

**the usa
body
psychotherapy
journal**



Volume 7 Number 1 2008

The Official Publication of

THE UNITED STATES ASSOCIATION FOR
BODY PSYCHOTHERAPY

Table of Contents

Editorial Jacqueline A. Carleton, Ph.D.	4
Guest Editorial James Elniski, LCSW, CBC	5
Alexander Lowen	6
Pulsation: The Growing Edge of Emotional Connection James Elniski, LCSW, CBC	7
Bioenergetics as a Relational Somatic Psychotherapy Robert Hilton, Ph.D.	9
The Clinical Theory of Lowen, His Mentor Reich, and Possibly All of Us in the Field, as Seen From a Personal Perspective Robert Lewis, M.D.	15
Becoming and Being a Bioenergetic Analyst Alexander Lowen's Influence in My Life Philip M. Helfaer, Ph.D.	28
Grounding and Its Variations Odila Weigand, PUC/SP	36
Bioenergetic Analysis in the College Classroom Peter S. Fernald	47
Bioenergetic Pamphlet	52
An Appreciation of Alexander Lowen Alice Kahn Ladas, Ed.D.	54
Gratitude Laurie Ure, LICSW, CBT	56
An Interview with Dr. Alexander Lowen Frank Hladky, Ph.D.	57

©2008, 2010 USABP

USABP Mission Statement

The USABP believes that integration of the body and the mind is essential to effective psychotherapy, and to that end its mission is to develop and advance the art, science, and practice of body psychotherapy in a professional, ethical, and caring manner in order to promote the health and welfare of humanity.



Alexander Lowen, M.D.

Dec. 23, 1910-Oct. 28, 2008

A student of Wilhelm Reich's in the 1940s and early 1950s he developed a form of body psychotherapy known as Bioenergetic Analysis with his then-colleague, John Pierrakos.



An Interview with Dr. Alexander Lowen

Frank Hladky, Ph.D.

Abstract

This article is an excerpt from a 1998 interview with Dr. Alexander Lowen by Dr. Frank Hladky. Dr. Lowen shares some of his childhood experiences, his three years of therapy with Wilhelm Reich, his convictions that founded Bioenergetic Analysis, and the healing of his own "mind-body" split. , Dr. Lowen stresses the importance of healing the problems a person has from childhood and explains how they have become structure in the body

Keywords

Alexander Lowen - Bioenergetic Analysis - Bioenergetics

The following excerpt is taken from an interview of Dr. Alexander Lowen by Dr. Frank Hladky in 1998. The entire interview on the 90 minute DVD, The Energetics of Bioenergetics. Available through The Alexander Lowen Foundation.

Dr. Hladky - It is my pleasure to introduce Dr. Alexander Lowen, who I've known for 30 years, who is the founder, really the originator of Bioenergetic Analysis. He has written a great number of books. I feel fortunate that he has been my teacher and mentor all these years and I would like for Dr. Lowen to go ahead and tell us some of his basic ideas.

Dr. Lowen – I've got a lot of ideas but more important are my experiences...what I've realized that got me into the way of working the body-mind approach. I came out of a family that was split. My father and mother never got along together, they fought all the years that I've known them. And they were two different personalities. My mother was the intellectual, not a great intellectual, but she was always thinking, thinking, trying to figure things out in her head and was ambitious. My father was pleasure loving, kind of relaxed, wanted to enjoy life, but not aggressive.

Dr. Hladky – So, you were aware of these things?

Dr. Lowen – Only as I got older. In fact, I wasn't really aware of how much they affected me until I got into therapy and began to do this work, that they affected me.

Dr. Hladky – Right.

Dr. Lowen – Because what happened to me is that as I grew up, I found that I was smart. My mother had insisted on that you see. Oh, but I loved to play ball. I loved the physical aspect. So you have one leg in one field, and one leg in the other and you're nowhere. And I needed to find something that would bring these two together... And luckily, I ran into Wilhelm Reich.

