

# GRÜNE TEXTE

## The NEW NATURE THERAPIES

Internet Magazine for Garden, Landscape and Nature Therapy, Forest Therapy,  
Animal-Assisted Therapy, Green Care, Ecological Health, Ecopsychosomatics

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## The "New Nature Therapies"

Going Green in *Integrative Therapy* - Ecological Awareness Work "Towards Nature": Salutogenic Experience of Nature, Landscape, Garden and Animal-Assisted Therapy.

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Lake shore of the "European Academy for Biopsychosocial Health", Beversee

**Our philosophy - the "ecological imperative":**

"Act in such a way that your way of life cannot endanger the biosphere. Use '*context awareness*' and '*complex mindfulness*' to be vigilant concerning damaging actions that could threaten the survival of life and the functioning of ecosystems around the world. Step in where such action by people in the noosphere becomes visible and try to prevent it. Maintain an ecosophical practice of life, preserve and protect nature". (Petzold, Orth-Petzold, Orth 2013, 60).

**PRELIMINARY REMARKS:**

We write this text because nature is important to us, the intact, undamaged nature, because closeness to nature has shaped us since childhood, because many creative developments in our life work have arisen from this "conviviality with all living", because we are vitally conscious: We are part of nature (Hüther, Petzold 2012). From our biographies we have a "green background". The "EUROPEAN ACADEMY FOR BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH", founded and managed by us in the "Oberbergischer Kreis Nature Park" at Beversee, has always been a centre of innovation for the psychosocial and therapeutic field. At the beginning of the 1970s, we developed the "body and movement-oriented therapies" or disseminated such approaches. We made them known in the German-speaking world as the

**"NEW BODY THERAPIES" (Petzold 1977n; cf. 1974j; Petzold, Orth 1993e; Orth, Petzold 1998a).**

We further developed the Academy into one of the leading training centres for creative therapy methods and complex creativity training in Europe, for drama, art, music, poetry and dance therapy, under the generic term of the

**"NEW CREATIVE THERAPIES" (Petzold, Orth 1990a; cf. Petzold 1972e, 1973c; Petzold, Sieper 1993; Orth, Petzold 2011; Sieper 1971).**

In the developmental steps of recent years we have been able to teach curricularly (Petzold, Orth-Petzold, Orth 2013) the therapeutic work in ecological relations with animals, gardens, landscapes (Petzold 1969b, 2006p, 2011h, i) and the meditation form of "green meditation" developed in decades of meditative practice (Petzold 1983e) that we have been practicing in clinical practice since the late 1960s, and to turn the Academy into a place of training and further education in these procedures. We referred to them as the

**"NEW NATURE THERAPIES" (Petzold, Orth 1998; Petzold, Orth-Petzold, Orth 2013; cf. Petzold 2013g, f, 2014n; Petzold, Hömberg 2014).**

This was not least due to the cooperation of our colleagues at the academy, who, like us, have a "green history". The leading education consultant Bettina Ellerbrock (Petzold, Frank, Ellerbrock 2011), Renate Frank as specialist for animal-assisted therapy, Konrad Neuberger (2011) as integrative garden therapist, Doris Ostermann (2010) as expert for health coaching and running therapy and many others are mentioned. If we see in the bio-psycho-social-ecological human image of the "Integrative Approach" (Petzold 1965, Petzold, Sieper 2012a) humans, women and men as body-soul-spirit beings, i.e. body subjects in the social and ecological environment (Petzold 1974k, 2003e), that with *explorative curiosity, poetic-creative striving for design and affilial search for relationships, to co-creatively master and shape life (Iljine, Petzold, Sieper 1967)*, then a more complex procedure is necessary than the traditional, almost exclusively verbally oriented forms of therapy offered so far. In the field of therapeutic efforts to treat people holistically and differentially, body-oriented, creative-therapeutic and natural-therapeutic methodologies have emerged - in *practice* they have existed since ancient times (Petzold, Moser, Orth 2012). They offer opportunities to express oneself creatively, to design one's own work of art (Petzold 1999q) and to find access to a broad spectrum of emotions, in particular to "soft feelings" (Petzold, Sieper 2012e).

Three times we had the chance to participate very early in the modern development of these "new old" forms of therapy (Petzold, Sieper 1990; Petzold, Moser, Orth 2012), to be able to help shape them and to proclaim them as „new“ therapeutic approaches. From our anthropological structural logic this was obvious and also from what our perception and experience of what people need. They have repeatedly confirmed to us in our practice that the *PATHS* we have taken with them have made a lasting contribution to their health and to their personal development.

The subject of nature is not only of enormous topical interest to us today, because nature is massively threatened. This must also become clear in the field of therapies and they must make their contribution to the preservation of our world (Petzold 2014m). The commitment to the "New Nature Therapies", whose tasks include, among others, sharpening "ecological awareness", reducing "ecological alienation" and promoting "ecological health" which also helps to reduce the symptoms of various disorders (e.g. depression, Petzold 2014i) - not only for humans, but also for the animal and plant world, for the ecotopes, indeed for the entire planet, which has been brought into states of serious illness by us (Lovelock 2009). There are more *WAYS to be followed, by everyone!* And this is entirely in line with the "philosophy of the *WAY*" represented by integrative therapy (Petzold 2005t; Petzold, Orth 2004b). Each individual must understand that he is on a "path of life", which he hopefully travels with a good "convoy" and which he can shape *poetically*. The "art of living", through which the "self

becomes artist and work of art" at the same time (*Petzold* 1999q), is in an eminent way the art of a personal and communal "shaping of the way" through one's personal lifetime and world. Today, both prove to be inescapable *embeddedness in mundane ecology* and its *globalized* socio-political and socio-economic reality (*Beck* 1997, 2008) - and this is often burdened by the *devolutionary destructiveness* of the *Sapiens hominids* (*idem* 1986h), our excess. Without any *wisdom*, we are exploiting this planet to the full, threatening to drive it into the abyss on a rough ride (*Lovelock* 2014). The world is "at risk" (*Beck* 2010), we are thus "at risk" as humans, as mankind, as a *planetary community of all living things* - in a dramatic way, as the latest alarming results from all areas of ecological research show – only Arctic climate research is exemplary (*Merchant* 2014). We natural therapists know this and constantly refer to this situation in our publications (*Petzold* 1986h, 2006p, u; *Petzold, Moser, Orth* 2012; *Petzold, Orth-Petzold, Orth* 2013; *Petzold, Hömberg* 2014). This aspect is mentioned in every clinical publication, because "devolution" - so my term (1986h) - is in progress and this is not a "negative picture", we look at the gigantic species extinction (<http://www.artenschutz.info/einfuehrung/artensterben.htm>; [WWF-Info about species extinction](#)) with daily around 100 - 150 irretrievable losses of species - estimates assume over 50,000 species losses annually (*Orenstein* 2014; *Stein* 2014; *de Vos et al.* 2014). We represent a "disillusioned but hopeful anthropology" (*Petzold* 2003e), as we do not have any illusions about the destructive potentials of human beings, but also trust in their possibilities for prudence and hope in their abilities of reason, so we work with many others to turn the tide. There would be enough reason for a negative view, but we don't want it (*Petzold, Sieper* 2008a), and then you just have to do something to realize your will.

