

INTERNATIONAL BODY PSYCHOTHERAPY JOURNAL

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF SOMATIC PRAXIS
INCORPORATING US ASSOCIATION FOR BODY PSYCHOTHERAPY JOURNAL

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International Body Psychotherapy Journal*The Art and Science of Somatic Praxis*

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The International Body Psychotherapy Journal (IBPJ) is a peer-reviewed, online journal, published twice a year in spring and fall. It is a collaborative publication of the European Association for Body Psychotherapy (EABP) and the United States Association for Body Psychotherapy (USABP). It is a continuation of the USABP Journal, the first ten volumes of which can be found in the IBPJ archive.

The Journal's mission is to support, promote and stimulate the exchange of ideas, scholarship and research within the field of body psychotherapy as well as to encourage an interdisciplinary exchange with related fields of clinical theory and practice through ongoing discussion.

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From the Presidents of USABP and EABP

At the recent EABP Conference in Berlin this year, September 2018 we made each other's acquaintance for the first time. We will once again meet up at the USABP conference in November 2018. This has given us the opportunity to confirm our commitment to the International Body Psychotherapy Journal (IBPJ) - one of the cornerstones of both of our Associations.

This current issue of the IBPJ, containing tributes to Stanley Keleman, one of the key teachers and writers of the life of the body, come from the USA, South America and Europe and also indicates a true trans-Atlantic cooperation.

We are particularly pleased to announce the new Editorial Team, composed of members from both our organisations, which will support a fuller and more fluid collaboration between the two Associations in the future.

Carmen Joanne Ablack President EABP

Christopher Walling President USABP

From the Guest Editors

Stanley Keleman saw himself as an educator, not as a therapist. He was clear that his method was not body psychotherapy. However his pioneering work in the study of the life of the body has made enormous contributions to the field of humanistic psychology and body psychotherapy and this is what we honour in this tribute to Stanley.

This precious issue inspired by the death of Stanley Keleman has given a little breathing space between the work of the previous IBPJ Editorial team and the Spring 2019 issue which will appear under the auspices of the incoming Editorial team. It has offered Dr Carleton and myself that jewel of a chance to collaborate once again – this time as Guest Editors. Between 2012 – 2016 we worked together intensively, transitioning the USABP Journal into the new IBPJ. It was challenging and exciting to share the beginning of such an initiative. The incoming team has now had the opportunity to look over our shoulders, share our excitement around the Journal and look into the future – a future which promises ever more collaboration 'across the pond' and a deeper integration of new knowledge coming out of the two Body Psychotherapy / Somatic Psychology Associations, USABP and EABP.

We have made considerable progress with the IBPJ over the last years and with all the ups and downs have consistently produced two issues a year – on time – fulfilling our mission to produce “submissions of original theory, qualitative and quantitative research, experiential data, and case studies, as well as comparative and secondary analysis and literature reviews from clinicians and researchers practicing in all healthcare fields across the globe.” (<http://www.ibpj.org>)

The original agreement between the two Body Psychotherapy Associations was that the Editorship would rotate between the two organisations. Dr. Carleton (USABP) passed the gavel to Asaf Roelof Ben-Shahar, (EABP). The new Editorial Team offers a more direct collaboration between the two Associations offering new perspectives.

Editor in Chief: Madlen Algefari (EABP), studied at the Sofia University, Bulgaria (MA in Psychology) and at The National Academy for Theatre & Film Arts (Drama and Puppet Theatre Directing). She is a member of EABP, the Bulgarian Association of Psychotherapy, the Bulgarian Neoreichian Society, the Section of Psychology and Pedagogy of the Union of

Scientists in Bulgaria and President of the Board of Directors of the Bulgarian Institute of Neoreichian analytical Body Psychotherapy. She has translated much psychological literature into Bulgarian and written several books.

Deputy Editor: Dr. Aline LaPierre (USABP) is currently Vice-President of the United States Association of Body Psychotherapy (USABP). She is the co-author of *Healing Developmental Trauma: How Trauma Affects Self-Regulation, Self-Image, and the Capacity for Relationship*, now available in ten languages. Dr. LaPierre is the creator of NeuroAffective Touch® a neurologically informed psychotherapy that uses touch and bodywork as a vital bridge between body and mind. She is past faculty in the somatic doctoral program at Santa Barbara Graduate Institute (2000-2010).

Managing Editor: Antigone Oreopoulou (EABP). Antigone studied biology at the University of Thessaloniki, completed an MSc on Nutrition at the University of Toronto Medical School, and an MA in Psychology at the University of Indianapolis. She trained in Biosynthesis both as therapist and supervisor. She is a member of the EABP Ethics Committee and Chair and National Representative to the Ethics Committee of the Greek Association for Body Psychotherapy and member of its board. She is also the author of books in Greek and English on communication and parenting.

Assistant Deputy Editor: Christopher Walling (USABP) is President of the United States Association of Body Psychotherapy, Chairman, Education & Outreach, Alzheimers Prevention Foundation; Senior Faculty Member, Prema Yoga Therapy Institute. He is a licensed clinical psychologist who has also been certified in a number of modalities including somatic psychotherapy, emotionally focused couples-therapy, yoga therapy, coaching, and more.

Assistant Deputy Editor: Karen Roller (USABP) is Secretary of the USABP. She is a somatic psychotherapist oriented from the attachment and trauma resolution perspective and has taken a position as Clinical Coordinator at Family Connections in Redwood City.

The Team is strengthened by three Consulting Editors – Barnaby B. Barratt, Mark Ludwig and Rae Johnson. The Peer Review Board, the abstract translators, the International Advisory Board, and other participants in the development of the IBPJ represent both the diversity of interest and the international orientation of the Journal.

One thing that has struck me working on this issue is what a great impact ONE person can make in their lifetime. The authors all pay tribute to Stanley Keleman – the man and his work – both of which have impacted their personal and professional lives in so many ways. It has strengthened my belief that when more minds and souls are joined together we can make an even greater impact.

I see in my mind's eye a stream of people joined together hand in hand - the authors, the editing teams, the peer reviewers, the abstract translators, our secretariat, our designer, our webmaster, boards of the two Associations and the International Advisory Board. They have all collaborated on the development of the IBPJ and I thank them for their participation.

As I think of the new team taking over under the direction of Madlen Algefari, Aline LaPierre and Antigone Oreopoulou with the backing of the two Boards under the leadership of their Presidents Carmen Joanne Ablack (EABP) and Christopher Walling (USABP), the cooperation I have felt in the last months has set my mind at rest. I am ready to relinquish control. My heart feels full - the IBPJ is in good hands and minds.

Jill van der Aa-Shand
Managing Editor IBPJ 2012-2018

A tribute to Stanley Keleman

Stanley Keleman was in many ways a Titan in his contributions to the field of body psychotherapy. I think of him and a few others such as David Boadella, Charles Kelly, John Pierrakos and Alexander Lowen as the progenitors in one way or another of much of modern body psychotherapy. As the generation immediately after Reich, each conceptualized and elaborated aspects of the bodymind that have continued to inspire their critics as well as their followers.

But, unlike other denizens of Mount Olympus, Stanley consorted with all of us, never too busy to answer a phone call or reply to an email sharing his experience and assistance with friends and colleagues over the years. He loved receiving friends and family in his sunny kitchen, and offering coffee from his favorite expresso machine. After the death of his beloved wife Gail, he invested himself in keeping family connections intact, especially rituals around food with his children and grandchildren. Together Stanley and Marilyn blended families and a home life while continuing to work together strengthening the Center Community and deepening the work of Formative Psychology.

