

## Mevlana Stories and Gestalt Therapy

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Gestalt therapy, which is a life philosophy and life style more than a therapy approach, has taken place and takes place in every kind of field (*individual, group, society, culture, and work of art, etc.*) with many shapes (*poem, novel, story, etc.*). Since the 13<sup>th</sup> century Mevlana stories have been a guide shedding light for those mentally in a bind, healing for those heart-broken and pacifying those souls in search. In this study five Mevlana stories, having an important place in Turkish culture, (*Moses and the Shepherd, the Linguist and the Ship-owner, the Deaf and his Sick Neighbor, the Merchant and his Parrot, the Leather-man*) were explained with some concepts of Gestalt Therapy (*wholeness, the relationship between field and shape, the relationship among field-shape and needs, awareness, awareness experiment, producing meaning, importance of senses, poles, obstacles to needs, here and now, contact, introjection, and desensitization*). As a result of the study it was found that five Mevlana stories and Gestalt therapy explain their philosophies with different concepts but there are similarities in their dealing with human nature. Finally, Mevlana stories are considered to be explained with Gestalt therapy concepts. Last but not least, this study suggested that following studies might analyze other Mevlana stories with Gestalt therapy concepts.

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### Introduction

Although there has been no change in the basic needs of individuals (*physical needs: eating, drinking, emotional needs: loving, belonging etc.*) since the first age, ways of meeting these needs have changed according to time and geographical position.

Mevlana was an Islamic sufi, who lived during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, affected the humanity thanks to his language touching souls, and was tolerant towards the whole humanity and varieties. In Mevlana stories, it is stated that an individual is a part of a whole (the Creator) in the universe, an individual should know herself/himself physically, mentally, spiritually and wholeheartedly so as to recognize her/his aim in the universe, and s/he can achieve this by accepting and getting in touch with people. Mevlana stories are especially said to be a guide shedding light for “those mentally in a bind”, healing for “those heart-broken” and pacifying “those souls in search” (Karaköse 2009, p. 9).

Gestalt therapy is a therapy approach and even a life philosophy using “here and now” and

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dialogue methodology which took its roots from humanistic, existentialist, holistic and phenomenological approach in the early periods of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Hatcher & Himelstein 1995; Levin 2010; Paterson & Watkins 1996, p. 349-371; Woldt ve Toman 2005, p. 47-52). In Gestalt therapy approach, it is aimed that an individual understands and accepts her/his needs, desires and fears on the field and s/he recognizes how s/he obstructs them while reaching her/his aims (Daş 2006, p.19-21, Mackewn 1997, p. 34, Woldt & Toman 2005, p. 84-96).

When considered in this respect, there are many common points with regard to the way both Mevlana's philosophy and Gestalt therapy approach to humans. In this study, the aim is to explain Mevlana Stories with basic concepts of Gestalt therapy. For this purpose, five Mevlana stories (*Moses and the Shepherd, The Linguist and the Ship-owner, The Deaf and his Sick Neighbor, The Merchant and his Parrot, the Leather-man*) were analyzed with Gestalt concepts of “wholeness”, “field and shape relationship”, “field-shape and needs relationship”, “awareness”, “awareness experiment”, “producing meaning”, “importance of senses”, “poles”, “obstacles to needs”, “here and now”, “contact”, “introjection”, and “desensitization”.

### ***Mevlana and Gestalt Therapy***

Below can be found five Mevlana stories (*Moses and the Shepherd, The Linguist and the Ship-owner, The Deaf and the Sick, The Merchant and his Parrot, the Leather-man*) analyzed with Gestalt therapy concepts of “wholeness”, “field and shape relationship”, “field-shape and needs relationship”, “awareness”, “awareness experiment”, “producing meaning”, “importance of senses”, “poles”, “obstacles to needs”, “here and now”, “contact”, “introjection”, and “desensitization”. Firstly basic concepts of Gestalt therapy were explained, secondly stories were summarized shortly and finally, stories were evaluated with Gestalt therapy concepts.

