



Ecotherapy Principles and the Use of Gestalt Techniques in the Ecotherapy Group Outing

April 11, 2026

9:00AM – 12:10PM Eastern Time

**3 CE credits for Psychologists, Social Workers,
Marriage & Family Therapists, & Professional Counselors**

Ecotherapy appears in many shapes, from quiet contemplative practices to fully immersive, movement-based experiences. One of its most powerful expressions emerges inside the frame of psychotherapy. When we integrate the living world into our clinical work, we invite clients into a wider field of possibility, where insight can arrive through sensation, contact, and encounter rather than conversation alone. In group therapy, this widening becomes even more dynamic. Clients relate not only to each other but to the environment that holds them, allowing fresh patterns of connection, curiosity, and mutual support to surface with a kind of organic novelty. Gestalt therapy offers a particularly fitting lens for understanding these processes, since its emphasis on present-centered awareness, co-created experience, and embodied exploration mirrors what naturally unfolds in nature-based sessions. I'll be using Gestalt concepts to illuminate the ways I practice and understand Ecotherapy, though it's important to note that nearly any therapeutic modality can be enriched, enlivened, or deepened by bringing the natural world into the work. Ecotherapy is less a technique and more a spacious context that invites every approach to stretch into new forms of healing.

Presented by Nathan Schlingmann, LPC



Nathan Schlingmann, LPC, is a psychotherapist in private practice, educator, group facilitator, and organizational consultant with extensive experience in relational, experiential, and nature-informed work. He is faculty at the Gestalt Therapy Institute of Philadelphia, adjunct faculty in Drexel University's M.A. in Creative Arts Therapy program, and co-founder and faculty of Philadelphia Ecotherapy, where he trains licensed practitioners in integrating ecotherapy into clinical practice for continuing education credit. His work is grounded in Gestalt Therapy and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, with a strong emphasis on group process, therapist use of self, and field sensitivity, supporting both seasoned group therapists and organizations in deepening awareness, strengthening relationships, and improving collective effectiveness.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will be able to identify and describe at least three core principles of Ecotherapy and explain how these principles intersect with Gestalt therapy concepts such as awareness, contact, and experimentation.
- Participants will be able to analyze and articulate the therapeutic benefits and clinical considerations of integrating nature-based interventions into group therapy, including how environmental elements influence group dynamics, cohesion, and interpersonal awareness.
- Participants will be able to apply at least two Ecotherapy-informed interventions appropriate for group settings and evaluate how these practices can enhance or complement their existing theoretical orientation, clinical goals, and ethical responsibilities.



REGISTRATION INFORMATION

ALL attendees MUST register on our website: <https://www.pagps.org/>. Payment will be accepted via credit card and PayPal, as well as by paper check. All checks can be made out to PAGPS and mailed to the following address: 632 N 2nd St, Unit #590, Philadelphia, PA 19123.

- \$75 member
- \$100 non-member, no CEs
- \$130 non-member, with CEs
- \$25 student rate
- PAGPS Equity Rate is available – please see our website for details.

The link for the Zoom meeting will be sent via email the day before the event.

**NO ONE WILL BE ADMITTED WITHOUT HAVING REGISTERED
PLEASE DO NOT SHARE THE PASSWORD FOR THE ZOOM LINK WITH ANYONE**

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Please contact PAGPSGROUP@gmail.com with any questions.

Sign in will begin at 8:30AM, welcome and introductions at 8:45AM. Because we are issuing CEs, you must be present for the full three hours with your video feed on, beginning promptly at 9:00AM. There will be a 10-minute break in the middle of the CE event.

ABOUT PAGPS CONTINUING EDUCATION

PAGPS offerings are designed for mental health professionals and deal with topics that are usually underrepresented in graduate training programs and/or that provide additional, advanced, and newly emerging perspectives on group therapy theory, research, and practice. This program is intended for mental health professionals at a post-graduate level. This program, when attended in its entirety, is available for 3 continuing education credits. The Philadelphia Area Group Psychotherapy Society (PAGPS) is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. PAGPS maintains responsibility for this program and its content. PAGPS is also approved by the PA State Board of Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists & Professional Counselors to offer continuing education for social workers, marriage & family therapists, and professional counselors.

Attendees can also receive 3 credits toward re-certification for the National Registry of Certified Group Psychotherapists (CGP). PAGPS is committed to accessibility and non-discrimination in its continuing education activities and will conduct its activities in conformity with the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles for Psychologists. To arrange accommodations for special needs, please contact us at pagpsgroup@gmail.com.

There is no commercial support for this program nor are there any relationships between the CE sponsor, presenting organizations, presenter, program content, research, grants, or other funding that could reasonably be construed as conflicts of interest.

The Philadelphia Area Group Psychotherapy Society ([pagps.org](http://www.pagps.org)), an affiliate of the American Group Psychotherapy Association (<http://www.agpa.org>), provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, theories, studies, research, information, and experience in group psychotherapy. Members come from all over the Philadelphia region, including the city of Philadelphia as well as surrounding areas in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Members may list their groups on the PAGPS website. For more information about joining PAGPS or renewing your membership, please visit our website at www.pagps.org, or e-mail us at pagpsgroup@gmail.com.