One of Stanley's most intriguing works, my favorite, is his colloquy with Joseph Campbell entitled *Myth and the Body* (1999), a condensation of 14 years of their seminars together. "For me, mythology is the poetics of the body singing about our cellular truth. Myth is a poem of the experience of being embodied and of our somatic journey....myths describe the experiences of the body. They are, in fact, metaphors for internal body states, experiences, and development. (pp.xii-xiv) We can learn to live from the body, and to form its responses for our life. living a somatic life is living a mythic story." He concludes his introduction:

Everyone is a hero.
This is a given.
We have a call to adventure.
We refuse.
A crisis ensues.
We cannot turn back -- and we answer the call.
We collect helpers, teachers, guides.
And we cross a threshold into the unknown.
We lose our identity and enter an abyss, a nadir,
the belly of the whale.
We emerge.
We begin traveling back home to what we have known --
recrossing the threshold.
We return.
We have changed.

More than 10 years ago I was fortunate to work with Stanley and many of the practitioners working in his tradition/modality as we put together a festschrift to honor his 75th birthday. (To be found at <http://www.ibpj.org/usabpj.php?id=11>) Not only did I emerge from the experience with an incredible respect for and some understanding of his work, but also of how he inspired and supported those who collaborated with him. Far from followers or "groupies", these people were impressive in their intellectual backgrounds and creative elucidations of Stanley's work. They were also warm and caring and innovative in a way I had really never encountered in other modalities in my 20 years of editing The USABPJ and then the IBPJ.

They, along with his writing and his arts, are his legacy to us..

Jacqueline A. Carleton

Editor Emeritus, International Body Psychotherapy Journal



Stanley Keleman and Marilyn Haller

Who is Stanley?

Marilyn Haller

Although Stanley will no longer be a daily presence, the Center for Energetic Studies and Center Press under the direction of Marilyn Haller will continue archiving his unpublished work, including many films of Stanley teaching his annual programs, as well as keeping his current books and recordings in circulation. His next in-progress book, *Dreams and the Body* will proceed into print. Questions about his work or availability of materials may be directed to her at Center@centerpress.com or 510-845-8373.

Stanley Keleman is an original — a pioneer who forged his own path in the field of applied somatic psychology. For over 60 years he had a continual and indefatigable interest in understanding what it means to be a self-forming human being. Grounded in his own biological and psychological experience, Stanley was a dreamer and a poet, a pathfinder and a visionary, and at the same time a very pragmatic and practical teacher.

His early training in human anatomy and physiology is the bedrock from which he vigorously deepened his biological and scientific understanding. When he died unexpectedly, those books on the cutting edge of scientific thought were the ones laying open and marked up.

Propelled by a persistent and insistent curiosity, both experiential and intellectual, he was a voracious reader, thinker and a lifelong student of what life has to teach. A seasoned and inspirational public speaker, quick to think on his feet, he was also a man determined to put his kaleidoscopic experience into the written word. In his later years, composing

prose and poetry to give expression to his experience was a daily endeavor. Reading it was an adventure, a pleasure and a challenge.

Always honoring embodied experience as his teacher, Stanley mixed and matched concepts that in his lived experience were functional. He articulated what he lived and thought into a language and practice that for him made sense, and he gave to the rest of us a framework of understanding that has a coherence and functional elegance. He gave his framework a name: Formative Psychology®. He worked hard to make complex behaviors more accessible through his invention of VMCE, also known as the Formative Methodology of Voluntary Muscular Cortical Effort.

Stanley loved sharing his experience with others and gave his wholehearted support to those who chose to share his discoveries. He did not believe in training people or creating followers through imitation. No, his intent as a teacher was always to refer each person to their own experience — and from that ground to form their personal expression.

His deep respect for individual empowerment through voluntary self-forming meant, for him, that each person is an artist, an adventurer, a pioneer in deepening their own soul and forming their life. His lasting gift to those of us who have been fortunate enough to know him and to work with him is his unshakable belief in the goodness of primary embodied life — its pulsations and heartbeats — and an unwavering support of forming a meaningful and satisfying present and future.

His presence is firmly embedded in these efforts as we live them and share them with others. Whatever happens after death or wherever his spirit is now, I am certain his exuberant optimism is joyfully cheering us on.



Stanley Keleman: In memoriam David Boadella

Stanley Keleman died peacefully in his sleep on Aug.10th, 2018, just two months after completing his latest book, *Forming your Aging*.

This is a personal tribute to Stanley, as a poem to celebrate a close friendship with him over sixty years.

Soul brother

We were bonded together
through our work, on teaching our trainees
to listen to their bodies and create more ease
so as not to get flooded by trauma.

We swam in the same somatic sea together
and kept truly meeting each other
for sixty years of living our dying,
in a friendship that felt like flying
on parallel tracks, each of us founding
in our own way, our understanding of grounding.

Poems crossed the oceans between us,
and built a presence
for the essence
of contact, which could appear
in the letters which flowed
between us as swimmers
born in the same year.

So far away yet so near
the pain eventually came
out of the blue,
when death claimed you,
my soul brother.

No other
man can replace you as a life companion
in creation:
your aging has ended.

Your soma could no longer be mended.
I carry you with me in my heart
as a pulse of remembered life, beyond the dark.
I embody you still in my dreams, at night
as you keep me company on my journey towards light.

David Boadella

Email: info@biosynthesis.org, www.biosynthesis.org

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 with¹

¹ 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*.¹

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, Website: <http://www.zikp.de/>

¹ 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

Stanley Keleman: Memory, Love and Honor Leila Cohn

Abstract

In this article the author talks about her history with Stanley Keleman and how their growing cooperative partnership led to the realization of the project "Interviews with Stanley Keleman". This article contains an excerpt of their last interview "Quantum Dynamics in the Human Experience"

Keywords: Formative Psychology®, Quantum dynamics, Stanley Keleman, Formative process, Human experience, Incompleteness, Evolution

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*Stanley Keleman with Leila Cohn
October 8 2018*

I will briefly share some of my history with Stanley Keleman as an introduction to the publication of an excerpt of our last interview "Quantum Dynamics in the Human Experience", a DVD we have just launched in July 2018.

When I first read *Emotional Anatomy* I was deeply impacted by the Formative Paradigm, by the vision of the human being as a subjective embodied process, continually reorganizing itself. Formative Psychology viewed the body as an encompassing process – emotional, cognitive, imaginative, sensorial, motoric, subjective – a unified ongoing evolutionary process, inseparable into its parts. This concept spoke to my heart and I moved to the Bay Area in order to learn this work. I stayed in California for six years during which I attended every workshop, class, seminar, group, course led by Stanley Keleman, while also having individual meetings with him. Being in contact with Stanley was a powerful formative process in itself, which would grow and deepen for the next 30 years until his death. I was impacted by his presence, his humanness, his enormous generosity and ability to reorganize himself. He truly walked his talk, and that, for me, was a value in itself.

During those years I definitely embraced Formative Psychology as a way of living and working. When I started preparing my return to Brazil, Stanley and I began to plan his visit here. We also discussed how we would keep in contact and how I would organize the teaching of

Formative Psychology in Brazil. I moved back and founded the *Centro de Psicologia Formativa*® do Brasil, (Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology), where I have formed a professional team and have been teaching Formative Psychology in classes, seminars and workshops for the last 24 years. Eventually, Stanley Keleman became the *Honorary President and the Director of Education and Research* at *Centro de Psicologia Formativa*® do Brasil. This has been a most fruitful cooperative achievement.