#### ***ii.i. Moses and the Shepherd: Wholeness, Field-Shape and Needs Relationship,***

##### ***Introjection***

A human is a whole with her/his intuitions, senses, thoughts and behaviors and as a whole, s/he interacts with her/his environment and becomes a part of the environment (Perls 1969, p. 6). For the individual who becomes a whole by interaction to be a whole internally, s/he has to recognize her/his needs (Corey, 2008, p. 213-214; Daş 2006, p. 66-67; Latner 1973; Paterson & Watkins 1996, p. 350-351; Perls, 1969; Woldt & Toman, 2005, p. 88-94).

Needs of the individual are energy sources leading to behaviors stemming from her/his field. Those needs full of energy and leading to behaviors are gathered in two categories (basic needs and psychological needs) and one need arises after the fulfillment of another one (Daş, 2006, p. 67-73; Latner, 1973). Although needs stem from an individual's field, behaviors emerging so as to fulfill those needs may not cohere with an individual's field. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize the needs underlying the behaviors instead of the behaviors themselves and to focus on these needs (Daş 2006, p. 73- 74; Polster & Polster 1974, p.46).

For an individual to focus on and meet her/his needs instead of behaviors/figures, s/he should use contact manners consistent with both her/his field and environment. Otherwise, an individual may lose contact with both herself/himself and her/his environment and also s/he may not meet her/his needs (Daş 2006, p.73-74; Polster & Polster, 1974; Scherler, 2007). For

instance, if an individual's need is to say no to what s/he doesn't want in the work place, but, during the contact with the ones in the work place, if s/he exactly obeys to given orders, s/he cannot meet her/his real need in the field.

If an individual loses contact with herself/himself, it means that s/he cannot meet her/his needs. Even this loss of contact experienced by the individual leads to an increase in awareness by using five senses in "now" and this loss of contact may lead to a leap in dimensions within four dimensions of awareness (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions) (Daş 2006, p. 49-65; Mackwen 1997; Woldt & Toman 2005, p. 87-88).

These concepts of Gestalt therapy can be observed in Mevlana's "Moses and the Shepherd" story. The story can be shortly recounted like the following:

*Prophet Moses met a shepherd who was praying in his own manner but not in the religiously suggested manner. The shepherd was praying to God as the following:*

*"My dear Allah, You should know how much I love You. I can do whatever You want, Your wish is my command. If You command, I can sacrifice the fattest sheep in the herd for You without blinking an eye. My dear Allah, fried sheep meat is delicious, You can add the tail fat into your rice, it will be extremely delicious. Your wish is my command; I can wash Your feet. I can clean Your ears, kill Your lice. How much I love You. I admire You."*

*Prophet Moses went up in the air upon hearing these and he intervened in the prayer of the shepherd.*

*"Shut up you ignorant man! What do you think you are doing? Does Allah eat rice? Does Allah have feet? How can you wash His feet? What kind of a prayer is this? You are totally falling into sin. Immediately foreswear!"*

*The shepherd blushed to the ear upon Moses' scolding; he wanted to curl up and die and cried away. Moses heard a voice that night, which was Allah:*

*"O! Moses! What have you done today? Have you come to separate or unite? You have scolded this poor shepherd. You could not understand how close he was to me. Although he did not know what he was saying, that shepherd was sincere in his faith, he was pure in heart, and his will was neat. We do not look at words, we look at will! If we were to look at words, there would not be any human on earth! We were contented with the shepherd. Anyone's praise may appear to you as worthless. Anyone's honey may be poison to you. You regarded what you heard as denial and swear but you should know that even if he has any fault, what a sweet fault it is."*

*Upon hearing this, Moses, being sad, searched for the shepherd a lot and when he found him he said:*

*"Oh friend, I am mistaken, please forgive me. Pray as you know. This is more valuable in the sight of Allah."*

*The shepherd said to Moses:*

*"Oh Moses, I have already gone through this phase. I am full with holy love. Actually you have whipped my horse. My horse has reared up and has gone beyond the universe"* (Karaköse 2009, p. 75-78).