We will need all ecological knowledge, all natural and human scientific knowledge and all evolutionary wisdom as well as all *collective willpower* (*Petzold, Sieper* 2007a) for a "*melioristic turn*" - in the micro range every household, every family, every community, and in the macro range every industrial enterprise as "global player" and every state and the international community as a whole - in order to escape the disaster.

"**Meliorism** is a philosophical and sociological view (historically developed in various currents) that strives to "improve" world relations, societies or people by engaging in the development and use of potentials. **Meliorism assumes that** societies can be improved in the course of historical processes and cultural evolution, that progress in the sense of continuous development for the better is possible, and that it can be advanced with reason, scientific means, material investments, and potential-oriented social-humanitarian and ecological **engagement**. (*Petzold, H.G., Orth, Sieper* 2013a).

I have described our time with its serious upheavals in so many areas (population explosion, ageing population, climate change, globalisation, megametropolises, cyber world etc.) as a "transitional period" (*idem* 2006u) in which we must fundamentally find new solutions, because the old ones no longer reach for *nature* and also a "back to *nature*" in the *Rousseau* sense will not be possible, but we need a new "*towards nature*". We need new relationships with nature, we need to understand them anew - more ecologically - see them anew - with loving concern. We must safeguard and support them in a way that is compatible with nature and determine from this understanding what "sustainability" is, namely what nature needs and not, as we have done so far, what we think we need. We have to bring back our "eccentricity", which is "above" nature, vital and in harmony with the reality that we belong to nature, indecompressible, and our destruction of nature amounts to self-destruction. We have always argued that the *eccentricity* characteristic of *homo sapiens sapiens* and only of *homo sapiens sapiens* must be supplemented by a new appreciation of our

**c e n t r i c i t y** . Many people have dissociated this rooting into the biosphere, into the soil of the living. But the "noosphere", as *Vernadsky* calls the world they created and changed with the emergence of mankind, is not viable without a functioning biosphere. *Vladimir Ivanovitch Vernadsky* (1863 - 1945), the ingenious and perhaps most important Russian natural scientist and founder of geochemistry and biosphere-noosphere theory (*Vernadsky* 1924, 1998, 2012; cf. *Samson, Pitt* 1999), has with his findings already shown the paths that need to be taken, namely the development of a new understanding of nature and natural behaviour. Ultimately, this means that we have to rethink our "lifestyles" and partly redesign them, and these are processes that reach into personal identity and "identity work" (*Petzold* 2012a). If, according to our "biopsychosocial-ecological human nature" (*idem* 1965, *Petzold, Sieper* 2012a), we take the "bio", the bodily-organic dimension of our existence, seriously in the knowledge that the "bio" is inextricably linked to the "eco", then personal identity work must become more nature-conscious, more ecologically conscious. The "green side" of our identity must be developed and cultivated (cf. "Someone's green side" is the lovingly turned side of emotional closeness, the heart side, Brockhaus Multimedial CD-Rom 2005). This has an impact on the ecological education of children, the " e c o l o g i s a t i o n " (*Petzold* 2006p, 2014m; *Petzold, Orth-Petzold, Sieper* 2013), the learning and practice of an ecological education and lifestyle. In the processes of "*narrative identity formation*", much has to be told and spoken about nature and much has to be done concretely in nature (running, hiking, school and house garden, nature conservation in projects, green power training; *van der Mei, Petzold, Bosscher* 1997, *Orth, Petzold* 1998a) as "*actional identity formation*". In such "complex learning processes" (*Sieper, Petzold* 2002), and this is what I am talking about, identity is formed in the training of cognitive and linguistic *competences* (*idem* 2010f) and in concrete action, in the training of emotional, communicative, practical *performances*. In these two dimensions of identity, our new ecological and natural relationships must organize themselves, with new forms of *primary ecologization* (toddlerhood), *secondary* (childhood, youth) and *tertiary ecologization* (adulthood), each conveying specific references to nature, knowledge of nature and differential behaviour towards nature (*Petzold* 2014m). Clinically, this is taken into account when natural therapeutic approaches are planned into a "*bundle of measures*" for specific indications and implemented in the treatment as "adjunctive offers", for example in dysthymia and depression treatment, where "green power training" or "therapeutic walking or running" are indicated as out-door training (*Petzold* 2014i; *van der Mai, Petzold, Bosscher* 1997; *Petzold, Waibel* 2009). Such "bundles" are characteristic of multimodal work, especially with complex disorders and chronic patients in integrative therapy (*Petzold, Brühlmann et al*, 2007; *Petzold, Sieper* 2008a), and offer good opportunities for multi-professional treatment, as has been successfully practiced in the clinical field of psychiatry and psychosomatics for decades, but is still largely deficient in outpatient settings. In addition to the disorder-specific improvements, the aim is also to use a salutogenic line of intervention to develop a "movement-active", a "health-conscious" and "nature-loving lifestyle" in the sense of a measure of "*tertiary ecologisation*". It is to serve the development of a new relationship to nature, which should also carry through into everyday life. On the whole, an ecological reorientation must take place not only among patients, but broadly in the population and affect large populations, ultimately worldwide and in a l l areas of life, if our nature, our global ecology, if we as the "living human being", yes if we as humanity want to have chances for a safe and livable future: *with* this "planet of life" and not *against* it, as *fellow creature* and not *against* all other species. We live as "members" with all living beings in and with this world in a fundamentally "convivial space". *Conviviality*, a core concept of integrative therapy (*idem* 2003a, 904; *Orth* 2010),