Stanley came to Brazil for the first time in 1995 and kept coming back in the next several years, sometimes twice a year, when he gave talks and led workshops. We also enjoyed going to good restaurants, Art and Crafts markets and taking walks on the streets. Stanley liked looking at people and learning about the culture.

I have continued going back to Berkeley twice a year to meet with Stanley and attend his workshops and groups and we have also kept constant contact through phone and on line conversations.

A few years ago I had the urge to keep a record of the evolution of his thinking, and to make it available to the general public. He was developing innovative concepts and ways of thinking about the human process, such as the quantum process in the body, the relationship between the formative practice and epigenetic evolution, the development of extended time, to mention a few. I thought we had to have a record of these developments and also of the way he talked, gesticulated, the intonation and the sound of his voice, I wanted to capture his presence live.

Stanley was a true original thinker, and I thought these new conceptual frameworks constituted an important contribution to the way we think about the human process, and possibly an important influence on the way we approach and work with people in the future. Therefore, it should be recorded. We talked about filming some interviews and initiated the project “Interviews with Stanley Keleman” in 2012, which we kept going throughout the years. So far, two DVDs have come out of the Interview Project *Living Your Older Age* in 2017 and *Quantum Dynamics in the Human Experience* in 2018. Hopefully the next one will be *Dreams and the Body* in 2019.

While doing the interviews Stanley mentioned he would like to have direct contact with my groups in Brazil, and then for the last four years we have carried on on-line conversations on a regular basis with professional groups both in Rio and Sao Paulo. People were able to talk to him directly, we had very good discussions, and those were incredibly rich experiences to all of us. Carrying out these projects strengthened our friendship, as well as the experience of mutual trust and cooperation, which I value wholeheartedly. Our constant conversations stirred my imagination and intellectual curiosity and at the same time filled me with the joy of an affective and fruitful partnership. We developed both a professional and a personal relationship, and Stanley became also part of the family.

In his words, I hereby present what the Quantum Dynamics interview talks about,

Formative Psychology, the life of the body and quantum mechanics are linked experientially, so we can learn about how we think, feel, act and make sense of the world we are living in. I am interested in quantum mechanics for what it has to say about the rules of nature on the micro level, and how do these principles apply to human experience. Applying quantum dynamics to human experience shows us how small events are part of larger organismic events, even when a direct connection seems unknown. The principles of waves and particles, as well as the non-linearity of entanglement support human experience in its micro and macro realities and expressions. Once human bodily existence is understood as localized events in a generalized wave we have a better view of our own responses to

life situations internally and externally. Quantum dynamics allows us to better understand the field of human experiencing, and that is my interest'.

Excerpt from the fifth interview with Stanley Keleman:

Quantum Dynamic in the Human Experience

L: *We are here again for our fifth interview with Stanley Keleman, which is part of our Interview Project and today we are going to talk about the quantum dynamic of the re-bodilying human experience. Hello Stanley.*

I would like to start by quoting you from a paper you wrote: "The quantum principle states that the parts of a system can only be considered as functions of the whole, not as separate parts forming a whole"

How does this statement apply to the somatic process considering the body as an integrated entangled system? What is the quantum process in the body?

S: *The first part of that statement tells you that the organism is a whole and cannot be divided into its parts except as it manifests itself, meaning as an expression, as a way of talking about the process. For example, if you ask people about their experience, they tell it to you in a linear form: this happened, that happened, this happened. But actually, they are coming from a background of experiencing and they are selecting out something to say. The whole is always operating even though it is not manifested in any local expression.*

When you are working with people in a formative, somatic way you start with a local organ -- "Show me your smile. Show me your tension pattern. Show me how you grab somebody." And they will do something with their hands or their mouths or some part of themselves. And they will have a local expression that is a muscular event that begins a process. They don't say generally, "I am squeezing my hands", they say, "Oh, I feel that in my feet". Or "That reminds me of something..." And as you keep exploring that with them formatively-- make your hands tighter, make your hands less tight, make your mouth tighter -- you see they begin to add different parts of themselves. "Oh my back is stiff. Oh I feel my mouth as biting." And you see that they are assembling their experience into the languaging process. What is happening is that local events are generating parts of a whole to come forward and that is nonlinear. The organism is trying to create a way of expressing itself that is communicated to the other person. However, what they don't see is that the whole body is involved in it in its own way. Mostly hidden by clothes. So we may not see them tapping their foot or squeezing their shoulders, but it is there even though local events don't necessarily convey the whole program.

They tell you that the whole body is involved. Even though it may not be manifested on its surface. Once you understand that, you understand that the pattern is being assembled in pieces even though it is already activated.

L: *In the Quantum Dynamic paper you have said that the cortex, as a structure grown by the body, articulates the body's quantum process. I would like you to say more about this as well as about the cortex as a function grown by the body as a whole system.*

S: *There is a relationship between the whole body, the brainstem, the thalamus and the cortex. Basically, the brainstem is the instinctual system, the thalamus is the categorization of behavioral patterns, and the cortex is interpreting a command. There are two kinds of signals reaching the cortex. One kind of signal is, "This is it. Do this. Fight. Run." And the other signal is, "Is this dangerous? Is this pleasant? Is this surprising? Or, how should we react to this?" The cortex is being informed about a decision to be made that alters the behavior -- "Yes or no." That means that the*

cortex is being informed by the body in general and then making maps of the behavior which it can alter by giving suggestions, “Do this. Don’t squeeze so hard. Don’t push so hard.” And it is forming a differentiation of a function. That dialogue is, in fact, the nature of experience and the nature of the human beings’ ability to influence their own behavior. In that sense, the cortex over time acquires a very powerful suggesting force to the inherited brain and the whole body system.

What you get from quantum mechanics is a formula of how they are observing particle processes traveling as a wave or as a particle. We don’t know how a particle gets to a place., What we see is activation of particles at a distance in simultaneous times. As you look at quantum mechanics as a law of nature, it doesn’t really talk about the pattern of experience.

I am seeing Quantum mechanics as an underlying ordering system in experience. It is telling you that the organism is entangled always with those parts of itself that have had previous experience. That is what the genetic code is all about. It is the encoding of former relationships, even though you have an immediate reaction, you have invested yourself in the history of your organism. It is the same about learned behavior. You always involve what has been learned in a situation experientially.

Every act that we do is never a complete act. We can only know partially what we have done because we are in a bigger pattern of organizing than its local event.

Some things don’t appear to make sense. And yet they do make sense. They are not logical. There is a different ordering process. There is a kind of coherence in an act. For example, we see a person acting, doing something and we see that it looks like a smooth walk, but if you observe, you see that the walk is really not so smooth. It is a series of segments aligning themselves, making the best possible act. How an organism operates is always assembling itself in an immediate situation even though it has a sort of accepted program.

It knows something about itself, and things it doesn’t know about itself in the sphere of influence take place. But in the organism’s functioning, what is unpredictable is still present as a direction of movement even though the organism may not know it. For example, I reach out. I find a way to reach out. I don’t know everything that I am doing about it. I don’t know how to manage the vascular system. But it responds to me. I don’t know exactly how someone else is going to respond or how to read back my own efforts. Those things about uncertainty are really statements that enter human experiences, and how do we deal with that?