In this story praying shapes emerging from the thanksgiving need of the shepherd and those patterns and *shapes emerging from the field* of Moses are different from each other. Thanksgiving and praying – both the same needs – are met in different *shapes* in both the shepherd and Moses and each individual is in contact with his needs. However, when Moses told the shepherd that he had to pray in the way Moses did, the shepherd exactly applied the ways Moses told (introjection) but he couldn't meet his own needs and he desensitized. When the shepherd desensitized, Allah told Moses that in the *wholeness* of the universe, every individual was a necessary and different part and that being different and stating her/his needs in different shapes did not harm the *wholeness/unity*. Therefore, Allah suggested Moses that instead of the stereotyped behaviors he should look at the needs and wills underlying the behaviors. When Moses told all these to the shepherd, the awareness in the field of the shepherd increased, the awareness experienced by the shepherd in the emotional dimension leaped at the spiritual dimension and he met himself in the upper level.

***ii.ii. The Linguist and the Ship-owner: The Coherence of Field-Shape Relationship and Meeting Needs Here and Now, Desensitization and Incoherence of Field-Shape***

In Gestalt therapy the “field” is a life space covering an individual's experiences (feeling, thought, observation, experience, etc.) starting from birth (Daş 2006, p.68-69; Polster & Polster 1974; Scherler 2007). When an individual forms behaviors/shapes in accordance with the needs of the organism, shapes return to the field of the individual. When needs in the field of the individual are not met, shapes remain in the field full of energy and appear in the field in different shapes until needs are met (Daş 2006, p.68-71; Greenberg & Rice 1997; Lather, 1973; Perls, 1969; Polster & Polster 1974, Woldt & Toman, 2005; p..88-89).. Therefore, abundance of experiences in an individual's field is important. Additionally, abundance of experiences expands an individual's field while scarcity of experiences shallows it. Having broad or shallow field is parallel with an individual's management of her/his needs in a correct way (Daş, 2006; Scherler, 2007).

For an individual to manage her/his needs in a correct way, s/he should remain “here and now” (Latner, 1973; Perls, 1969; Woldt & Toman 2005, p.104-105). When an individual focuses on “here and now”, s/he recognizes the obstacles and problems in her/his body, mind, behaviors and s/he seeks solutions for these. For her/him to focus on “here and now”, “what an individual says” is not important but instead “how s/he says it” is important (Perls, 1969). When an individual does not remain in “here and now”, s/he cannot meet her/his needs (Daş 2006; Latner, 1973; Perls 1969). There are many factors which obstruct an individual's remaining in “here and now” and one of these is desensitization of an individual to herself/himself and her/his environment (Daş, 2006, p. 137- 146; Levin, 2010; Polster & Polster, 1974). Desensitization means that an individual does not see, hear or feel or s/he uses some of her/his sides excessively or never uses them. Desensitization is observed in individuals whose cognitive sides are on the forefront (Daş, 2006, p.137-146; Scherler, 2007).

These concepts of Gestalt therapy (harmony of field-shape relationship and meeting needs by remaining in now or not meeting needs due to desensitization of an individual to herself/himself by remaining in now and disharmony of field-shape) can be observed in Mevlana's “The Linguist and the Ship-owner” story. The story can be shortly recounted like the following:

*“A linguist got aboard. That conceited linguist turned to the ship-owner and said: “Have you ever read grammar?”*

*The ship-owner said “No” and the linguist replied “Half of your life has gone for nothing.”*

*The ship-owner was heart-broken due to this speech and he got angry but he didn't reply immediately, he remained quiet. Later on, a wind blew and the ship was sucked into a whirlpool. At that time the ship-owner called out to the linguist:*

*“Oh, linguist, do you know how to swim?”*

*The linguist said “Oh pleasant ship-owner, I do not know how to swim.”*

*The ship-owner said “Oh linguist! Your whole life has gone for nothing because the ship is about to sink in this whirlpool. You should know this well, here you should know how to perish, now knowing grammar is worth nothing. Sea water carries a dead man over its head, how can an alive man rescue from the hands of the sea? If you get rid of your human qualities and bad habits by passing away, God's sea of secrets will carry you over its head. (Karaköse 2009, p. 46-47).*

In this story while the linguist has a lot of knowledge as to “what” is a grammar, he does not have experimental knowledge on “how” to swim.