must no longer be confined to fellow human beings. Therefore we must be identified with this world and its creatures. It must be seen that our identity with its "five pillars" (I. physicality, II. social network, III. work/performance/leisure, IV. material security, V. values, idem 2012a, 520ff) is rooted in the first pillar, the physicality (I) in the midst of life, and that the second of the social network (II.) is rooted in the "corporeality" of the people and domestic and wild animals, even plants belonging to us. The third pillar of the field of work (III.) serves, considered closely, essentially the safeguarding of life (even if not only) and must today - the ecological situation forces us to this realization - also include work for the safeguarding of our livelihood (e.g. ecologically sustainable production). The fourth pillar of "material security" (IV.) does not only include security through money and goods, but must also include the security of the ecological materiality of our living space, because we are rooted in the world. Our physical nature is directed towards the world, is part of it, as *Merleau-Ponty* (1964) expressed it in his wonderful formula of "being to the world" (*être-au-monde*). Nature, the natural ecological world, is part of our identity, and this must be affirmed again and again in permanent consciousness work. What's the matter with you? Because it is structurally also part of our humanity to rise above the world with eccentric consciousness, to look at it with detachment, an *eccentricity* of the "*human animal*" (sensu *Darwin*), which always also contains a structural moment of "alienation", as *Hegel* had clearly recognized. And yet we can never go beyond our *centricity* as bodily belonging to the living, to nature. Today we must acquire this *centricity* in a new way, cultivate it as a precious good, enjoy it, use it and protect it. This is the task of a new, "*alternative identity work*" (*Petzold* 2014m). It must take place in all areas of life, in personal and collective life, in private and public spaces. This also applies to the field of psychotherapy and psychosocial work. In our integrative approach, we have drawn conclusions from this insight, because we have recognized that nature is showing us "the red card".

„We must learn to live and cultivate the dialectic of eccentricity/independence and centricity/rootedness into nature in an *ecosophical, nature-oriented way*, otherwise evolution will pull us „out of production“, because we have no one to put us under species protection!“

**In 2002 we formulated the following:**

"To handle the relationship between *eccentricity/hypereccentricity* and *centricity/hypercentricity* in an appropriate way, as it is in accordance with the nature of man (e.g. with regard to possible genetic and cerebral self-manipulation, self-cyborging, etc.) and as mundane ecology requires it as the basis of all life processes (e.g. production and consumption practices which endanger the genetic engineering, ecological and climate systems and in which, in the truest sense of the word, the *living world* is consumed until it can no longer regenerate), this confronts mankind as a task which will decide on its future, its survival. *Hyper-eccentricity*, which makes high-tech research and globalised research efforts in their internationalised "joining" possible in a never before seen way [...] must never lose sight of the following: It is always us humans ourselves, with *our* view of the world and our self, who initiate and carry out cognitive processes, and that for us there can certainly be *vital connections in the life world*, in the system of this wonderful planet, which are *structurally unseen* and will remain unseen by our sensory and brain capacities and prey-exploiting strategies designed for the mesocosm - [...] This is ] a position of extreme scientific sobriety. Such a hyper-eccentric knowledge of our *structural punctum caecum* [blind spot that cannot be removed] would have to have the consequence that all interventions in our human-organic

system and in the mundane ecosystem with great depth and breadth of intervention, that all "mega-interventions" with not really calculable risks, with extreme scepticism and caution would have to be regarded and subjected to "hyper-examinations" - beforehand! Possible mega consequences will not be catchable " *Petzold* 2002b/2001e, 5f.)

**With such a scientific, critically sharpened view of the natural conditions and at the same time with a skeptical and doubtful attitude (idem 2014e, f) towards scientific hubris, we see our paths through today's world conditions as *transitory PATHS*. Often they are "border crossings". They are always characterized by high *precariousness*. They are risky and require a far-reaching, evolutionary understanding (idem 2009a) and a consistent, "*ecosophical* action" - by everyone and everywhere - from a comprehensive, "*transversal reason*" always looking at the whole (*ensemble*) of world relations (*Petzold, Orth, Sieper* 2013a, 2014e; *Welsch* 1996).**

"Transversal reason is all about not excluding anything a priori, but being vigilant against ground in and unnoticed exclusions ... [excluded] to turn confidently towards them and also to take advantage of opportunities for change [...]. Transversal reason is directed from its innermost impulses to vastness, openness, polyperspectivity, comprehensiveness." *Wolfgang Welsch* (1996, 919)

"**Transversal reason** wants to combine mono- and multidisciplinary individual knowledge into inter- and transdisciplinary, transcending overall knowledge (plural!): Knowledge about man, his nature, societies, the world, life, etc. in a way that does not level out the diversity of circumstances. **Transversal reason** rather keeps them open and makes possible transitions between them. These reason-founded and at the same time reason-generating mentalizations/ideas are to open up regulatively and structurally manifold practices of self- and world control with sufficient concertation" (*Petzold, Orth, Sieper* 2013a, e).

**With such a broad view and such a basic attitude of *transversality*, it is necessary to tackle the burning problems mentioned above: Today, by anyone who has understood its urgency, who can no longer tolerate a delay, but who demands *ecosophical foresight* and *ecological commitment* imperatively.**

*Hilarion Petzold, Ilse Orth, Johanna Sieper*

"**Ecosophy** is the wise/knowing, careful handling of the living space, the biosphere. This happens on the basis of the experienced experience and an internalized knowledge that we as human beings are part of "world ecology" through our biological bodies. The world is our living space, where we experience that nature is beautiful. We must become aware that it is precious and that we can therefore develop an **ecophilia**, a "love for nature", for our world, and a "joy of living". (*Petzold* 1961IIb).

**So we're going on the *WAY*.**

*"Isn't planting trees something beautiful and ploughing the fields or tending the vines? ... But I personally like the fact that the soul has a special leisure with them to think about something and to think about things ... such works, which do not overstrain the body, do not prevent the soul from turning to the higher things ... If one is now a friend of wisdom (φιλοσοφει) and a farmer at the same time, then no other life can be compared with his..."*  
(*Gaius Musonius Rufus*, around \*30 A.D. † before 101/102 A.D., p. 514).