The march for certainty can be really not as important as managing what we don’t know about something. How the organism is always managing the storms of its own excitement is really more important than trying to quiet the excitement or find an expression for it.

Applying quantum dynamics to human experience shows us how small events are part of larger organismic events, even when a direct connection seems unknown. The principles of waves and particles, as well as the non-linearity of entanglement support human experience in its micro and macro realities and expressions. Once human bodily existence is understood as localized events in a generalized wave, we have a better view of our own responses to life situations, internally and externally. Quantum dynamics allows us to better understand the field of human experiencing, and that is my interest.

L: I would like you to expand now on how the principle of uncertainty is played in the forming process?

S: If you go back to Heisenberg, he would say: “If you know where a particle is, you don’t know how fast it is going. If you know how fast it is going, you don’t know where it is.

Another way to look at that is to recognize that whatever you do, there is a relationship between the excitatory force that fuels an expression and the structure that has to participate in generating it and responding to it. There is always a relationship between structure and behavior. Between

excitement and the generation of excitement. This back and forth in which you are not quite certain of having all the information about knowing where you are or knowing the structure that you are in. And you are moving back and forth in this dynamic of operating in a region of knowing what you can know but you don't have the whole answer or you don't have the whole experience.

Forming a relationship to certainty and uncertainty is central to human experience. The hallmark of being human is that the soma uses its cortex to manage instinctual behavior. When we are able to manage our excitement we establish islands of certainty in a field of unpredictable outcomes. The practice of voluntary muscular cortical effort gives you the possibility to form your life with malleability and the ability to choose your responses, rather than being a victim to instinctual programs.

Once you understand that there is a level of incompleteness of any event that we are participating in experientially, you have a whole different way of looking at how you are in the world, how the world is responding to you. And that uncertainty becomes recognition about the nature of existence, and not that you could know everything about everything.

L: Right on to that, Stanley, you wrote: “The principle of entanglement and uncertainty underlies the human ability to have a choice in creating a future in reforming the present in the past. This is what rebodying is about.” How are entanglement and uncertainty present in human choices regarding the future?

S: *“Be empathetic. Be forgiving. Try to understand. Put yourself in another person's place”. These are all statements of being entangled with them in the human dilemma. And that you don't stand outside the human dilemmas of trying to be alive. You may not be a murderer in some ways, but in certain ways you've had to kill something in yourself in order to get on with the job. So there is an entangled relationship, meaning a direct response to another person's act which you can understand by recognizing that you have had a similar reaction on a certain level of activity. Even though you can't imagine actually murdering somebody, the fact that you have to eat something and that you've had to kill something or pull a plant out, it is still there, at that level. So this is entanglement in a social way. That same entanglement is there in a cellular way. And that same entanglement is there in a constructed organization of cortical realities.*

Entanglement can be being caught up with the whole recognition that parts of you are historically involved in what you have been through, holds true as part of the process in which you can understand yourself and others within a context of evolutionary, behavioral differentiation. It really is about empathy, forgiveness, trying to understand why a person did this and how you want to behave toward it. That is the uncertainty principle and that is entanglement.

I should add that the bodying practice, the use of voluntary muscular and cortical effort in reassembling a behavior -- an experience like reaching out or holding something -- that fact in itself is creating an entanglement with what was and is and it gives certain sensation and feeling, and the ability to edit the geometry of cellular architecture, which gives different sensations, the ability to re-categorize a behavior and change its intent. It can never be totally complete except it has more completeness with behavioral practice, putting it into effect, re-bodying it. That gives you the ability to be a human that is forming its life rather than being a victim to its instinctual programs.

EVOLUTION INVOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION AND VOLUNTARY DIFFERENTIATION

L: In a nonlinear reality, past, present and future are an entangled event and not separate from each other. Please tell us about the concept of influencing one's past experiences with the practice of voluntary effort.

S: *There is no experience without anatomical participation. Experience is a behavioral act. A memory is a behavior. It is a neural behavior located in the brain. But when you say located in the brain, we are talking about structures. We are talking about axons and dendrites and neural bodies and synaptic junctions and pathways that are laid down, that are reflections not only of the neural pattern, but of the muscular action's participation. Changing yourself means changing your anatomy. All experience, all memory is anatomical tissue architecture, and all behavior or experience is always a combination of neural and muscular acts, even when the connections seem mysterious. Changing your experience means changing your memories, and both require changing the shapes of your anatomical architecture. When you talk about a behavior or an experience it is always accompanied by micro- or macro-muscular acts.*

Just trying to remember is a particular act. Just trying to reorganize how you want to say it, is a muscular act. You have to control the tongue and the mouth and so forth. If you have the ability to voluntarily imitate an emotional posture like being angry or being fearful or being concerned, if you could assemble that, you say to somebody, "Show me how you are concerned", you have a chance to edit an instinctual pattern that is generating feelings. And in reassembling it in a voluntary way, you are adding information that alters the anatomy and the experience. And if repeated enough times or with enough intensity, it lays down pathways that acquire duration, meaning the axons, dendrites and neural bodies in a synaptic place begin to fire in a particular new way that makes those pathways have duration. And people do not know that insights, experiences, a-haa's, really are anatomical events that are searching for more body. Even though you know something cortically, it has to be translated into action and you may not know how to act. You will do what you know. You may say, "I know how to act, but I still eat the chocolate." You haven't learned the delay mechanism.

L: *You've already said something about this, but I think it's so important that I would like to expand a little bit. Quoting you: "The practice of Voluntary Muscular Cortical Effort with an involuntary pattern generates probable outcomes in a self-organizing process. We may partly expect this for certain developments. But the process may take another route and surprise us as observers". What does this say about the human process?*

S: *It tells you that the human process is the equation between a given pattern seeking to complete itself and a process of being able to alter it to a certain degree and accomplish either similar or adaptive outcomes. How you satisfy your hunger is a very good example. If you are very hungry, you may devour something. If you have lots of food on the table, you may not know how to eat slowly, but you recognize that if you gobble the food down, you get indigestion. If there is no food, you just gobble what you can. If there is food, you have to learn to eat slowly. Think about the old saying, "Chew your food slowly". They are implying that you have to learn it. And then the organism must do something to learn it. You just leave it up to them to do something, but they may not be able to do it.*

L: *They don't know how!*

S: *Yes, they tell you, "I am chewing it slowly!" (laughs)*

This is the relationship between an instinctual pattern and the emergence of the cortex as a differentiating behavior for the instinctual process. It is a way the organism becomes more efficient in its own structure's use of its own resources. It's Occam's Razor¹ principle in perfection: to do something efficiently, to use less of your resources, not to burn yourself out. And it means longer life. It really has a very powerful evolutionary dynamic involved. We are living this! You simply cannot say that in the last 500 years, the human being is living longer because there is more food, more labor saving devices.

¹ Occam's Razor is the principle of parsimony. Every concept or theory, whether it is in physics or biology, is partially judged not by the fact, but by the economy and the efficiency and the beauty of the concept to explain an event. If it is too complex, then it doesn't serve the principle of efficiency and simplicity. That is Occam's Razor.

You have to see that the organism has found ways to relate not only to changing its environment, but to changing itself so it uses less energy, meaning its own resources to generate glucose and so forth, it uses less of that. It responds with less emergency reactions. Therefore, it adds to its ongoing longevity. And that is important. And this is left out of the whole evolutionary dynamic -- that the organism must learn to make cortical, differentiated suggestions permanent parts of the inherited transition.