Therefore, the linguist cannot meet his need of survival after having any obstacle in the sea. This situation shows that *field-shape should be in harmony with needs*, and abundance of experiences in the field is important in meeting an individual's needs. In addition, while the linguist was busy with dealing “what grammar says (*with his past*)”, he could not focus on *here and now* and *desensitized* towards himself and his environment. This situation shows the importance of “here and now”. In fact, in the story it is suggested that the linguist should focus on “here and now” and should live through “here and now” so as to get rid of desensitization and to meet his need of survival.

### ***ii.iii. The Deaf and His Sick Neighbor : Here and Now, Field-Shape Relationship, Producing Meaning, Importance of Senses, Awareness***

For an individual to recognize her/his needs in the field and to produce proper shapes for her/his needs, s/he should use her/his five senses “here and now”, s/he should perceive the stimuli in herself/himself and in her/his environment and to give meaning to these stimuli (Daş, 2006; Greenberg & Grenberg 1997; Lather, 1973). In short, “here and now” has a great power (Polster & Polster, 1974).

When an individual uses her/his past experiences and patterns to meet her/his needs in her/his field, s/he cannot produce proper shapes and meanings for her/his needs in her/his field (Corey, 2008, p.216-217; Lather, 1973; Polster & Polster 1974). This situation is related to an individual's not recognizing her/his need full of energy. Awareness is the most effective way to cure the individual (Grenberg & Rice, 1997).

These concepts of Gestalt therapy (field-shape relationship, producing meaning, importance of senses and awareness) can be observed in Mevlana's “The Deaf and the Sick Neighbor” story. The story can be shortly recounted like the following:

*“A man who gives importance to neighborhood relations informed a deaf man that his neighbor was sick. Upon learning this, the deaf man thought about inquiring after his*

neighbor's health but he wondered how he would achieve this with his deaf ears. He said to himself: "When a man is sick, his voice also grows weak. I must visit him, he is a neighbor. However, it is impossible to hear what he says with these ears. For the best, I'll guess what he says when he moves his lips and I will talk accordingly."

Presuming that such a conversation might take place between him and his neighbor, he prepared himself. He thought about saying "Oh my sorrowful neighbor! How are you?" and in return he presumed the neighbor to reply as "I am fine, thanks." The deaf man would say "Thank Allah" and he would ask later on what type of food the sick man ate. He presumed the sick man would say "I drank sherbet or I ate lentil soup." The deaf would say "Enjoy your meal" and he would ask which doctor came round for the treatment. When the sick would say "This so-and-so doctor", the deaf would say "That doctor brings good luck. He is an expert in his field. It is wise of you to call him for the treatment. With that doctor assume that your illness is over."

The deaf visited his neighbor with this scenario in his mind. After greeting the sick, the deaf sat on a corner and asked "How are you my dear neighbor?"

The sick replied "I feel very bad, I am about to die".

The deaf said "Thank Allah" and the sick felt blue. He was heart-broken due to his neighbor's words. While he was thinking about the appropriateness of being grateful, the deaf asked:

"What do you eat?" The sick, being furious, answered as "Poison and demon drink."

The deaf smiling in the way he meditated before said: "Enjoy your meal." Upon this answer, the sick got really furious but he did not show his emotions. The deaf kept asking:

"Which doctor comes round for the treatment?"