Dr. Hladky – And tell us how you happen to get yourself into the place where you could appreciate who Reich was and how you needed to work with him.

Dr. Lowen – Well, what happened is that I was teaching schools in summer places and I was an attorney admitted into the bar with a few degrees in law - and floundering. What did I want to do with my life? How could I fit in somewhere that made any sense to me? And I thought it had to do something with bodywork. The reason for that is, when I went away to teach camp in the summer, that's when I enjoyed my life.

Dr. Hladky – You got the feeling.

Dr. Lowen – And I said it's got to be there. So I tried to write a book, which would explain the value of working with the body for feeling, and for a good feeling you know. But I didn't know enough. It was just a feeling in me. So I started to look around for people who understood the relationship between the body and the mind, and there were very few. Either they were intellectuals or they were purely physical people. They didn't have a connection. Until I met Reich. He was teaching at the New School for Social Research. He was giving a course, I forgot the exact title, Character Analysis, I think. In which he explained that there was an intimate connection between the body and the mind.

Dr. Hladky – About when was that?

Dr. Lowen – 1940. Where are we now? Fifty-something...

Dr. Hladky – 58 years later.

Dr. Lowen – And I tell you I was so excited. He let me come into the course, and while I was skeptical about one aspect of his work, which is emphasis upon sexuality, I was enthusiastic about his ideas, about the body-mind connection. Well, eventually, I got into therapy with him. And everything that I hoped for became possible for me. The road wasn't easy. I had to work through a split, it is not something you can heal through your mind.

Dr. Hladky – Yeah, you feel it.

Dr. Lowen – You have to feel it and you have to work it out on a dynamic level. You see. Well I was in therapy with Reich for three years and it was body therapy mostly. We didn't do much talking and focused on breathing. Well, breathing is the most important thing in life. You don't breathe, you don't have any life! And he knew something about breathing. I had some great experiences in that session. And it really changed my life. So here I decided I had to get into this work. And I had to get trained for it. Reich taught me some of the things that he did and knew. And I began then to start to work with people, a little bit. But I knew I had to be more trained so I went to medical school. And after getting my medical degree I came back, and shortly after that I started working on Bioenergetic Analysis.

Dr. Hladky – So about when was that? When was John Pierokas associated with you?

Dr. Lowen – I met him in 1952, after I came back.

Dr. Hladky – That was after you came back?

Dr. Lowen – Yeah, we just started sharing an office, but he was also interested in my ideas, so we teamed up. But that was '52, did I say that? And now, '98. Well, I can only say that in these, more than 40 years, 46 years, of working on the body-mind problem, I think I'm beginning to understand something and I'm going to talk about it tonight. The conviction I have of course is that, you are your body. Your head doesn't control it, in a positive way. It can control it, in some respects, in a negative way. And my job was to get more into my body, so I wouldn't slip between the body and mind situation. And of course that saved my life, fulfilled my life in many ways, and I'm finally coming to a point, where I think I understand how this should work. But it is not easy.

Dr. Hladky – Well, give us some of your basic concepts.

Dr. Lowen – Well, you are your body right? That means if you are going to change in any significant way your body must change. And the body is not something you talk about. Your body is something that can be seen. So if I work with somebody I have to see the physical change on the body level, then I know they're changing and what's going on. But in, more important you see, you are your body and it tells the story of your life. And it also tells where your present problems are. It's all about you. In fact, it is you. So knowing how to read the body, the body language, and understand that it portrays the history of the person, gives you some leverage in helping him make the changes he needs, to find some fulfillment in life. They aren't easy. But if you don't make them, I'm sorry for you, because you lose out on the meaning of life. You will never know the fulfillment, the joy of being fully free in your body, and all your life.

Dr. Hladky – I'm sure that so many people that I have seen you work with, that when they know that you see them through their body they know you understand them. And it develops a working relationship very quickly from your understanding by seeing their body. You don't have to talk to them for hours, and they are ready then to go ahead and begin the work.