L: *Very good.*

S: *What I have tried to do is to bring quantum mechanics into the formative dynamic and bring in the bodying practice. Editing – Voluntary Muscular Effort as a differentiating function – serves the principle. It is ironic because while it creates complexity, it is creating simplicity: an efficiency of use.*

The full interview is available on the DVD, *Quantum Dynamics in the Human Experience* and will be soon published in print by Center Press, Berkeley, CA.

Stanley Keleman was at the same time a teacher, a friend and a constant inspiration. I feel grateful and lucky to have met him and to have formed all we did together. Although we can no longer have live personal conversations, I continue conversing with him within myself. I think this will be an on-going conversation for many years to come. I am now forming the next step in my formative journey, and it includes being deeply committed to carrying on the teaching and development of Formative Psychology, as well as protecting the work and keeping the legacy alive. Formative Psychology is a way of living and working, a way of being in the world. As Stanley always said, "To be continued!"

BIOGRAPHY

Leila Cohn, M.A., is a licensed psychologist in Brazil, founder and director of Centro de Psicologia Formativa do Brasil (Brazilian Center of Formative Psychology), in Rio de Janeiro, where she teaches Formative Psychology to professionals and holds a private practice. She has worked with Stanley Keleman since 1988, having done intensive work at the Center for Energetic Studies (CES) in Berkeley, California during six years (1988-1994). She has been a member of the Formative Psychology International Professional Team since 1992 and has created the project, *Interviews with Stanley Keleman*, which she has coordinated since 2012.

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Learning from and Collaborating with Stanley Keleman: Recollections from the Early Days

Sylvia Adler

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Abstract

In this article, the author shares some of her experiences with Stanley Keleman and with learning and practicing Formative work. She begins by describing her first meeting with Stanley. Next, she describes two early workshops: The one in which Stanley first presented fundamental insights into the Formative Process, and the one in which he introduced the How Exercise. She goes on to describe two of the Family Body programs that Stanley and she later conducted. Finally, she describes a few of her own observations and impressions concerning Stanley's use of himself.

Keywords: Somatic Psychotherapy, Formative Psychology®, Stanley Keleman, Personal Growth, Groups, Family Body Work

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I have known Stanley Keleman for 34 years. At the time I met him, I was disillusioned with psychoanalysis, and I was seeking an alternative approach and guidance in how to strengthen and grow myself. I attended my first Keleman workshop at the urging of friends. Shortly after I attended that workshop, I became part of a circle around Stanley that included professional students and people from many walks of life, eager to learn about his vision of the life of the body. Ever since then, I have been closely associated with Stanley's continuously evolving body of work, as a student, as a teacher and as a collaborator in forming the Family Body approach.

When I began to write this article, I dug up my old notebooks and journals. As I read them over, I was once again reminded of the special magic of the early workshops, so I decided to make those workshops the focus of this article. My notes refreshed my memories considerably and have enabled me to reconstruct and portray exactly when the Formative process became central to Stanley's understanding of the life of the body and how he first presented his thinking about it; his introduction and use of Formative journal work; his introduction of the five-step process of Formative work, the How Exercise.

Of course, learning from a great teacher involves learning much that is less tangible than the content of concepts and the rules of techniques. Stanley has always conducted experiential groups, and I have often been present during his one-to-one work with group participants. In this context, I have learned a great deal by observing the enormous range and skill of his applications of Formative principles and the How methodology to help participants elicit and form new possibilities for themselves. Stanley's charged interactions with provocative group members have also taught me a lot. To convey something of this dimension of my learning experiences, I offer a few observations and impressions about Stanley's use of himself.

First Encounter

It was in 1972, shortly after I moved to San Francisco from Chicago, that I first heard about Stanley Keleman's body-oriented work. At that time, I was exploring some of the new approaches in personal growth work that were proliferating as part of the Human Potential movement. Several people whose opinions I valued urged me to go to a Keleman workshop; they could not praise him enough. I stayed up all night one night reading *Sexuality, Self & Survival* (Keleman, 1971), and attended my first Keleman workshop that summer.

Limited to 16 participants, the workshop took place over 2 days in a comfortable house in the Berkeley hills. We sat on pillows surrounding a mattress, listening to Stanley's interchanges with group members who sought his help with various personal issues. The member would be asked to stand and walk around a bit while Stanley studied his or her structure. Then the member would be asked to engage in some kind of physical movement, often while lying on the mattress. The connections between the person's presenting issue and what he or she had been asked to do were not always clear to me. My background as a clinical social worker and family therapist, and as a former psychoanalytic patient, offered only limited guidance as I struggled to understand what was going on. I did recognize that something powerful was happening. I was experiencing a high level of visceral excitement and a wide range of emotional responses as I listened and observed. I sensed that other group members were having a similar experience, and at some point I realized that each person's physicalizing of his or her situation was setting the stage for, and evoking the expression of, the next person's issue. My own work in this workshop remains vivid—partly because it was my first experience with Stanley and partly because I was in a personal crisis at the time. Starting my life over again in California was proving to be more daunting than I had anticipated, and my coping resources were wearing thin. Also, I felt intimidated by the seeming sophistication of the other participants in the group. So at the same time that I was experiencing an increasingly urgent need to reach out for help, I was unable to summon up my speaking voice—I literally could not open my mouth and ask to work. Finally, to my surprise and relief, Stanley recognized my silent distress and invited me to explore my state with him. My intensely constricted throat quickly became the focus of the work.

Looking back now, after 34 years, I understand much better than I did then what happened next, and the nature of Stanley's interventions. First, he instructed me to externalize and enact my self-strangulation by strangling a towel; then he had me gradually do that less. This freed up my voice, but I still needed further help in how to use myself bodily to form a personal expression of asking for help. Growing up in a family where self-reliance and not-needing were highly valued, I had learned all too well how to stifle myself. However, I hardly knew how to use myself to express a need (although, paradoxically, I was able to serve as an advocate for others). In this first powerful experience in my personal somatic education, Stanley began to teach me two things: How to influence what I did know how to do (an extreme form of self-inhibition), and how to form a bodily expression of what I did not know how to do.

In retrospect, I recognize that Stanley was already applying a number of Formative principles in this work with me. First, the principle of always beginning with the person's existing pattern of self-use, and having the person embody that pattern more intensely, so that an enhanced template is formed, which can then be influenced by the deliberate exercise of voluntary effort. Second, the principle that recognizes that when an ingrained pattern of self-use is modified, the body does not know what to do next; another behavior must be deliberately formed and practiced. And third, the principle that recognizes that relief, and the beginning of

real transformation, come when a person, with another person's help, begins to do something for himself or herself.

Milestones in the Development of Formative Psychology

Is there one thing in the known universe that is not subject to the law of evolution?

— Jack London, Martin Eden

After this first experience of working with Stanley, I wanted more. I attended another two-day workshop and began having private sessions. However, I was a practicing psychotherapist and, before long, I decided to study with Stanley, in the hope of bringing bodily perspectives into my professional practice. From Fall 1972 through Spring 1973, I attended a series of one-day professional tutorials. Here I found myself part of a loose circle of interesting people, all devoted to learning from Stanley. I think we all recognized that he possessed great wisdom about the life of the body, and wisdom about how to help ourselves and for others to connect with themselves bodily and emotionally. I also recognized that, at the ground floor, in myself was a deep hunger to feel more alive, a hunger to expand my ability to behave more as an actor than as a reactor in my own life.