Having no more patience and with his full anger the sick shouted "Who would come round? Of course, the Angel of death, Azrael is approaching. What kind of a neighbor are you? Buzz off."

With all his calmness the deaf replied "Oh is he coming? He brings good luck. Be happy, be joyful. Assume that your illness is over."

The patient got very sad because of his neighbor and thought like "We have not been able to know this neighbor. He is actually our enemy." The deaf asked for his permission to leave and left his neighbor's house joyfully thinking he realized neighborhood rights. While the deaf was leading towards his house full with the joy of realizing his duty, the sick neighbor thought about him like "Visit of patients is done to inquire after one's health, to please. This man has offended us and increased our illness at the same time. (Karaköse 2009, p.57-59).

In this story, the Deaf and his Sick Neighbor form a relationship with one another based on completely their own fields and their ways of producing meaning is limited to their own fields. Both of them "here and now" do not use their 5 senses and they are not completely open to outer stimuli. Even the Deaf does not hear, he has the capability of using his other senses (*seeing and feeling*) in "here and now", but instead he uses the fiction in his mind and he does not understand his neighbor's reactions. In short, the Deaf is not aware of his other

senses. His neighbor is also not *aware* of the fact that his visitor is deaf and he *cannot understand* the reactions of the Deaf. As both of them exhibit shapes from their own fields, neither the aim of this visit by the Deaf nor the need of the neighbor to be glad of this visit is met.

#### ***ii.iv. The Merchant and His Parrot: Awareness, Here and Now, Awareness***

##### ***Experiment and Exaggeration Technique***

Awareness is an individual's being in contact with her/his own perceptual area and it is necessary for an individual to meet her/his needs appropriate to her/his field (Daş 2006, p. 105-109; Perls, 1969; Polster & Polster, 1974; Woldt & Tolman 2005). For awareness, an empty mind is necessary. An empty mind focuses an individual to “here and now” and offers her/him many options to meet her/his needs (Latner, 1973).

Additionally, awareness, taking place “here and now”, is formed in four dimensions of existence (*physical, mental, emotional and spiritual*) and is achieved through five senses (*seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling*) (Daş 2006, p. 108-113; Polster & Polster 1974, p. 129; Mackwen, 1997).

Stereotyped thoughts and believes are obstacles to form awareness and, together with awareness, to give meaning to needs and to form proper shapes for needs (Daş, 2006; Lather 1973; Mackwen; 1997). In order to change the structures hindering awareness, various Gestalt therapy techniques are used (Joyce & Sills 2001; Mackwen 1997; Polster & Polster, 1974). Out of these techniques, the most commonly used ones are experiment and exaggeration techniques (Cohen, 2008, p.234; Daş, 2006, p. 260; Scherler 2007).

Experiments increase internal (related to oneself) and external (related to a person's environment) awareness, materialize abstract concepts and form contact boundaries (Cohen, 2008, p. 227-229; Joyce & Sills, 2001; Macken, 1997; Polster & Polster 1974). During the experiments, resistance in here and now is studied thanks to active participation of an individual both physically and mentally (Mackwen, 1997). In order to gather information on an individual's resistance, to recognize her/his need and meet this need, an observed situation in an individual is exaggerated. For instance, if an individual shakes her/his leg while talking, s/he is requested to shake it more quickly (with her/his five senses and four dimensions of her/his existence) so as for her/him to recognize her/his need (Corey, 2008, p. 234.; Joyce & Sills 2001; Mackwen 1997).