Dr. Lowen – Well, let me put it this way to you. The way you make contact with people is physically not psychologically. You don't sit down and chat about ideas. That's not contact. Your eyes look at each other, you touch, and you hear the voices. So it's a real living vital experience, on an energetic level.

Dr. Hladky – And when you see the body, and see what the person's experience has been, and where they are now, how do you begin the work?

Dr. Lowen – Well, what you find is, that all the problems the person has are structured in his body. And the basic problems he has is that he is afraid to come alive and have feelings fully. That's the basic problem. For good reason, but the fact is that this is the basic problem.

Dr. Hladky – Oh, sure. Because usually as children they were reprimanded or rejected whenever they showed their emotions.

Dr. Lowen – That's right, oh even punished. When they get a little wilder, they were beaten you know, all kinds of terrible things happen. So we had to learn to cut off feelings, and the only way to cut off feelings is to deaden your body. That's the only way for you to cut off feelings—dead bodies don't feel. But getting back the feelings, when people are so frightened of feeling,

is a long hard road. It's a worthwhile road. The problem that we have is that the culture is not a body culture. It's a head-end orientated culture.

Dr. Hladky – Absolutely, more and more.

Dr. Lowen – More and more, emphasizing thinking and power and not feeling. Feeling is the last thing that enters the picture of modern life. I'm afraid we're fighting a losing battle on this.

Dr. Hladky – Certainly, socially our problems look like they're getting bigger and bigger all the time.

Dr. Lowen – When you lose contact with your body, you enter a little bit of an insane world. That's what insanity is. You become unreal. You don't feel yourself in a human way. As you see there's a lot of that going around here. I'm afraid that is going to get worse. But you know, if you're going to help people, you have got to first look at yourself and find out how you can deal with the problems that you've had from your childhood. When you can do that, it's not a quick job, but when you do that, you open your heart and your mind and your body to the real understanding of life.

Dr. Hladky – And what people, I think, so often miss in talking about this is that with this comes real pleasure.

Dr. Lowen – Joy, even.

Dr. Hladky – Yes. Because real pleasure is a body awareness. Feeling aliveness.

Dr. Lowen – Sure, sure. So, everybody is worried about health these days, and I think they are right to worry. Because they're not healthy. People are sick out there. Their bodies are grotesque. So let me say this, that a healthy person is really characterized by a body that is alive and vital. Eyes that shine, voice that resonates, a manner that is soft, a sense of grace, a character that is dignified and not dominated by his ego. There is a sense of humility when he talks about things. So, I have to find that in myself, and if I find that in myself, I try to share that with my patients and help them reach it. It's a long road, Frank.

Dr. Hladky – Years and years and every step is worth it. I remember when you said years ago that it was like a gold mine. They take years to get the gold out, but every little bit you get, you get something.

Dr. Lowen – That's right. It's been certainly worth it for me, would you say the same thing about yourself?

Dr. Hladky – Absolutely. You know, both of us are getting mature but I am enjoying the process. In some ways I feel more alive all the time.

Dr. Lowen – That's right, I do. Your body—there's a different quality in your body—it isn't that you have the same athletic ability that you had when you were younger. But, I still retain quite a good body function at 87. But the fact is that you have a deeper feeling and appreciation of life because you're in your body. So, I hope that people will take our experiences that we're sharing here to heart, and the understanding that they can have something like this. But you know that people are so scared, so scared to feel, there's a lot of pain in them, sadness, despair, feelings that they'll go crazy if they open up their feelings.

Dr. Hladky – Because they were so rejected for their aliveness as children and that is so much apart of them still. And we know that it is only through relationships with us, as a therapist they can trust, that they get the courage to begin to open those feelings up.

Dr. Lowen – But does it make a difference how long it takes if you're on the right road?

Dr. Hladky – No, not if you're gaining all the time.

Dr. Lowen – All the time, exactly. I don't mind continuing the work on myself. You can work with the body to increase its aliveness, to give it more energy, to find that you have more—a better sense of control, more self possession. I mean, your body is who you are, and the more you're in touch with the body, the more you're in touch with yourself.

