

## Memorial for Stanley Keleman EABP Congress - Berlin, September 6, 2018 Ilse Schmidt-Zimmermann

### Abstract

Ilse Schmidt Zimmermann, ex-President of the EABP (European Association for Body Psychotherapy), gave this tribute to Stanley Keleman at the EABP 16th European Body Psychotherapy Congress in Berlin, describing Keleman's theoretical legacy and the contribution he has made to the body psychotherapy field.

*Keywords:* body psychotherapy, Emotional Anatomy, embodied dialogue, volitional muscular/cortical effort, formation process

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Dear Colleagues,

Stanley Keleman, Dr.h.c., a true pioneer and contributor to the field of body psychotherapy, has passed away at the age of 86, just one month ago, on August 10th in his home in Berkeley, California.

What better place could there be than a congress with body psychotherapists from all around the world to honor his person and acknowledge his enormous and unique lifework.

Stanley's friendship and connection with Alexander Lowen lasted until Lowen died. His deep connection with David Boadella is so beautifully expressed in David's poem "Soul Brother", a personal tribute to Stanley, a poem to celebrate a close friendship with him over sixty years.

Stanley loved the honors he received as lifetime achievement awards from USABP and of EABP. Some of you may remember the congress in 2007, also here in Berlin, where he received this honor. For his speech he obtained a standing ovation.

Keleman's theoretical legacy is laid out in eleven books and already perfectly implied in the titles of his books like *LOVE: a somatic view*, or *Emotional Anatomy* or *Your Body speaks its Mind*. This broad spectrum of themes he was looking into and doing research on, expresses the magnificence of him as a thinker, a clinician, a practitioner, author, teacher and mentor for his students. Theoretical and technical precision and artistic creation that are obvious in his poems, complement each other and were in an intense dialogue.

Embodied dialogue as regulatory and self-regulatory processes is at the root of Formative Psychology.

- Dialogue between the different levels and layers of the organism like for example Outside –Inside
- Dialogue between the formed and the unformed, the bounded and the unbounded
- Dialogue between the volitional or voluntary and the spontaneous/involuntary
- Dialogue between the body and its brain, and the brain and the body
- Dialogue of self and other: To be is to be with<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Translated from the German: Da sein ist Mit sein)

Self-regulation is a keyword in Keleman's concept, innate and therefore a function of all that is alive. We have an anatomically and genetically given body. We develop through differentiation and our body learns from itself throughout its development in a continuous process from birth to maturation, through the different phases of childhood and adulthood, from aging towards dying. Formative Psychology sees the continuity of human existence here through the lens of changing anatomical shapes over a lifetime. As embodied human beings we experience anatomical changes as changes in feelings, sensations, perception and thoughts. One example is the development of the arbitrary muscular system. This changes the whole world of a small child.

The impact of relevant relationships and biographical events also shapes the embodiment process. Keleman characterized four different Somatotypes – as described in his book *Emotional Anatomy*.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to the given body and the biographically shaped body, we can, as adults – from the perspective of Formative Psychology – participate and actively involve ourselves in the maturation, change and growth process, even aging process, of us as embodied human beings. Keleman's basic contribution, one contribution of many, is his finding that through volitional muscular/cortical effort we can influence ourselves in a way that brings deepening, growth and change. Keleman's 'How' exercise shows precisely how we can organize and disorganize learned, limited and fixed bodily patterns – you can also say characterological structures. Each step of the way of this bodying practice changes feeling states, exaltation, energy, insights and understanding. "Our body speaks its mind".

In this way the practitioner can develop over time in a truly personal, unique and real way, capable of forming himself, of un-forming himself and regulating himself.

As observed in my clinical practice, patients who get involved in their formative process develop a deep commitment, grounding and profound connection to themselves.

Stanley Keleman, to meet you and to learn from you, personally and professionally over 20 years, had a fundamental impact on me and my life and the life of my patients and students. Thank you Stanley with my deepest appreciation.

## BIOGRAPHY

**Ilse Schmidt-Zimmermann** is a licensed psychologist, psychotherapist and body psychotherapist, student of Stanley Keleman and member of his International Professional Class. She is the director of the German training program in Unitive Body Psychotherapy in Frankfurt and is a lecturer, supervisor and trainer in Psychodynamic Therapy. She was President of EABP from 1998-2002. Email: [ilse.schmidt@mac.com](mailto:ilse.schmidt@mac.com), Website: <http://www.zikp.de/>

<sup>1</sup> At this point of my original congress keynote I had Stanley talking directly to the audience. I showed a 6 minute long video where he introduces his animated version of „Emotional Anatomy“.

You find Keleman's film on You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NJU7iFGyT0>

The whole DVD can be ordered at Center Press from Keleman's Institute in Berkeley