*Musonius*, the important Stoic philosopher, expresses here an ancient knowledge of Greek-Roman antiquity about the healing power of nature, nature to which man belongs and which, if he "lives according to nature", brings him health and old age. ***Natura sanat, medicus curat***, nature heals, the doctor treats, this wisdom goes back to the *Corpus Hippocraticum*. On this

basis we (from 1965 *Hilarion G. Petzold, Johanna Sieper*, then from 1974 with *Hildegund Heintl, Ilse Orth*) have developed **Integrative Therapy** as **Integrative Human Therapy** on the basis of Active Analysis (*Ferenczi*), Psychodrama (*Moreno*), Gestalt Therapy (*F. Perls*), Body and Movement Therapy, Imagination Procedures (*Janet*) and other influences. Since its beginnings in the mid-sixties, it had always had a **curative** line aimed at eliminating pathologies and an **agogic** "developmental line" aimed at promoting health, well-being, strength and creativity, i.e. at salutogenesis - as *Antonovsky* (1979) later said. We had worked out this *bimodal* approach with its two trajectories, the *clinical* and the *agogic*, within the framework of the "Four Ways of Healing and Promoting Health" and had developed "conflict-centered, experience-centered and practice-centered modalities" that can be used in the process model of the "Tetradic System". This is a central foundation of the practiceology of the integrative approach. It was the first method in psychotherapy that systematically pursued such a double or multiple approach. This also influenced his methodological approaches, for example when *Petzold* and *Sieper* (1970, 1977) - supplementing Gestalt Therapy - developed the concept of "Gestalt Pedagogy" or complemented Integrative Movement Therapy (idem 1974j) with "Movement Pedagogy" by moving, running, dancing in nature (idem 1969c; *Petzold, Berger* 1974a). In 1972, more than 40 years ago, when I and *Johanna Sieper* founded the "**Fritz Perls Institut für Integrative Therapie, Gestalttherapie und Kreativitätsförderung**" (**Fritz Perls Institute for Integrative Therapy, Gestalt Therapy and Creativity Promotion**) (Düsseldorf) as an institution for vocational, scientific and clinical education for adults, therapeutic and agogic objectives were always linked across methods (*Petzold, Sieper* 1970). In 1982, thirty years ago, we were able to establish the "European Academy for Psychosocial Health" (now "Biopsychosocial Health") at Beversee.

Today, in psychology, psychotherapy and experiential education, the importance of nature and landscape is being rediscovered (*Flade* 2010; *Hunzinker* 2010). "Healing Gardens", "Healing Fields", "Healing Landscapes", such titles refer to a turn towards nature and natural life, which is possible for people into old age. In our integrative work, we have always followed traditions of health care and healing that go back to antiquity. *Cicero* points out that the "*trees planted by his own hand*" and the "*flowers that give off their sweet scents*" fill people of all ages with peace of mind and happiness. "To enjoy this happiness is therefore free for the elderly, and our years do not prevent us from maintaining our zeal for other things and above all for agriculture until the last days of old age," says *Cicero* (de Senectute, p. 83, cf. *Petzold, Müller* 2004). He praises the "*joys of farming, which I find incredible pleasure in; on the one hand, they are in no way hindered by old age and, on the other hand, seem to me to come closest to the life of a sage*" (*ibid.*, p. 73). Nature plays an important role in the spiritual exercises of the Stoa, since it is a matter of "living according to nature" (*I. Hadot* 1969; *P. Hadot* 1991, 1995).

A "deficit of nature" has arisen in our urbanized ways of life, which is now painfully felt by many people who are unfamiliar with an experience such as *Goethe's* "Easter Walk" (Faust):

*"The ice has cleared the rivers and streams,  
Through the spring, a fair, invigorating look,  
In the Thale greets hope-happiness;  
The old winter, in its weakness,  
Retired to rough mountains ...  
Look how agile the crowd is.  
Smashed through the gardens and fields,  
Like the river, in breadth and length,  
Some funny nachen moves..."*



This text about nature, one of many written by the poet-prince, ends with the famous, cheering exclamation:

*"Here I am human, here I can be."*



Am Beversee - View of the "European Academy for Biopsychosocial Health" from the lake

Since its beginnings, the **inclusion of nature** has played an important role in the therapeutic work of integrative therapy, its "bundles" of measures that it puts together for its patients and with them in multimodal and mutimethodical work (Petzold, Brühlmann, Orth, Sieper 2007). There are biographical reasons for this, among others. Our fathers *Fritz Sieper* and *Hugo Petzold* worked as agricultural and seed experts. We grew up in nature, on farms, domains, in meadows, fields, gardens, camps, forests. *Hilarion Petzold* did an agricultural apprenticeship. The hikes with the family, almost every weekend, were under *Goethe's* motto in the first issue of his series "Zur Naturwissenschaft überhaupt" (LA I 8): " *What I didn't learn, I have hiked through.*". The nature poems of the landscape and nature lover *Goethe* (2003) were accompanying reading, next to the landscape ballads, poems and texts by *Mörike*, *Löns*, *Droste* and *Miegel*, which we learned. *Fontane's* "Wanderungen" and *R. L. Stevenson's* travel reports, which we read, fascinated us, especially the idea of hiking with the donkey *Modestine*. A part of the "*Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* (1879)" we "migrated" during our student days.

We were given love of nature, yes, enthusiasm for nature, in a long tradition of garden art. *Eduard Petzold* [1815 -1891], the great landscape gardener, had left an important cultural legacy - gardens we visited and works in the family's library (cf. *Rohde* 1998).



***Carl Eduard Adolph Petzold***, \* 14 January 1815 in Lubniewice / Königswalde, † 10 August 1891 in Blasewitz. After his apprenticeship with the park creator Prince ***Hermann von Pückler-Muskau in Muskau*** he became Grand Duke-Weimar court gardener in Ettersberg in 1844. He planned and realised 174 parks and gardens in Europe. From 1852 - 1872 he acted as "park director of the Netherlands".

He designed his gardens with a clear conceptual reference to the natural scientist *J. W. v. Goethe*. He in turn had dealt with the natural philosophical thoughts of *Spinoza* and *Schelling*. "Nature should be the visible spirit, spirit the visible nature" (*Schelling*, *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur*, 1797, LXIV). These ideas had also shaped the understanding of nature in our parental home. *Goethe*, as we were taught, had recognized that one cannot really recognize anything if one does not somehow listen to him, if one does not grasp nature in a holistic way, for it is "a creature only a tone a shadow of a great harmony, which one must also study in the whole and in the great, otherwise every individual is a dead letter" (*Goethe* WA IV 6, 389f). *Goethe's* discovery of the intermaxillary bone in 1784 (with *J. C. Loder*, but previously discovered by *Felix Vicq d'Azyr* in 1780), made him see man as part of an evolution, thus placing him completely in nature: "You lead the line of the living / Before me by and teach me my brothers / Know me in the quiet bush, in air and water" (*Faust*, 3225). Man stands in the "line of the living" and he "knows himself only in so far as he knows the world, which he only becomes aware of in himself and himself in it. Every new object, well looked at, unlocks a new organ in us" (*Goethe* 1923 LA I 9, 307f; cf. *Eckermann* 29. 1. 1826). Nature, especially our own, "has neither core nor shell, it is all in one" (*Goethe* 1820, *Unwilling Exclamation* LA I 9, 223). Here *Hugo Petzold* built a bridge for us to *Charles Darwin's* "On the Origin of Species" (1859) and to *Alfred Russel Wallace*, one of his favourite authors, whose "The Geographical Distribution of Animals" (1876) founded an evolutionary biogeography with the idea of ecological zones. This had inspired his (and my, *H. G. Petzold*) interests in habitats of plants, animals, humans, in "ecotopes" and the idea of an "ecosophical", a "wise" way of dealing with habitats (*Petzold* 1961IIa). *Wallace* (1878) was perhaps the first to warn against ecological overexploitation and is therefore highly topical. From all this followed for us: "Life can only be grasped by understanding living spaces and development processes" (*Petzold* 1961IIa). This also applies to people, especially in "minus milieus" (*Petzold* 1973), in bad socio-ecological situations, slums, ghettos (*Hecht, Petzold, Scheiblich* 2012). The evolutionary-biological and ecological orientation in integrative therapy with reference to *Goethe, Darwin, Wallace, Mendel, K. Lorenz, E. Mayer, S. J. Gold, S. Oyama* and others should not be overlooked (*Osten* 2009; *Petzold* 1986h, 2005t, 2006j, 2009a).

