

In Memoriam – MONY ELKAÏM

7 November 1941 – 20 November 2020

Dear Friends, dear Colleagues,

Some very sad news has arrived – our dear friend and colleague, teacher, founding member and former President and an Honorary President of EAP, Professor Mony Elkaim died in Brussels on 20th of November.

He made enormous contributions to EAP with his energy, wisdom, political talent and humour in calm and turbulent times of our existence. He always approached people very personally, with an open heart, inviting EAP Board members to his home in Brussels, when we have had EAP meetings in his town. His talent to find a peaceful and balanced solution in most difficult situations was legendary, indeed.

Many of us consider Mony Elkaim to be an exemplary psychotherapist, and as an excellent personality to follow. He will live forever in the hearts of those who knew him.

Rest in peace, dear friend and teacher!

Condolences to his wonderful family from all of us.



Eugenijus Laurinaitis
EAP General Secretary

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To all those who knew him, Mony leaves the memory of a man with exceptional charisma, of a brilliant theorist, of an extraordinary therapist with unique intelligence and intuitions. He was a pioneer of family therapy, which he helped introduce in Europe.

After training in neuropsychiatry at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB, Brussels) and a stay in the United States, upon returning to Belgium he created in 1979 in Brussels the Institute of Family and Human Systems Studies with which he organized the first major international family therapy congresses in Europe in 1981, 1983, 1986 and 1989, to which were invited the American and European pioneers of family therapy as well as representatives of antipsychiatry (whose network he had coordinated in the 1970s). These congresses served as models for those subsequently organized by EFTA.

After coordinating (with Maurizio Andolfi) the European network of family therapists, he was at the origin of the foundation of EFTA which he chaired for many years until. After the subdivision of EFTA in 3 chambers, he became chair of the chamber of Training Institutes (EFTA-Tic). Mony was always concerned with defending the status of European family therapists.

In 1979, he also created the first French-speaking family therapy journal – the “Cahiers Critiques de Thérapie Familiale et de Pratique de Réseaux” – which published both translations of the American texts of the pioneers in our field and articles testifying to the development of these practices in European countries.

Mony Elkaim was an outstanding, internationally recognized trainer in systemic family therapy, stimulating the deployment of the sensitivity and skills of the many therapists he trained and supervised around the world.

Edith Goldbeter

Head of Training, Institut d’Etudes de la Famille et des Systèmes Humains, Brussels.

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With sadness and admiration, I remember Mony and keep him in my Heart as a Friend forever

Alfred Pritz
Former EAP General Secretary



I am so sorry to hear of Mony's passing (Nov. 20th). I somehow thought of him as eternal. In any case, his memory is eternal. Although it has been a few years since I attended meetings of the EAP, where I got to see you all, I remember Mony as if it were yesterday.

His personality really marked me: not just as a gracious humanist, but also as an authentic author (I loved his book, "*Si tu m'aimes, ne m'aime pas*"), and as EAP president, cumulating personal authority with an empathetic ear for all, but especially his ever-present smile and the eyes that went with it.

Mony was also a great dancer, as I learned in a Latin Quarter nightclub "Cave" when the EAP met in Paris. That actually inspired me to take up lessons, and since then dance has become a major hobby for me, thanks to Mony! He was fun-loving, yet somehow found time in an incredibly busy schedule to discover new things and places, like the 'Procope' restaurant, with a small handful of EAP buddies during that same weekend in Paris.

So much more could be said, but these are the first memories that come to mind on hearing of his passing.

Joanne Graham Wilson

Member of IJP International Advisory Board

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I worked with Mony within the EAP for many years: it was a total delight: – we really bonded, or, at least, he made me feel that we did –possibly he did that with everyone. He used to stand up in meetings whenever there was any contentious stuff going on and say, with his great beaming smile on his lovely face: "*Dear Friends, Dear Colleagues...*" – and the atmosphere changed like magic. He was a magician!

