

Keleman's Anatomy and Formative Process – an approach to understanding mankind Linking two dimensions Anton Darakchiev

Abstract

This article expresses the opinion of a physician, specialized in internal medicine about the Bodywork method of Stanley Keleman and his understanding of the human anatomy. It points out the contribution of Keleman's "Formative Process" and "Emotional Anatomy" to the understanding of human behaviour and the way to change it in a positive way.

Keywords: Anatomy - Formative Process - Emotional Anatomy - Stanley Keleman - Somatic Work - Biological Vision - Human behaviour – Body psychotherapy

International Body Psychotherapy Journal *The Art and Science of Somatic Praxis*
Volume 17, Number 2, Fall 2018 pp 57 - 59. ISSN 2169-4745 Printing, ISSN 2168-1279 Online
© Author and USABP/EABP. Reprints and permissions secretariat@eabp.org

Many health practitioners would admit, that the living body with its different states is the basis for the exploration of what we call physical and psychic health. When I started studying medicine at the Medical University of Sofia, anatomy was considered one of the most important and difficult subjects. The numerous tiny holes, curves and rims of the bones, all with their own names, eventually seemed nothing in comparison with the multitude of muscles and tendons, or the complexity of the nervous system. Although physiology, pathology, biochemistry and many more disciplines gave sense to remembering so many details and led to a better understanding of what happens in the human body, I still did not have any idea how this incredible bio-robot we assembled during the study, year after year, made up the human being. Many years later, after I graduated in Marburg, Germany and specialized internal medicine, having done countless sonographies, endoscopies and punctions of cavities and organs, after having had contact over several years with emergency medicine as well as with energetic medicine in the form of homeopathy, wave energetics, bio-resonance and kinesiotaping, I still felt, that I did not understand much about why homeostasis in the body "suddenly" changes into something, which in common language we call illness. My frustration began to diminish only after I turned to body psychotherapy, where I become acquainted with the works of Reich, Lowen, Myers, Schleip, Dahlke, to mention a few, which showed me a different, wider understanding of the body and the symptoms that none of us likes, when they appear. It was very pleasing to read at last about the connection between the body and emotions.

I am especially thankful to have been introduced to Stanley Keleman and his concept and work about the Formative Process. As a man who graduated from a chiropractic institute, having - without any doubt - an excellent knowledge of anatomy and the mechanics of movement on the one hand, and not being too much involved in the highly specialized thinking of physicians on the other, Keleman developed his own approach to how we learn

and create our reality, explaining it in body terms. Keleman wanted to gain a much wider view of mankind and its place in the universe. Crucial for him was the point, where psychology meets the body in pure anatomical terms, taking into account all the processes that take place in it, and emphasising the muscular-brain connection. Believing that everyone has his/her own destiny, Keleman wanted to make it possible for everybody to fulfil this destiny. Having made the distinction between a psychological and biological vision, he described more fully the biological approach. He observed that most people are totally identified with their social personality, their mental imagery. “They are identified with the part of themselves that judges and controls their excitement and that strives to attain socially acceptable images they have introjected”. (Keleman, (2007). *A Biological Vision*. USABPJ Vol. 6, No. 1 (original work published 1978.)) Keleman states that to be able to interact adequately with others, one has to create and develop one’s own identity, which means to manage and regulate the processes of excitement in the body. Our responses to the impact of the surrounding and inner environments can be seen as certain shaped body patterns, that permit specific kinds of excitation and prohibit others. The body patterns include both the physical and the psychic, which always have to be seen as working together. For Keleman emotions are inseparable from the body and its structure. Feeling, thinking, imaging and acting are all part of our biological process. To be happy, one has to be able to recognize one’s needs and to satisfy them. However, many of us have patterns, which interfere with our needs and lead to the opposite result. We seem to be unable to escape from these patterns or change them. Stanley Keleman’s work emphasizes how one can work with oneself, with one’s own patterns, first becoming conscious of them, working bodily, and then, step by step, changing them.

To make people acquainted with his method, Keleman introduces a different approach to our anatomy. For someone who had learned anatomy in medical school, I was fascinated about how he describes and makes connections between our anatomical “parts”, as well as the connections between them, and the different emotional states.

Keleman shows what is common between all systems. A central element is the cell with its membrane, which can swell and shrink, become rigid or porous, and collapse. In this way the cell pulsates creating a pulsating continuum. In a more general look the body consists of many cells that form layers, pouches, tubes and organs, all of them pulsating and making specific movements, thus creating our inner state that we consider our reality. Excitement driven by energy, is the fuel for the cellular activity. During our lives from birth onwards we get acquainted with our body, using our muscles. We develop specific patterns and form shapes, which are responses to the signals from the inner and outer world. Keleman differentiates four muscle states – dense, swollen, rigid and collapsed. Depending on our character and behaviour (we also call the behaviour shown “mask”, because normally we behave in a way we want to be perceived by people, thus playing a role) these states could be different inside and out. He explains the states of stress, fear, anger and many more emotions and conditions, thus describing vividly the formative process and what happens to us, as in a slow motion film.

In his books and articles Keleman’s language is remarkable and picturesque, with a fine sense of humour. For him, every patient that came to him with a problem to resolve was a human being saying “I’ve got to end the way I am using myself”. Change takes places in three phases, Keleman says. First, the actual condition has to come to an end. A “middle ground” follows, where the new state is not reached, “a confusing state of ups and downs” and at last – the formation of new behaviour.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that everyone who works with people, could profit and learn from Keleman's approach and way of describing the human body. No matter whether you are involved with massage, kinesiotherapy, internal medicine, neurology or are practising as a general practitioner – Keleman's anatomy will enrich your understanding about the human being. For me, as a lecturer of anatomy and physiology in the Bulgarian Institute for Neo-Reichian Analytical Therapy, Keleman's work is a very important link between anatomy and psychology. It helps people to understand how the body and muscular patterns give rise to the emotions, how they change and interact forming the body, and last but not least - how we can work on that. It is a way to influence the formative process, and thus – like Keleman says – one can be the architect of one's own destiny.

BIOGRAPHY

Anton Darakchiev is a Neo-Reichian analytical body psychotherapist who lectures in anatomy and physiology in the Bulgarian Institute for Neo-Reichian Analytical Therapy. He is also a physician and has specialized in internal medicine in Germany. After studying and working in different hospitals and doctor's offices for 17 years in Germany, gathering experience in clinical, general and alternative medicine, he returned in 2016 to his country, Bulgaria, where he works as a body psychotherapist. Anton Darakchiev is a member of Madlen Algafari's team, one of the founder of BINAP – Bulgarian Institute for Neo-Reichian Analytical Psychotherapy.
Email: antondaraktchiev@gmail.com