**Natural therapy** in an integrative approach is much more than hiking in nature! It is a "WAY" of recognizing one's own nature. "You should only check yourself most of the time / whether you are core or shell" (*Goethe* FA I 2, 508). We've been given *Goethe's* question "Isn't the core of nature man in the heart? (ibid.)"<sup>1</sup> must be answered: Yes, we humans are nature, through and through, in our hearts! This is what we have to experience - in the heart and with the heart. One immediately thinks of *Saint-Exupéry* (*Petit Prince*, c. 21): "On ne voit bien qu'avec le cœur. L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux". The essential is invisible to the eyes because one is centered in nature. One is immersed in "ontological experience" (*Orth* 1993) both with oneself and with nature, one belongs, like *Merleau-Ponty* (1964), to the metaphorized "flesh of the world", and in such "in the midst" dissecting, exploring view is transcended in a convivial participation (*Orth* 2010).

In an integrated way to be with oneself, with the other, with nature, becomes basis of **belonging** (*convivialité*) and that stands against **alienation** (*aliénation*), guarantees the **integrity** of people, groups, habitats for people and animals (*Petzold* 1978c; *Sieper, Orth, Petzold* 2010). This is a basic orientation of our work at the "**European Academy for**

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<sup>1</sup> The background theme of *Goethe's* discussion with *Kant* ("Ding an sich") on the poem by *Albrecht von Haller* cannot be picked up here. "Observation and dissection of phenomena penetrate into the interior of nature, and one cannot know how far this will go with time" (*Kant*, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B, 333f.). The passage was underlined by *Goethe* in his edition.

**Biopsychosocial Health**" at the Beversee in the "Bergisches Land Nature Park", a place that we carefully selected for this purpose because it enabled us to experience nature, contact with the landscape, with water, animals and forests. An ideal place to teach landscape-oriented and animal-assisted therapy (*Sieper, Orth, Schuch 2007*).



Horse paddock at Lake Beversee

Our nature orientation from a biographical background, theoretically thought *with Goethe, Merleau-Ponty* and the ancient authors, also received a praxeological reason from our work with marginalized groups, especially with addicts, as well as with disadvantaged families and their children in "negative environments", in whose treatment settings we have been involved in therapeutic communities and social projects since the late sixties. We used gardening and animal-assisted therapy long before they became popular (*Fine 2000; Olbrich, Otterstedt 2003*).

We have used landscape and garden therapeutic measures (*Neuberger 2011; Petzold 1969c, 2011b*) to use benign "**ecologisations**" (imprints by landscape, *idem 2006j*) and their positive **ecopsychosomatic** effects in the sense of the integrative approach (*Leitner, Sieper 2008; Petzold 2009c*), which should support the therapeutically necessary processes of "**new socialisation**". At the end of the sixties we introduced landscape therapy in combination with running therapy into psychotherapy, which later became a research focus of my work at the University of Amsterdam, with studies that showed that running therapy could<sup>2</sup> significantly improve severe depression. This correlates with "nature therapy" or "ecotherapy" (*Buzzell, Chalquist 2009*), whose benefits for health and well-being must be emphasized (*Bird 2004*). "A 2007 study from the University of Essex in the U.K., for example, found that a walk in the country reduces depression in 71% of participants. The researchers found that as little as five minutes in a natural setting, whether walking in a park or gardening in the backyard, improves

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<sup>2</sup> *Petzold 1974j, 351; Van der Mei, Petzold, Bosscher 1997; Schay, Petzold et al. 2006; Waibel, Petzold 2009.*

mood, self-esteem, and motivation" (*Sorgen* 2011; cf. also *Reynolds* 1999, 2002). *Pretty et al.* (2005) show that people who practice their sporting activities as "green exercises" benefit more physically and mentally compared to indoor sports. "Green Power Training" or "Green Gym" or "Out-Door-Training", forest up- and wilderness hiking, movements that we have helped to shape, are therefore effective possibilities for holistic health promotion.

Shamanism, Gaia spirituality, New Age visions, as found in some circles of the Gestalt scene, are not our traditions and references in Integrative Landscape Therapy. The ecopsychological design practice of *Dick Price* (1930 -1985), whose work we got to know from 1969 and 1970 to 1972 (*Petzold* 2007j), is influenced by Buddhist and Taoist meditation practice, which is anyway characterized by a strong closeness to nature. *Price*, the co-founder of the Esalen Institute (*Erickson* 2005; *Callahan* 2009), who died in a travelling accident, is a pioneer of experiential hiking. His work and that of his friend *Steven Harper* (1995), an experimental wilderness guide, is in the flow of the Anglo-American natural and eco-psychological movement (*Roszak et al.* 1995), whose concepts we have received since its beginnings in the 1980s. Our own orientation was "psychological", especially oriented to the *life span developmental approach* and the "ecological developmental psychology" (*Petzold* 1992a, 544ff; *Sieper* 2007b). We refer to the works of *Bronfenbrenner* (1979, 1981, 1986), which have good connectivity to our context-continuum model of the micro-, meso- and macro-level (*Petzold* 1974j). The ecological perception theory of *J. Gibson* (1997) and his wife *E. Gibson* (1969) had also gained importance for our work (*Petzold, Beek, Hoek* 1994). The American "Eco- and Nature Therapy" does not refer to these sources. It also lacks a *reference to Lewin*, so that there are no field-theoretical influences that *Lewin* (1917, 1963) inaugurated. *Lewin* was important for ecological development research. He had contacts with *Vygotsky*, this important context theoretician (*Vygotskij* 1992), who with his concept of the "zone of the next development" (*Jantzen* 2008; *Petzold, Sieper* 2005) laid the basis for an ecological theory of learning and development, which we were able to elaborate, and who also initiated modern context-theoretical developmental psychology (*Rogoff* 2003; *Rogoff et al.* 2010). Of course, the environmental and environmental concepts of *Hellpach* (1911) have also become important for us, as have the biological work of *Jakob Johann von Uexküll* (1920; 1938), who, through the development of his biosemiotic view, viewed life phenomena in a fundamentally contextualized way and understood life as biological sign and communication processes. His concept of the environment laid the foundations for modern ecology (*Buchanan* 1975; *Kull* 2001; *G. v. Uexküll* 1987).