In reviewing my notes from these early programs, I see that Stanley was already talking about the Formative process of all animate life, and that he saw this Formative process as the basic structuring force of human life. For example, in my notes from the tutorial on May 19, 1973, I wrote: "What a person is forming (the tending toward) is one of the deepest ongoing events in his life. The Formative process can be facilitated or inhibited but cannot be stopped." And again: "Think of yourself as a process, rather than as a body or a mind."

In subsequent programs, it became abundantly clear that Darwinian evolutionary theory influenced Stanley's thinking about the life of the body. The evolutionary principle that shapes change over time is the basis for Stanley's assertion that our bodies change shape over time, and that the shape of the body can be influenced by voluntary effort. By the early 1970s, Stanley's work already focused on encouraging what can be, rather than on restoring what was damaged or lost.

Because Stanley was an early member of Alexander Lowen's Institute for Bioenergetic Analysis, and was one of its senior trainers until 1970, he continued to be considered a bioenergetic therapist long past the time when the term was appropriate to describe his work. In fact, many other significant influences contributed to Stanley's anatomic-emotional approach. To begin with, there was his early chiropractic training, which gave him an extensive education in human anatomy. This was followed by his private practice as a chiropractor in New York, where he saw many patients from the Broadway theater world and was able to learn a great deal about how people used their bodies in singing, dancing and acting. Nina Bull, a lay researcher who directed a Research Project for the Study of Motor Attitudes at the Psychiatric Institute in New York City, and who is best known for her Attitude Theory of Emotion, was a mentor and a personal friend. Stanley often credits her with giving him a creative and profound understanding of the social implications of neurology. Karlfried Graf von Dürckheim, founder of the Center for Initiation and Religious Studies, was also a mentor who gave Stanley a deeper understanding of the value of subjective experience. A later, but also very important, influence was Joseph Campbell. Over a 10-year period, he and Stanley did personal growth workshops together and charted new territory in the relationship between anatomy and mythology.

I would say that by the early 1970s, Stanley's vision of the life of the body, and his techniques of somatic work, had progressed to a level of distinction such that his body of work stood on its own. However, it was a body of work without a name of its own; it was known simply as somatic-emotional work, I believe until the early 1990s, when it was christened Formative Psychology.

Following are descriptions of two early ground-breaking programs in the history of the Formative approach.

"The Body as the Living Expression of the Formative Principle," October 8-12, 1973

This 5-day residential program was held at the Westerbeke Ranch, in Sonoma, California. Here for the first time Stanley made the Formative process the central focus of the group. He spoke of our living in a continuous field and being always in the continuum of our lives. He said that being in the Now does not exclude the past or the future. We did an exercise that consisted of taking a memory and stretching it out to its past and future. Our focus during the week was to establish, in both narrative and embodied form, where we were in our lives at present, so that we could learn what we were tending toward and could participate in our own formativeness.

This was also the first workshop in which participants were asked to keep a journal. This enabled them to do a great deal of work on their own, to take the lead in helping themselves, and to generate a larger frame of reference for themselves. In our journals, we addressed fundamental questions about our lives. These questions were always connected to how we used ourselves bodily and emotionally and were designed to further the process of developing an embodied ego. Our Formative journal work was also the springboard for working one-to-one with Stanley in group sessions.

We were directed to pay great attention to our subjective experiences of excitation—how our excitement peaked and flattened, and how our excitatory processes were fundamental to the way in which we left one world and created another.

Here are some of the evocative, Formative questions that we worked with:

- Where do you perceive yourself to be at this stage of your existence, in both your inner and outer worlds?
- What are important stepping-stones—events that led to this place in your life?
- What is your relationship to your body?
- What is the image you have of yourself that you polish? What do you suppress and repress of yourself in the service of that image? Can you identify how you enact these processes physically?
- What do you experience yourself as tending toward?

In the closing session of the workshop, we each dealt with the question: what have I formed of myself this week, and what am I tending toward?

"The Life of the Body," July 1-19, 1974

This 3-week program, the first of Stanley's annual Summer Institutes, was held at the University of California, Berkeley and was attended by about 45 participants. A number of other body-oriented therapists besides Stanley conducted sessions, and I was one of the people recruited to serve as a small-group facilitator. These small groups met regularly; in

them, participants could express and deal with their confusion regarding the conceptual material and the exercises. They could also share their bodily experiences during the group exercises, and receive acknowledgement and support from other small-group members.

Our conceptual frame of reference in this program was the Formative process, which Stanley now described as having three phases: Endings, Middle Ground and New Form. Each week of the program, and its attendant exercises, emphasized a different phase. We began with the question, “What is Ending for you?” Our focus was on learning how we responded bodily to both large and small endings and turning points in our lives, and on how we could voluntarily influence our process. For example, we worked with how we ended being merged with our parents on the way to forming a private, unshared part of ourselves.

In the second week of the program, the focus was on experiences in Middle Ground, the place of less form that we find ourselves in when something has ended or is ending, whether we choose to end it or not. We called this “being in the soup.” We learned how we functioned when we were in a relatively unformed state, with the globalness, the increase in excitation, and the expansiveness of this state, which for many people may be quite threatening. Our question here was, How do you handle yourself in the Sea of Creation?

In the final week of the program, we focused on self-gathering, helping ourselves to make more form and experimenting with new forms of self-expression. We explored stances of being the fool and being the knower; we learned how to “sing our own song.”

It was in this program that Stanley first introduced the How Exercise, or Five-Step Process, the ritual that translates Stanley’s understanding of the Formative process into a series of steps that people can use to voluntarily influence how they function. The How Exercise remains the core methodology of Formative work. It is much easier now for Stanley and others who do Formative work, myself included, to guide novices through the exercise. But when we first tried to do this exercise at the 1974 Summer Institute, it was amazingly difficult to get what Stanley was after. The experience was something like grappling with a Zen koan. This may have been because people were generally attuned to focusing on what they experienced (for example, “I’m a tense person”) rather than on the how of their experience (“How do you make the tension?”).

In this introduction to the How Exercise, Stanley had a standard response to people who volunteered to talk about their process in the group. He would interrupt these people to ask how they were doing whatever they were talking about. The interchange might begin something like this:

Woman Participant: I’m a very insecure person...My mother was very hard on me, and my father was basically absent. I do grounding exercises to help myself.

Stanley: How do you make the insecurity? Participant: (long pause)... Very anxiously. Stanley: How do you make the anxiety?

Participant: (long pause)...It just comes whenever I’m with a person in authority, Stanley: Is the insecurity here now?

Participant: Yes!

Stanley: Can you experience how you’re lifting and bracing your chest and holding your breath as you talk to me? Participant: Oh!

Stanley: How do you lift your chest? Participant: (appears to be thinking)

Stanley: You’ll never be able to figure it out. You need to do the movement.

Participant: (intensifies bracing her chest) Oh, I can feel that I’m stiffening my upper body.

Another example:

Participant: I'm too much of a good boy. Stanley: How do you make your good boy? Participant: (long pause)...By inhibiting myself. Stanley: How do you inhibit yourself?

Participant: (long pause)...By not breathing deeply? Stanley: How do you do that?

Participant: (long pause)...By raising my shoulders and tightening my belly.

It seemed as if the How questions could go on indefinitely. Eventually, it became clear that one could not answer the questions by consulting one's ideas about oneself. The answers could come only from the direct experience of one's process. It became apparent that the value of doing the How Exercise lay in the broadening and deepening of one's experience and one's behavior, not in finding answers. The person who was going on the journey with Stanley was entering ever more deeply into the somatic-emotional organization of a fundamental aspect of his or her way of being in the world. In so doing, the person was learning experientially how to participate in his or her own Formative process.