Dr. Hladky – I remember the three statements you used to say: Self Awareness, Self Expression, then comes Self Possession. And I feel that's so true. We have to feel where we are to be aware of our feelings and it takes some time to even get aware of our feelings.

Dr. Lowen – Or, have you got any feelings to work on.

Dr. Hladky – Or haven't gotten any feelings!

Dr. Lowen – Well, I had a patient who came in yesterday and she said she was lost. She felt lost. Well, of course she wasn't lost in what you might call a practical sense. She knew where she was, she can tell you her name, she wasn't crazy or anything like that but she didn't feel herself. In the sense of the feeling of the self, she was a lost person and you can't do that by talking about it. You have to feel it.

Dr. Hladky – You have to begin to feel it.

Dr. Lowen – Yeah. So feeling is where Bioenergetics is at, and unfortunately, feeling is not where the world is at right now.

Dr. Hladky – And usually the development of feeling has to come, as you said, from the body - through movement and sound and energy. Through the aliveness of the body, we get the feeling.

Dr. Lowen – Well, what feeling is a very simple thing. You feel your body and for you to feel your body, your body has to move. Something that doesn't move, you can't feel. It's dead.

Dr. Hladky – If you're dead you don't feel anything.

Dr. Lowen – That's right. So you got to get this body alive, then you can get some feeling. You can talk about feelings all day long, but it's not feeling. It's an idea you're talking about. Feeling is a sensation in the body that comes when you can sense what's going on in your body. You can have good feelings and bad feelings but if you don't sense your body, you're just a spirit. What do I call it—a disenchanted spirit that's wandering around and doesn't know where to go, who he is or who she is. So if you put this spirit back into body; the body gets more alive and the spirit gets more uplifted and fulfilled.

Dr. Hladky – And we find pleasure and joy.

Dr. Lowen – Yes.

Dr. Hladky – Even with all the pain in life.

Dr. Lowen – Well, there is less pain...people carry a pain that is unnecessary. I mean, they're frightened really.

Dr. Hladky – Mostly.

Dr. Lowen – Just giving an example, if they're sitting up as tight as this [taking an extremely rigid posture], and talking—God, that's an awful, painful way of being.

Dr. Hladky – And they may have been carrying that for 50 years.

Dr. Lowen – They're not even aware of it. They don't know what you're talking about when you talk about their tension and how much it hurts because they've deadened themselves to it, you see. Tragic, tragic. For most people, life is tragic. Well, lets hope that anybody who does any therapy with people will really realize the importance of working with the body to make that body alive and change in a positive way. Because what you're doing in your head and those feeling qualities attached to it are very little. Consciousness is a very shallow phenomenon. It's like the tip of the iceberg, what you can be aware of. It's the surface, it doesn't go deep. So, from the conscious level—sure you can change some ideas—like painting the house over doesn't change the house but real change is done on the dynamic inner level, below the level of consciousness and that is what Bioenergetics is. It works below the level of consciousness.

Dr. Hladky – And it's only by the therapist becoming aware of their aliveness and working on their problems that they can be able to help others.

Dr. Lowen – Well I suppose, you know, if you haven't made a trip to a certain place you can't take anybody else there. You've got to make the trip of discovering yourself first, going through your problems before you can lead anybody else. Well, I think that if anybody could commit himself to his own body, you know, in a real way, you'll never regret it.

Dr. Hladky – Absolutely. I want to thank you so much, Dr. Lowen, for taking the time to share your experiences with us and it's always a pleasure to be with you. Every time I've been with you over the last 30 years, which has been many, many times, I've learned something and also enjoyed our contact.