Of course, all this is also a question of the human image:

"Man is a physical, psychic and noetic being in a given social and ecological living space (*Lebenswelt*). That is why we must examine it in the light of this living space and these dimensions" (*Petzold* 1965). "Der Mensch - als Mann und Frau - ist ein Körper-Seele-Geist-Wesen (= Leib-Subjekt) im sozialen und ökologischen Umfeld" (*idem* 1988n/1996a 188/2003a, 409).

In the development of this anthropological model we have invested a lot of time and effort over the decades of our collaboration, reflecting on it again and again, also from gender-theoretical perspectives, you will certainly not continue this work (*Petzold, Sieper* 1998, 2012; *Petzold, Orth* 2011; *Petzold* 2003e).





Workshop of Ilse Orth, Hilarion Petzold and Johanna Sieper 2010 under the linden trees in the Park of the Academy

With the Integrative Approach, we are - as far as we can see - the only therapeutic method that has so explicitly anchored the gender perspective and ecology in its human image and has been able to<sup>3</sup> develop its theory and differential practice in a stable, congenial gender cooperation over such a long, continuous period of more than 40 years. The traditional paradigm of the patriarchal school founder has always seemed "outdated" to us. From the integrative view of man there are compelling interventions as gender-sensitive "body therapy, psychotherapy, nootherapy, sociotherapy and **ecotherapy**" (*ibid.*, emphasis here), with the latter "interventions on the micro-, meso-, macro- and mega-level, environmental modelling, project work in order to achieve *integrated ecological references*, preservation and design of living space - ecological awareness & consciousness" (*ibid.* 188).

Moreover, the integrative core concept of the "**Informed Body**" (Petzold 2002j, 2009c; 1988n, 192;) states that our state of mind is strongly determined by what information we absorb from the environment, and therefore the ecological space must be of interest. The "*ecotherapeutic* view [serves] the protection of the ecological - and man is part of an ecology and falls ill if it is destroyed" (*idem* 1988n, 190). Large landscapes with their "*tranquillity*" and "*cheerful serenity*", with their beauty, sublimity and delight (*bliss, elation*), gentle meadows or ancient trees, "old avenues that have something stately, something awe-inspiring", according to the landscape gardener *Eduard Petzold* (1878, 4) - family sources, as already mentioned, are used for integrative therapy. Trees fill and relax us, calm and delight us, are "balm for body and soul", and these insights have been and are being put into practice in our therapies.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Petzold, Heintz 1983; Petzold, Orth 1985, 2011; Petzold Sieper 1970, 1977, 1993a, 2011; Sieper, Orth, Schuch 2007; Sieper, Orth, Petzold 2010).





The European Academy in the "Bergisches Land" Nature Park

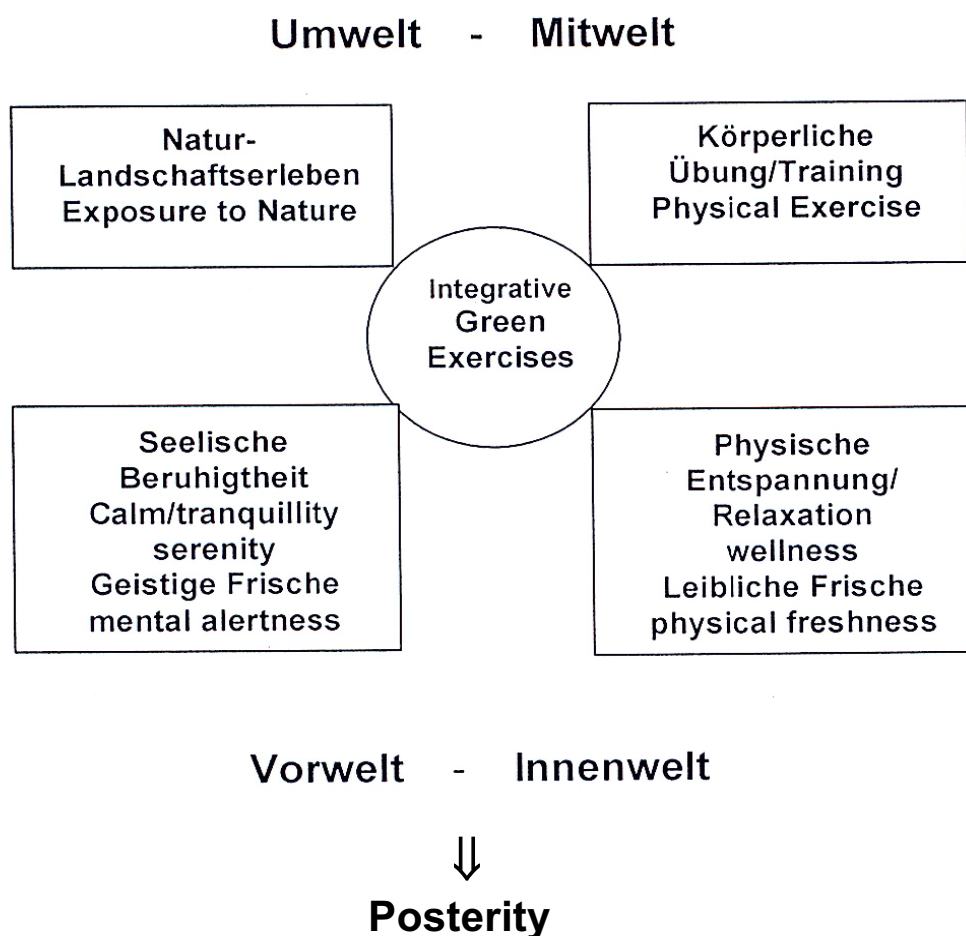
Natural therapeutic practices have been and still are considered in the spectrum of integrative **"methods"**, which the **"method of integrative therapy"** has at its disposal (Petzold 1993h) and for which it provides the metatheoretical and theoretical basis (e.g. running therapy, relaxation, breathing and movement therapy, green power<sup>4</sup> training). **Methods** such as "Integrative Garden Therapy" (IGT) or "Integrative Landscape Therapy" (ILT), each used individually or in combination (IGLT), are thus **"nature-based therapy methods"** within the same elaborate, scientific and praxeological framework as the **"artistic therapy methods" of "Integrative Therapy"** (Petzold, Orth 1985a, 1990a; Petzold, Sieper 1993). As "integrative methods" they are applied and taught within the framework of integrative therapy. The following definition text describes the status and orientation of integrative nature-based methods and therapeutic **"green activity"**.

