



## WISDOM IN PRACTICE: FINAL REPORT

The Roman event was initiated by the School of Neo-Existential Psychotherapy (SPEs), in collaboration with the Federation for Existential Therapy in Europe (FETE), which held its 6th annual conference. The event also marked FETE's 10th anniversary.

Unlike a traditional conference focused on the presentation of new clinical and research experiences, this event was primarily characterized by dialogue and exchange, bringing together national and international existential therapy schools, experienced psychotherapists, young students from schools around the world, as well as experts in philosophy, psychiatry, and coaching.

The Existential Psychotherapy Conference offered a significant opportunity for reflection and in-depth exploration of the role of practical wisdom within in the therapeutic relationship, with particular focus on the transition from existential training to the clinical encounter.

The starting discussion was introduced by the consideration that existential therapy plays the role of **metapsychotherapy**, a foundational training for all helping professions.

The body of the conference unfolded through sessions of sharing and dialogue that explored several key themes:

### 1. **From Training to Therapeutic Presence**

One of the central themes that emerged was the need to overcome the dichotomy between theoretical knowledge and authentic presence. The speakers emphasized that training in existential psychotherapy must increasingly focus on the development of self-awareness, deep listening skills, and authenticity, which are fundamental elements for establishing a truly transformative therapeutic encounter.

*"It is not enough to understand existence; one must learn to inhabit it together with the patient."*

### 2. **Wisdom as a Clinical Compass**

The concept of wisdom was at the heart of the discussion. Rather than being viewed as static knowledge, it was understood as a dynamic and situational quality that emerges through experience, doubt, and the ability to tolerate uncertainty. In this perspective, the existential therapist is someone who embraces the complexity of life without reducing it to preconceived explanations, offering the patient a space of both freedom and responsibility.

### 3. **The Encounter as an Ethical and Aesthetic Space**

Various interventions have emphasized the deeply ethical, as well as aesthetic nature of the therapeutic encounter. Existential ethics, which is dialogical rather than normative, is based on recognizing the other as a co-author of the process. The aesthetic aspect emerges in the ability to grasp the meaning, form, and beauty of the human experience, even in pain.

### 4. **Emerging Cross-Cutting topics**

Some of the most frequently recurring cross-cutting topics included:

- Time and finitude: the awareness of mortality as a key to authenticity.
- Existential solitude: not as pathology, but as a fundamental human condition to be integrated.
- Crisis as opportunity: each crisis holds a potential for existential reorientation.
- The body as living presence: the value of the body reemerges as a place of truth, not just as an object of analysis.

### 5. **Existential Coaching**

An important section was dedicated to the role of existential therapy in supporting the well-being of both work and the worker, who, through specific coaching methodologies, can overcome the existential traps present in every work environment.

### 6. **Looking to the Future**

The Congress concluded with a call to cultivate a psychotherapy that is less technique-centered and more oriented towards authentic human connection and the courage to dwell within complexity. It is hoped that training will include spaces for philosophical reflection, group experiences, and contemplative practices, to support the personal growth of the therapist as the foundation of clinical work.

*"The existential therapist does not cure, but accompanies. He does not solve, but sits beside the mystery of the other."*

In conclusion, *Wisdom in Practice* represented an important opportunity to reaffirm the centrality of the human element in psychotherapy, highlighting the responsibility and beauty inherent in the art of encounter.