An Interview

Hladky

Frank Hladky, M.D., has played a pivotal role in the development of Bioenergetics. His style of bodywork is based on his strong association with Dr. Lowen for over 40 years. He directed the Tulsa Psychiatric Foundation which he ran partially using a bioenergetic model. Dr Hladky has led bioenergetic trainings worldwide and currently maintains an active private in Tulsa, Oklahoma. www.frankhladky.com

USA BODY PSYCHOTHERAPY JOURNAL

The Official Publication of
United States Association for Body Psychotherapy
Jacqueline A. Carleton, Ph.D., Editor (jacarletonphd@gmail.com)

USABP Mission Statement:

The USABP believes that integration of the body and mind is essential to effective psychotherapy, and to that end, its mission is to develop and advance the art, science, and practice of body psychotherapy in a professional, ethical, and caring manner in order to promote the health and welfare of humanity.

USA Body Psychotherapy Journal Purpose:

This peer-reviewed journal seeks to support, promote, and stimulate the exchange of ideas, scholarship and research within the field of body psychotherapy as well as an interdisciplinary exchange with related fields of clinical practice and inquiry.

SUBSCRIPTION & BACK ISSUES

(all funds USD)

_____ \$65 (USD) Two year subscription

_____ \$35 (USD) One year subscription

_____ \$20 (USD) Single issue

_____ \$25 (USD) Keleman issue

2002 _____ Vol. 1, No. 1 _____ Vol. 5, No. 2

2003 _____ Vol. 2, No. 1 _____ Vol. 5, No. 2

2004 _____ Vol. 3, No. 1 _____ Vol. 5, No. 2

(Selver Issue)

2005 _____ Vol. 4, No. 1 _____ Vol. 5, No. 2

(Research Issue)

2006 _____ Vol. 5, No. 1 _____ Vol. 5, No. 2

(Boadella Issue)

2007 _____ Vol. 6, No. 1 _____ Vol. 6, No. 2

(Keleman Issue)

2008 _____ Vol. 7, No. 1 _____ Vol. 7, No. 2

(Lowen Issue)

(Research Issue II)

2009 _____ Vol. 8, No. 1 _____ Vol. 8, No. 2

2010 _____ Vol. 9, No. 1 _____ Vol. 9, No. 2

(Research Issue III)

2011 _____ Vol. 10, No. 1 _____ Vo. 10, No. 2

SUBSCRIBER INFORMATION

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Country _____

E-Mail _____ Telephone (daytime) _____

An email address is required for electronic notification. A non-AOL address is preferred.

Amount Enclosed _____ Check Discovery Visa MasterCard

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ Security Code _____

Signature _____

I would like information about becoming a member of USABP



The United States Association for BODY PSYCHOTHERAPY

8639 B 16th St. Ste. 119
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: 202-466-1619 Fax: 832-717-7508
E-Mail: usabp@usabp.org
Web: www.usabp.org

The USA Body Psychotherapy Journal

The Official Publication of the
USABP

Editor

JACQUELINE A. CARLETON, PH.D.

Peer Review Board

SUSAN APOSHYAN, M.A.

DAVID BROWN, PH.D.

RUELLA FRANK, PH.D.

MARY J. GIUFFRA, PH.D.

BARBARA GOODRICH-DUNN

ELLIOT GREENE, M.A.

LAWRENCE HEDGES, PH.D.

JOEL ISAACS, PH.D.

GREG JOHANSON, PH.D.

BLAIR JUSTICE, PH.D.

RITA JUSTICE, PH.D.

ALICE LADAS, Ed.D.

ALINE LAPIERRE, Psy.D.

LINDA MARKS, M.S.M.

JOHN MAY, PH.D.

PATRICIA PALLARO, LCMFT, ADTR

MARJORIE RAND, PH.D.

LAUREL THOMPSON, M.P.S.

Proofreaders

ILONA KOVAKS

MARGARET MOORE

Journal Interns

MARIYA BUTNAR

CALIN CHEZNOIU

ILONA KOVAKS

MARGARET MOORE

Production Manager

ROBYN BURNS, M.A.

USABP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VIRGINIA DENNEHY, PRESIDENT

PAUL BRIGGS, VICE PRESIDENT

LYNN TURNER, SECRETARY

JACQUELINE A. CARLETON, TREASURER

MARY J. GIUFFRA

KAREN JACOBSON

GREG JOHANSON

ALICE KAHN LADAS

KATHY SCHEG

KATY SWAFFORD

LAUREL THOMPSON

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

The USABP Journal accepts advertisements for books, conferences, training programs, etc. of possible interest to our members. Please contact usabp@usabp.org for more information.