**"Integrative Landscape and Garden Therapy as methods in the "Integrative Therapy" process make use of man's physical capacity for perception and expression and his evolutionary biological orientation towards the natural contexts of landscapes with their mountains and valleys, forests, fields, corridors, meadows, gardens, parks, bodies of water, etc., to address the body with "all senses" through a "receptive modality" of the nature and landscape experience: walking, hiking, relaxing and resting. Landscape thus becomes a healing, health-promoting, delightful "aesthetic experience". But it also offers an "active modality" of doing, acting, working in the landscape: through shaping and caring, e.g. planting trees, hedges, shrubs, dealing with flowers, soil, wood, fruits, etc. Landscape-therapeutic activities should open wide possibilities to people to become creative, to receive play and free spaces of the experience and the expression, to make experiences of meaningful working and doing, activities, in which they experience cooperatively and co-creatively with other humans, to act, to arrange can. The landscape thus becomes a space for experience, a space for design, a living space. People can practice their dexterity, agility and strength through recreational movement in the landscape: hiking, running, climbing, or through physical activity and work in the landscape: digging, planting, felling and cutting trees, mowing and scything, laying out paths, enclosures, fences, etc. This means that through "green power training" they can achieve excellent physical effects and optimal**

<sup>4</sup> See Petzold 1974j, 1988n; van der Mei, Petzold, Bosscher 1997; Petzold, Orth, Orth-Petzold 2009.

health promotion for themselves. This enables people - clients and patients - in landscape therapy to find access to nature and its riches, to their living beings and to their fellow human beings. All this can give people a fundamental access to their inner sources of life, to the experience of affiliative spaces, a comprehensive conviviality, a closeness to nature and love for nature, can give them *roots, tranquillity, elation*, resilience and freshness. In *encounters* with other people, with animals and plants, isolation can be broken through, fears, compulsions, depression overcome and the resources and potentials of one's own personality unfolded. In contact with nature, in landscape experience and in landscape design, man is able to feel **the "fear of life"** (*A. Schweitzer*), to find himself, to experience beauty, community, meaning and a **"joy of living"** (*H. Petzold*), which gives him pleasure in himself (philauty), in nature (ecophilia) and in his fellow man (anthropophilia)" (*Petzold, Orth, Sieper 2008*).

The landscape and garden therapy practice is based on the model of integrative therapy of the "individual and his world" (*Petzold 1992a/2003a, 397, Fig. 1*).



**The integrative nature and landscape therapeutic concept of the "Green Exercises" by H.G. Petzold** (from: *Petzold, Orth, Orth-Petzold 2009*)

This basic model determines our landscape therapeutic concept. Through landscape and garden therapeutic measures, as presented in this model, we achieve a variety of effects in practice, some of which are highlighted: psychophysical relaxation, stress reduction, mental calm and serenity, physical liveliness and mental alertness, joy and serenity of the mind, but also activation and stimulation of the senses (*Bruce 1994*), overall **physical, mental and spiritual freshness** and a generalized sense of well-being. This approach thus goes further

than a solely functionally oriented understanding of therapy, because **affilial solidarity** (Petzold, Müller 2005) is added as a **sense of community** and "inclusive" **network experience** (Adil 1994; Haller, Kramer 2006), which focuses on "**borderline**" instead of "**demarcation**", against "**exclusion**" (Bauman 2005) of the other, strangers with sometimes cruel tendencies of exclusion (Petzold 1995f; Farzin 2006). Nature connects!

Of the many methods of landscape therapy that we have developed, nature meditations in nootherapeutic practice of integrative therapy are briefly mentioned here (Orth 1993; Petzold 1983a): The meditation of a section in the lawn or in the canopy of leaves, of a finely ribbed leaf or of a moss cushion opens up the chance to find *unity in the manifold, connectedness in diversity* - a topic that still occupies us today (Petzold 1989a; Sieper 2006). The possibility of opening up "ontological experiences" (Alber 1972; Orth 1993) and "Sinnerleben" (Petzold 2001k) through forms of **green meditation** is one dimension of this meditation practice.

Another is - according to our nootherapeutic experience - that "green meditation" allows the "love of nature", i.e. *bio- or ecophilia*, to grow. *Anthropophilia*, the love for fellow human beings, can intensify in this way, because they are "children of nature", living beings like myself. And this in turn can deepen the "self-friendliness", the *philauty*, i.e. the love for oneself (Potreck-Rose 2006; Schmid 2004, 2008).



Shore of the Academy at Lake Beversee

*In contemplation* and its meditative intensification in **contemplation** and *contemplation*, one begins to understand nature, the world, life ever better, gains meaning, perhaps wisdom, and sometimes, as an "ontological experience", a **feeling for the world** opens up. "The mind of the world" becomes transparent in the sense of a "secular mysticism" (Petzold 1983e, Neuenschwander 2007). One experiences a "greening of *the soul*" (*greenery of the soul*), feels



that one belongs to people all over the world, to animals and plants, has a part in the "flesh of the world", according to a term by *Merleau-Ponty* (1964, 1995)<sup>5</sup>. This "flesh" is then often experienced in meditation as "green", like the animated nature, which is touched by the "green finger of God" and equipped with "green force" (*viriditas*), according to the nature theology of *Hildegard von Bingen*. The green vital force of nature is revealed to the meditating spirit when it is completely immersed in it and everything so diligently produced and built up *dissolves in a green thought, in green shadow*. *Andrew Marvell* (\*1621 - † 1678, to him *Craze* 1979) has expressed this in his famous poem "The Garden":

*„Annihilating all that's made  
To a green Thought in a green Shade.”  
(The Garden, Andrew Marvell 1993)*

Well-being, community feeling, closeness to nature, green experience, green energy and "freshness" have been suppressed in almost all forms of therapy (the absence of **freshness** is an important indicator for the development of disease). The integrative approach attaches particular importance to these psychological experiential qualities, which are at the same time "physical sensitivities".