These concepts in Gestalt therapy (*awareness, here and now, experiment and exaggeration*) can be observed in Mevlana's “The Merchant and his Parrot” story. The story can be shortly recounted like the following:

*“There was a certain merchant who was about to travel to India and he asked everyone in his house, including his beautifully singing parrot, what they wanted from India and he promised to bring what they desired. The parrot asked for something different. The parrot desired him to greet all parrots flying freely and tell them that he was kept confined in a cage. The merchant went to India and realized everyone's desire including the parrot as well. However, he felt very sorry while realizing the parrot's desire because the parrot that he gave the greetings of his parrot started shaking and got breathless and suddenly fell down dead. The merchant gave back everyone's desire upon his arrival to his home. When it was the parrot's turn, the merchant said that he did what he asked for but the parrot that he*

*greeted fell down dead and he felt very sorry for this and he regretted what he said. No sooner had the merchant's beautifully singing parrot heard the merchant's tale than he too started shaking and got breathless and fell down dead. Upon this, the merchant started crying. He opened the cage to take the corpse out and the parrot flew out of the cage and landed on a tree. The surprised merchant seeing this asked his parrot what the parrot in India taught him. The parrot explained to him that the Indian parrot gave the idea of pretending to be dead instead of beautifully singing so as to escape from confinement.” (Karaköse, 2009, p. 36-40).*

In this story, while the Merchant's beautifully singing parrot is aware of its freedom need, it is not *aware* of how it can meet this need or by conducting which behaviors it can meet this need. Therefore, it asked for the help of a parrot which met its need of freedom in its field. The free parrot showed the Merchant's beautifully singing parrot how to meet its need of freedom *by remaining here and now and exaggerating one of its behavior*. Thanks to *exaggerated behavior experiment*, beautifully singing parrot recognized that the way/behavior of beautifully singing did not meet its need for freedom and so as to meet its need, it changed its shape/behavior in its field with the behavior of “pretending to be dead” *here and now*. By this way, the Merchant's parrot's need for freedom was met and the act of pretending to be dead returned to its field.

#### ***ii.v. The Leather-man: Poles and Being a Whole***

In order to give meaning to her/his environment, an individual is continuously divided into parts and forms boundaries, that is poles (for instance: beautiful-ugly; hardworking-lazy; happiness-unhappiness; goodness-badness). An individual has a different part (pole) completing each of her/his parts and an individual is a whole with her/his poles (Daş, 2006; p. 217-228; Latner, 1973; Mackwen, 1997; Polster & Polster, 1974).

An individual's refusal of one of her/his poles due to internal conflicts is an obstacle for her/him to live through her/his wholeness (Daş, 2006, p.217-228; Mackwen, 1997). It is important to know between two poles where a person defines herself/himself and whether s/he sticks to one pole or not. In addition, an individual's attachment to one pole is related to opacity or solidity of her/his contact boundaries and this situation is an obstacle for an individual to see the alternatives in her/his life (Daş 2006: 217-228, Latner 1973, Mackwen, 1997).

An individual's keeping her/his poles in her/his field creates an unrestricted self and life space in an individual and gives the required flexibility to an individual so as to meet her/his needs in “here and now” (Daş, 2006, p. 217-228; Mackwen, 1997). Recognizing the poles and unifying them is an experience of “Hah (an exclamation of recognizing instantly)”, it leads an individual to think and act differently and it reorganizes an individual's life space (Latner, 1973). In order for an individual to keep and unify the poles in her/his field, it is necessary for her/him to meet different people and live through experiences (Corey, 2008, p. 224; Mackwen 1997).

These concepts of Gestalt therapy (*poles and wholeness*) can be observed in Mevlana's “The Leatherman” story. The story can be shortly recounted like the following:

*“One day a leather-man fainted while passing through a bazaar selling “rose scents”. The shopkeepers seeing the leather-man fainting approached to the leather-man and applied rose scents and incenses to him. However, nothing worked out. The leather-man got worse. At*



*that moment the leather-man's brother was crossing the road and he saw that his brother had fainted and he understood the reason. Without anybody noticing, he took some animal dirt and made his brother smell the dirt. As soon as the leather-man sniffed the dirt, he awakened and rose to his feet. Those craftsmen making effort to awaken the leather-man but not succeeding declared the leather-man's brother as a scholar.” (Kantar, 2008, p. 450-451).*