Throughout this 3-week program, we deepened our connections to ourselves bodily, becoming more intimate with our patterns in the different phases of the Formative process. We also did self-drawings—pictures of our bodily somatic-emotional attitudes, which we called somagrams—and Formative journal work. I found my experiences in this group enormously enriching, both personally and in the way they developed my ability to bring bodily perspectives into my own clinical work.

The Family Body

From early on, Stanley was deeply interested in family process, in working with the ways in which family dynamics and experiences influence how people form and use themselves. In 1974, he invited me to co-lead a professional group where he could apply his biological vision to family work. The idea was that I would offer psychosocial perspectives to complement his observations and insights. In 1975, we co-led an experiential personal growth group. By this time, I was experienced in working with the How Exercise, and I was ready to join Stanley in working somatically with people who were exploring family roles.

"The Family Body," January 29-March 5, 1974

The program consisted of six 4-hour sessions, held once a week over a 6-week period. The workshop announcement read: "This workshop is for exploring how our physical selves are formed by family roles. We will look at two family bodies in the group to explore their dynamics from this perspective." Actually, we were fortunate to have three families agree to participate in live sessions in front of the group. At the end of each session, the family would leave, and the group would discuss what had transpired and what we could learn from these family bodies. Stanley focused on the character structure of individual family members, suggesting linkages between, for example, a mother's collapsed chest and her inability to support her own assertions when she dealt with her recalcitrant husband. He was opening a window into a whole new level of understanding, and relating to, family process for me and the other therapists in the group. I had to expand my understanding of families as psychosocial systems and reconcile it with this new approach—looking at families and individual family members as bodies. It was a challenge that I willingly took on.

“Individuality and Community,” March 15-June 14, 1975

This experiential group met once a week over a 3-month period, beginning and ending with an all-day session. Stanley began by asking participants to make two somagrams—a large drawing of their family of origin and a self-drawing. Then he asked them to do journal work, addressing the following questions:

What role did you play in your family of origin and what role do you generally play in a family situation or group now? What did you want to be, but could not be, in your family? For example, did you want to be angry, or sexual, or assertive? What did you want supported by your family that was not supported? Who in your family did you feel blocked by? Or is there a situation in your family that blocks you?

At this point, participants worked on their own, making their somagrams and writing in their journals. They were also asked to physically mimic their somatic stance in various family scenarios—for example, when faced with a disappointed parent. This was the beginning process of making connections between their family images and stories and the physicality of family life and family roles. Next, we asked the participants to organize themselves into subgroups consisting of five or more members each. These subgroups would remain their “families” throughout the program. Within each family, members chose their own roles, but they also negotiated with each other about certain roles—if a member wanted someone to play her older sister, for example, and no one had chosen this role. Then these simulated families began to role-play various scenarios. Stanley and I visited each family, simply observing at first, and eventually intervening.

It quickly became apparent to us that these constructed family roles, and the role-playing interactions, created an intense interpersonal environment, which we later dubbed a co-bodily field. Within this environment, each person’s character structure and characterological issues revealed themselves. We used a variety of strategies to help people connect bodily with the way they functioned in their roles, and to influence how they functioned. One strategy was to stop the role playing abruptly and have participants freeze-frame their stances, using the How steps first to intensify and then to de-intensify their shapes. So, for example, a man playing an intimidating father might begin to experience how he both stiffened and inflated himself, and how he could deflate and soften this shape, enabling him to relate differently to the man playing his rebellious son. Many group members found it easy to make connections between the shapes they assumed in their simulated family and how they functioned in the real relationships in their lives. Another powerful strategy was to have participants talk to their families about the way they experienced the role they had assumed, and then exaggerate the physical organization of the role. The other members of the family would then imitate the person’s stance, generating a kind of somatic hall of mirrors. When the stances were taken down, a rich nonjudgmental sharing of experiences ensued. A third strategy was to have family members give each member nonjudgmental feedback about their somatic experience of that member’s stance. For example, “I notice that I become agitated and pull back when you reach out to me.” Of course, this feedback is equally useful to the person offering it.

After everyone had participated in the family role playing, much direct characterological work could be done. For example, group members could identify the role that they habitually played in family conflicts—provoker, initiator, avoider and so on; then work could be done on how they organized themselves bodily in these roles. We also called their attention to other aspects of their experiences in their family roles. These included how they participated

in rejection interactions, and how they managed themselves when desperate about certain impulses that they were determined to control around others. We asked each person to identify the feeling that he or she must generate in order to feel contact, exploring how the person used him or herself to evoke this feeling.

In the many years since we co-led these two programs, Stanley and I have continued to do Family Body work—together and separately, in group settings and in clinical practice. We have published articles on the Family Body (Schmidt [Adler], 1979; Schmidt [Adler], 1981; Keleman & Adler, 2001). Currently we are preparing a comprehensive anthology of lectures and articles on the Family Body.

Co-leading with Stanley was always tremendously challenging for me, and it was not necessarily easy for him. Energetically, we were not well matched, and of course, he was the conceptual visionary and a sophisticated somatic practitioner, while I, for a long time, was a beginning student. But it has been a Formative partnership, and the creative rewards have always outweighed the difficulties.

Stanley's Use of Himself

Stanley has a dominating presence and has always been very charismatic. He was only 40 years old when I met him, but he seemed older, probably because he bore himself with authority, like someone with a great deal of life experience. It is still common for people to be at least somewhat intimidated by the range and depth of Stanley's knowledge of anatomy and physiology, as well as by his deep understanding of all aspects of the life of the body. High-spirited, exciting, alive, unpredictable, a distinct authority figure, as well as someone capable of great empathy and tenderness, Stanley has always been a natural magnet for intense transference projections, both positive and negative.

On the Human Potential workshop circuits of the 1970s and 1980s, Stanley had a reputation as a "force to be reckoned with." Sometimes, this seemed to attract people who were looking for a strong person to pick fights with. He did not put up with participants who acted out in his groups, and he could be quite intimidating when seriously challenged, evoking the Brooklyn street fighter of his youth. He did not want the ethos of emotional catharsis and dramatic "breakthroughs" so prevalent in personal growth groups to permeate his workshops and would set firm limits on anyone who seemed to be moving in this direction. Sometimes, in the early workshops, he allowed himself to respond emotionally to camouflaged provokers and other people wearing the various guises of negativity. New students are often surprised by his confrontations with direct and indirect hostility. Personally, I have always found it refreshing and illuminating to experience a group leader willing to show many sides of himself, and I consider Stanley a model of emotional expressiveness. He has also always been a model of someone who works on himself and uses his own work to grow himself.

Of course, the vast majority of Stanley's interactions with participants in his groups have been free of conflict, and these interactions too have taught me a great deal. His capacity to be present with another human being is remarkable; his somatic intuition awe inspiring. I have never forgotten my own experience of meeting Stanley and feeling that I was really being seen by another person for perhaps the first time in my life.

As a family friend, I have experienced directly Stanley's strong commitment to family and family participation. He and Gail were married for more than 30 years and raised two daughters together. When Gail died, Stanley became a model for someone going through the grieving

process, and the ensuing processes of reorganizing family and other important connections.

Over the years, Stanley has shown me and others how we can live the stages of our lives, from the Alpha shape to the mature and Second Adult into the late Adult. He has shared a great deal in his writing and teaching, and by how he lives his life, influencing and forming his own process.