Forest path at the academy - GOING GREEN

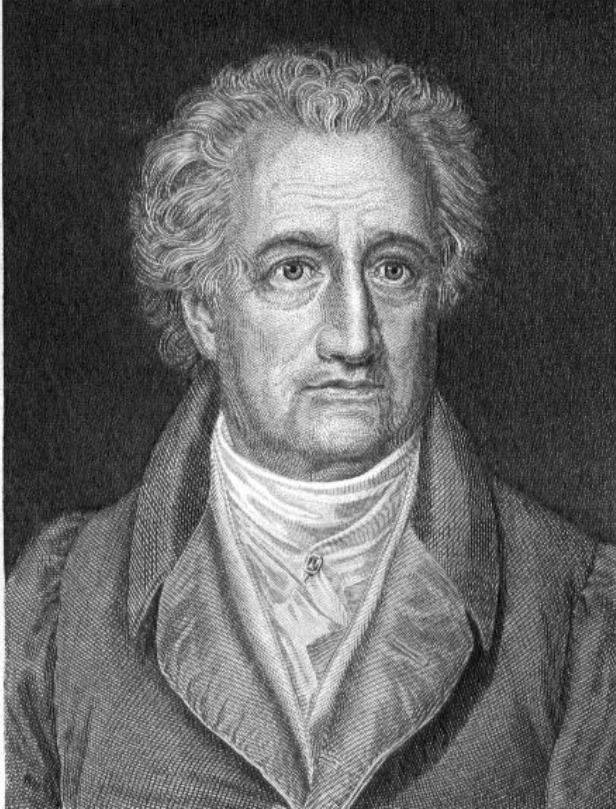
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<sup>5</sup> See here the impressive collage "*LA CHAIR DU MONDE*"...*POUR UNE ANTHROPOLOGIE DU CORPS*  
[http://agoras.typepad.fr/regard\\_eloigne/2007/01/la\\_chair\\_du\\_mon.htm](http://agoras.typepad.fr/regard_eloigne/2007/01/la_chair_du_mon.htm)

by pointing out "ways to health" through integrative health coaching, as we developed it at the EAG with the support of research (Ostermann 2010; Petzold 2010b), by undertaking and accompanying "green activities", "green exercises", "green meditation" and above all by sensitizing people in "complex awareness" for a new "ecological awareness", which is connected with experiencing the necessity of "ecological commitment" (Petzold, Moser, Orth 2012).

Experience of nature, landscape experience, garden experience, forest life, green meditation, health coaching, ecological awareness training show again and again that people feel addressed by nature when they come into contact with it - its beauty, its secrets, its depth and breadth structures - and make their way into the field, forest and meadow and again and again sit "behind the microscope". We have clinically tested these possibilities with the help of research, teaching "garden and landscape therapy" as well as "animal-assisted therapy" in specialised training courses at the "European Academy", which is thus treading "green paths" of innovation (Petzold, Frank, Ellerbrock 2011). We take a clear position in the natural sciences, but this must be undertaken and supplemented by cultural studies, because it is about the topic of *life* and liveliness in the life sciences, and therefore, in addition to the necessary reductionism of the exact sciences, artistic paths of cognition must also be taken so that the empirical view of research does not lose sight of the "magic of nature". Johann W. von Goethe, garden friend and landscape designer (Balzer 1966), had followed this path as a poet and natural scientist, and even though his scientific findings were caught up in many ways by time, precisely this synthetic approach has remained important (Krätz 1992; Magnus 2012; Partenheimer 1989) and also has significance for our time. Alexander R. Lurija (1993), the founder of modern neuropsychological brain research, referred to Goethe as a model for his multidisciplinary research and his knowledge-based, intuitive understanding as a paradigm of an integrative science and spoke of a "romantic science" (Petzold, Michailowa 2008), to which we attach renewed importance today under the impression of the ecological threat. Nature can no longer be seen only as the "object" of science and human pursuit of exploitation: "subdue the earth" (Genesis 1, 28, cf. Krolzik 1989). A "dominium terrae" as man's sphere of dominion is a dysfunctional idea, for we are not rulers of the earth, "maître et possesseur de la nature", as René Descartes formulated it in the "Discours de la méthode" (I, 6), but we depend in all things on it as our source of life. A completely new, **ecosophical way of thinking** is needed here. To represent and disseminate this, we see it as a task of "cultural work" to which we are committed in the integrative approach (Petzold, Orth, Sieper 2013a, 2014a). It is connected with an altruism that is necessary for survival, committed - though critically reflected - (Petzold, Orth 2013a, Petzold, Sieper 2011a), as "service to people" and as melioristic "service to Earth and Nature". We deliberately grasp the altruistic even further than what is commonly done, because we are not only directed at people and in our "cultural-theoretical manifesto" we combine altruism and ecosophy in the idea of a convivial world-living community (Orth 2010), which has to take care of all living things and work for an improvement of precarious conditions (Manifesto II, VII and 9). IX, Petzold, Orth, Sieper 2013a, 2014a, 674ff), because that means meliorism (see above). Our credo is that such a melioristic cultural work must be done "on the WAY" (Marcel 1964) out of "love for nature", "joy in living things" and a good "strength of hope" for us humans.





**J. W. v. Goethe - Garden lover - Horticulturist -  
Natural scientist - Botanist - Enlightenment philosopher - Humanitarian ...**

**ΕΛΠΙΣ, Hoffnung**

Doch solcher Grenze, solcher ehrnen Mauer  
Höchst widerwärtge Pforte wird entriegelt,  
Sie stehe nur mit alter Felsendauer!  
Ein Wesen regt sich leicht und ungezügelt:  
Aus Wolkendecke, Nebel, Regenschauer  
Erhebt sie uns, mit ihr, durch sie beflügelt,  
Ihr kennt sie wohl, sie schwärmt durch alle Zonen –  
Ein Flügelschlag – und hinter uns Äonen!

**J.W. v. Goethe, Urworte, Urworte, orphisch**

**Summary: The "New Nature Therapies". Going Green in Integrative Therapy -  
Ecological awareness work "towards nature": salutogenic experience of nature,  
landscape, garden and animal-supported therapy.**

The article highlights the importance of "New Natural Therapies", which are an important complement to traditional psychotherapies and health promotion, but which are also of eminent importance for the creation of "ecological awareness" and "ecosophical practice" in the face of ecological disasters. In Integrative Therapy as a **biopsychosocial-ecological** procedure, these perspectives have been developed and cultivated theoretically and praxeologically since their beginnings and today it is impossible to imagine their practice without them. The article presents essential basic concepts.

**Keywords: nature therapies, going green, ecological awareness work, ecological philosophy, integrative therapy**

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