Together, in the early days of EAP, one of the contentions was around how the power was distributed amongst the various committees. Eventually, we pushed for and established the European-Wide Organisations Committee (EWOC) during some of the EAP meetings in Rome, in about 1997. This created a necessary balance, along with the National Umbrella Organisations Committee (NUOC), so that associations and organisations representing a method or modality of psychotherapy had their own place of equality within the EAP structure, in parallel with the National Associations. We used to say that the NAs provided the quantitative check and the EWOs provided the qualitative check. He chaired this EWO committee for many years.

Another contention in those days was that it seemed as if everyone was over-involved in the early debates within the Training Standards Committee and that these discussions were superseding the rest of the business of the Governing Board. The 'solution' was to clarify what was called the "ECP Document", so, at his intervention, about 4 of us met at Mony's beautiful home in Brussels for one weekend, in between the EAP meetings, and we went through the ECP document with a toothcomb and made about 100 amendments to it: it then it passed through the next TSC & Board meeting easily – with everyone being somewhat overwhelmed – and the size of the TSC was then reduced dramatically. I am totally convinced that this could not have happened without Mony's intervention and endorsement: he was excellent as a powerful 'influencer' – possibly working best from behind the scenes. However, it was, to everyone's great delight, that he was – eventually – elected as President and then Honorary President of the EAP in 2009.

He resonated – he radiated – an atmosphere of equanimity, luxury, expansion, and friendliness. He was truly a "giant" within the organization, irrespective of his size. We were aware of his prodigious output, especially within systemic Family Therapy; of his Belgium-Moroccan background; of his somewhat radical "anti-psychiatry" endeavours, especially in the 1970s; but none of these seem to matter when with him, one was dazzled by his warmth and charm.

Courtenay Young
Editor, IJP

This is sad news indeed. He was an inspiration to so many – both inside the EAP and outside. Many of us owe him a great deal for his personal friendship and support. Behind that was a rich and extensive life, experienced in depths and well-lived. May he rest in peace.

Adrian M. Rhodes,
Past President, EAP

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I feel so sad to hear this news. Mony and I co-chaired the EWOC and GAP for many years. He was potent and caring: a prince of generosity! It is a great loss for all of us who had the privilege to work with him. Thanks, dear Eugenijus, for your authentic message.

Isabelle Crespelle

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Dear Colleagues,

We all know that, at one moment, there is a time to go beyond. Mony Elkaïm will remain within me as long as I live, and if possible beyond. A true person of human values and more. Thank you, Mony

Paul Boyesen
Past President of EAP

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I am deeply saddened to hear of the death of Mony. When I first arrived in EAP in the late 1990s, he was so warm towards me and helped me understand many things about our organisation. It is so sad to lose a founding member and former President and Honorary President of EAP. His wisdom, diplomacy, warmth and stature have helped to enable the growth of EAP. Rest in peace, Mony! With warm wishes, especially to all dear colleagues who mourn his loss,

Patricia Hunt
President Elect of the European Association for Psychotherapy

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We offer our condolences to the family of Professor Mony Elkaïm. For the European Association of Psychotherapy, there is a great need to start writing its own history. Once again, I express my condolences on the great loss for all of us.

Oleksandr Filts and all Ukrainian colleagues
Ukrainian Umbrella Organization for Psychotherapy

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On behalf of the Professional Psychotherapeutic League of Russia, Prof. Victor Makarov and me personally. I would like to share our deepest regrets for the loss of our dearest colleague, Mony, and to pass sincerest condolences to his family and friends.

Such a big loss for us all! With grief, Sofia Kamalova, PPL (NAO Russia)

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Mony was a great person and I have a beautiful memory of him. This is a great loss for European Psychotherapy. My deepest condolences to his family.

Patrizia Moselli (Italian NAO)

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A great loss! On behalf of the Latin American Federation of Psychotherapy, our sincere condolences and feelings. His contribution to psychotherapy will be unforgettable.

Emilia Afrange
Presidente da FLAPSI – Federação Latino-Americana de Psicoterapia

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Very sorry! He was a wonderful colleague! I remember him well.

Thomas Wenzel

