plans in the experimental seminar; and several are new lesson plans based on my experiences in the experimental seminar. As of this writing, I have not had the opportunity to experiment with these lesson plans in a second experimental seminar.

E. Conclusion

In concluding this thesis it is important to state that this architectural educational approach is experiential; it must be experienced to establish a full and operational understanding of it. I believe instructors of architecture who have some training and experience in the Gestalt awareness process could adapt this thesis and prototypal seminar for their own use readily and easily. I believe those instructors who have not had experience in the Gestalt awareness process will have to get some experience in it before they will be able to implement the educational approach presented in this thesis. I hope the presentation of this educational approach will serve to awaken the interest of these instructors in the Gestalt awareness process and in this architectural educational approach.

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