VOLUME 7, NO. 1, 2008

Abstracts and Indexes available at www.usabp.org

CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE

How does material in this manuscript inform the field and add to the body of knowledge? If it is a description of what we already know, is there some unique nugget or gem the reader can store away or hold onto? If it is a case study, is there a balance among the elements, i.e., back ground information, description of prescribed interventions and how they work, outcomes that add to our body of knowledge? If this is a reflective piece, does it tie together elements in the field to create a new perspective? Given that the field does not easily lend itself to controlled studies and statistics, if the manuscript submitted presents such, is the analysis forced or is it something other than it purports to be?

PURPOSE

This peer-reviewed journal seeks to support, promote and stimulate the exchange of ideas, scholarship and research within the field of body psychotherapy as well as an interdisciplinary exchange with related fields of clinical practice and inquiry.

To ensure the confidentiality of any individuals who may be mentioned in case material, names and identifying information have been changed. It must be understood, however, that although articles must meet academic publishing guidelines, the accuracy or premises of articles printed does not necessarily represent the official beliefs of the USABP or its Board of Directors.

The USA Body Psychotherapy Journal (ISSN 1530-960X) is published semi-annually by the United States Association for Body Psychotherapy. Copyright (c) 2008 United States Association for Body Psychotherapy. All rights reserved. No part of this journal may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission of the publisher.

Subscription inquires & changes of address should be sent to *USA Body Psychotherapy Journal*, 8639 B 16th Street, Suite 119, Silver Spring, MD, 20910. For customer service, call 202-466-1619.

Subscription Rates: Single current issue \$20; \$35 yearly. Postage outside the US and Canada please inquire at usabp@usabp.org.

Postmaster: Send address change to *USA Body Psychotherapy Journal*, 7831 Woodmont, PMB 294, Bethesda, MD, 20814.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND SPECIFICATIONS

First consideration will be given to articles of original theory, qualitative and quantitative research, experiential data, case studies, as well as comparative analyses and literature reviews. Submission of an article to the *USA Body*

Psychotherapy Journal represents certification on the part of the author that it has not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere.

Initial submission should be e-mailed to jacarletonphd@gmail.com as an attachment in Microsoft Word.

Manuscript should be double-spaced in 10pt. type, with at least a one inch margin on all four sides-please include page numbers, otherwise manuscript should be free of other formatting.

Title, full authorship, **abstract of about 100 words and 3-5 key words precede the text.** Please include an endnote with author's degrees, training, mailing address, e-mail fax, acknowledgement of research support, etc.

Authors are responsible for preparing clearly written manuscripts free of errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation. We recognize that the majority of contributors are not professional writers, nor do they function in a publish or perish mode. Furthermore, we are aware that the work of our profession is sometimes pragmatic, associative, intuitive, and difficult to structure. However, a professional journal such as we envision normally accepts only pieces that are fully edited. Therefore, we may occasionally suggest that writers find a reviewer to edit their work before it can be accepted. We will suggest names of possible editors if requested.

References: References within the text should include author's surname, publication date and page number.

Full attribution should be included in bibliography at end. *For books:* surname, first name, book title, place, publisher, date of publication. *For periodicals:* Surname, first name, title of article in quotes, name of publication, year, volume, and page numbers. Or, consult the latest edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The editors are eager to receive letters, particularly communications commenting on and debating works already published in the journal, but also suggestions and requests for additional features or departments. They may be sent to the email address below. A selection of those received will be published in the next volume of the journal.

CORRESPONDANCE ADDRESS

Jacqueline A. Carleton, Ph.D.

Editor

USA Body Psychotherapy Journal

115 East 92nd Street #2A

New York, NY 10128

212.987.4969

jacarletonphd@gmail.com