In this story it is observed that in the leather-man's field *there is only the pole of “dirty” and there is not the pole of “clean or musk”*. Therefore, when the leather-man enters into a field filled with rose scent or when he is about to meet the pole of “clean”, he faints and refuses the pole of clean in himself. This shows that in recognizing the pole which is absent in him, the leather-man's *contact boundaries are not flexible and transparent. As the contact boundary of the leather-man is not flexible and transparent*, rose scents and incenses which are applied to make him come to himself do not work. On the contrary, dirty smell, which is in his field, makes the leather-man come to himself. However, this hinders the leather-man to know the poles in himself and to become a *whole*. In addition, in this story, it is observed that the shopkeepers selling rose scent produce shapes and alternatives according to the clean pole in their fields and they refuse their dirty poles by applying rose scent to the leather-man and they cannot contact with the leather-man.

## **Discussion**

In this study, although they emerged in different times, some concepts of Gestalt therapy and some of Mevlana stories were analyzed since they were considered to deal with humans similarly.

One of the reasons why Mevlana stories were handled from the point of view of Gestalt therapy is to show that there are similarities in their way of dealing with humans no matter how differently they explain their philosophy. One other reason is to draw attention to similarities in the techniques they used while handling the problems of people who lived in different times and in different cultures.

For this purpose, five Mevlana stories (*Moses and the Shepherd, The Linguist and the Ship-owner, The Deaf and his Sick Neighbor, The Merchant and his Parrot, the Leather-man*) were analyzed with Gestalt concepts (wholeness, field and shape relationship, field-shape and needs relationship, awareness, awareness experiment, producing meaning, importance of senses, poles, obstacles to needs, here and now, contact, introjection, and desensitization).

In Mevlana's “Moses and the Shepherd” story, Gestalt therapy's wholeness, field and shape relationship and introjection concepts; in “The Linguist and the Ship-owner” story, disharmony of field and shape relationship, meeting needs in here and now and desensitization concepts; in “The Deaf and his Sick Neighbor” story, field and shape relationship, producing meaning, “here and now” and importance of senses concepts; in “The Merchant and his Parrot” story, awareness, here and now, experiment and exaggeration technique concepts and in “the Leather-man” story, poles and wholeness concepts were observed and interpreted.

In these stories, for those living beings (individual, animal) experiencing problems to recognize their own needs, to contact with their needs and to meet their needs in healthy ways, what they should do in practice was shown. In this context, it is assumed that common aims and problem-solving methods observed in these stories show similarities with Gestalt therapy.

In these stories, as the problem experiencing living being did not use his senses, he desensitized to himself and his environment, he accepted what was said in his environment and accepted the patterns without thinking for a while, he acted improperly during the event, he could not give meaning to the situation he lived through, he could not act in a flexible way towards the situations and events or he acted in a flexible way excessively, he, in return, experienced problems. In fact, all these reasons showed similarities with the obstacles causing an individual not to meet her/his needs in her/his field in Gestalt therapy (obstacles during “intuition”, excessive use of contact ways or never using them, transparency or solidity in the boundaries, disharmony in the field-shape, obstacles in awareness).

In addition, for a living being experiencing problems to solve his problems it was emphasized that he should define the problem he experienced by exaggeration or experience, he should use his senses correctly, he should give meaning to what he experienced, he should develop his behavior repertoire to meet his needs and he should be open towards differences. All these necessities and suggestions show similarities with therapy process (where the counselee is active) and therapy techniques (exaggeration, experiment) in Gestalt therapy.

Apart from this, a sample on how to deal with daily life stories like Mevlana stories using basic concepts of Gestalt therapy was offered. For those counselees having problems in terms of basic concepts of Gestalt therapy, Mevlana stories associated with these basic concepts can be used so as to increase the awareness of the counselees.

As a result, it is assumed that Mevlana stories can be explained through Gestalt therapy concepts. However, in this study only some of Mevlana stories were analyzed and dealt in terms of some Gestalt therapy concepts. For the following studies it is suggested that other Mevlana stories should be dealt with Gestalt concepts.

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