Concluding Remarks

In concluding this memoir, I want to share a recent dream and the story of my work with it.

I dream that I am with my ex-husband. We stand close together, and I experience a strong physical relationship between us and a warm, intimate feeling. I'm a little edgy, though, because I know it's time for us to separate—he has a plane to catch and I need to be somewhere else. But he clings to me in a very insistent way and won't let go, until finally I wrench away and push him back.

Now I am on the upper floor of a hotel, trying to catch an elevator to go down to the ground floor. The elevator stops several times, but the doors close before I can get on. I become more and more frustrated. Another woman arrives on the scene. She finds a back door into the elevator. In the blink of an eye, she opens it and gets on, slamming the door shut in my face. Now I'm really angry, but I also feel helpless.

I wake up.

A few hours later, feeling frustrated with the task I am doing, I remember the dream and decide to work with it. I assume the stance of my angry, frustrated, helpless self and hold my intensification of the stance for a long time. I feel as if I'm back in the dream, continuously being shut out of the elevator. Gradually, I work with softening the pose. As I disorganize my posture, pulsing waves of excitement fill me. I use myself to make a shape of containing this liquidity and as I do, inside myself, I hear Stanley's voice saying, "you are a wave." I recognize that the place I was shut out of was myself, and now I am in myself. I taste the experience of my own pulsating being and recognize that I am no longer angry or helpless, and I know that I will be able to deal with the task at hand. Once again, I am filled with wonder and gratitude to my great teacher, who has led me to the gift of my own aliveness and Formative capacities, and has helped me to share this gift with many others.

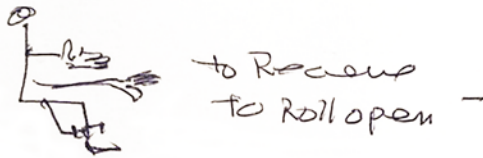
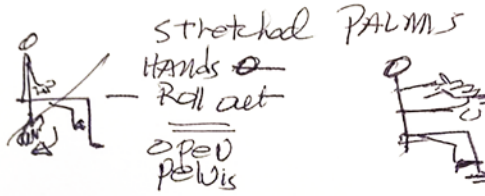
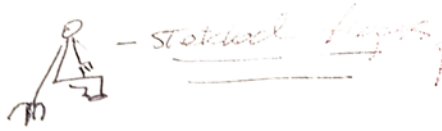
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BIOGRAPHY

Sylvia Adler, MSS, LCSW, is a psychotherapist specializing in Formative work who practices in Berkeley, California. She holds a master's degree in clinical social work from Smith College (1956). A cofounder of the Family Institute of Chicago, she is a longtime practitioner and teacher of family and individual therapy.

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The present of presence
unbounded - open mouth

Forming a Life Post Stroke

Alison Bonds Shapiro

Abstract

The impact of Stanley Keleman's work can be seen very clearly in its application to coping with the sudden changes in form and function that result from a major neurological injury. This article first describes a personal journey through recovery from such an injury using the tools of formative psychology. The article then discusses how the author includes those tools in training programs for survivors and family caregivers in both inpatient and outpatient settings. These training programs are designed to teach self-management skills for supporting ongoing neurological recovery and forming a life post injury.

Keywords: Stroke, Neurological injury, Neuroplasticity, Engagement, Internal Narratives, Sensory Awareness, Attention, Agency, Mirror Neurons, Self-compassion

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"...the ability for self-management is an antidote to helplessness. It offers a way to expand what nature has given us; it is a way to form and deepen a life, not simply be formed by life."

Stanley Keleman

At the time I met Stanley Keleman in 1995 when I was 45, I was a classic James Joyce character, living three feet from my body, uncomfortable and not grounded in my own experience. Noticing my distress, my then new husband Bob, a wise and thoughtful man and Stanley's long-term friend, suggested that I might just want to consider working with Stanley.

Warily I climbed the stairs to Stanley's office and sat down in front of him. I was prepared. I was very good at outwitting therapists. I knew a bunch of them personally and had worked with a few professionally. But I didn't know Stanley. The first time I sat across from him, my having said not much more than, "hello", Stanley fixed me within that lovely, wise gaze of his and named the central dilemma of my life. I was stunned but I was sold.

I worked with Stanley personally for two years and I have continued to study Stanley's teachings and learn from him ever since. It's a good thing I have. Ten years after meeting Stanley, six weeks after I turned 55, out of the blue, I suffered two brain stem strokes 24 hours apart.

I hope you never have this experience. But if you are interested in formative psychology, catastrophic neurological injury is quite an opportunity to study what happens to a person when they suddenly can no longer make the shapes they have used to take action or form a sense of self.

I was paralyzed on one side, wildly uncoordinated on the other. I couldn't swallow, focus my eyes, walk or sit up, among many other things. I was terrified. I could not organize my body. I could make very few voluntary shapes. I had a feeding tube. I could not make my throat work. My emotions were untethered from my frame. My roles, my ideas of who I was and would be,

were disconnected from my direct experience. What was I going to do?

My prognosis was poor. It was surprising I was still alive. 50% of brain stem strokes are fatal and I had two. Not good odds. No doctors were willing to hazard a guess as to my possible outcomes. After 10 days in a hospital I was sent to inpatient rehab, deep in despair and confusion.

I was profoundly injured and facing a life of unknown challenges. Although it was not uppermost in my mind at that moment, I was to learn that I had an extraordinary advantage. I had Stanley and I had Stanley's teaching.

How have you affected your own change or been victim to the processes that forced you to change? And how can you participate in the process of self-formation, permitting growth to occur with you taking an active part?.

Stanley Keleman

Most of our physiological models of recovery from accident or illness are passive. We wait to get better. My hand is cut: I put on a bandage and I wait. I get a cold: I go to bed and drink tea and I wait. If the cold develops into bronchitis, I go to the doctor and the doctor gives me medicine that I take and then I wait. This is the model we know.

Stanley, however, had taught me a different model. Stanley taught me to observe, experience, and then take voluntary action. It turns out that with a neurological injury waiting is the single most counterproductive thing any of us can do.

The process that leads to functional gain in neurological recovery is the process of neuroplasticity. When the brain is injured, tissue dies and it is not replaced. Rather than growing new brain tissue the brain will, if given enough incentive and information, attempt to make new connections around the missing brain tissue in order to regain function. It's rather like a detour around a roadblock.

If not given incentive the brain will make a habit of the disability and go on to other activities. This part of the process is called "learned non-use". It's the same process, the constant reorganization of the brain in response to learning. But one direction leads to increased function and forming a satisfying life post injury and the other leads to increased dysfunction and an ever-growing sense of helplessness.

Working with this information is neither as simple as it sounds, nor is the information generally taught to people who suffer neurological injuries or the people who will become their family caregivers. It's not simple because post injury I was living in a body that was radically changed. Doing the most elementary thing, like trying to brush my teeth while sitting in a wheelchair with one hand paralyzed and the other very difficult to control, took all my attention and creative strategies. The tool I was using for anything, my own body, was altered beyond my comprehension. Everything I tried to do was exhausting. Every task was monumentally difficult.

It is hard to describe the sense of helplessness that arises when you suddenly cannot swallow or move significant parts of your body. But embracing helplessness would not have benefitted me. Although I was unaware of it then, I had no time to waste. My brain was changing in response to my injury as I lay there. I could participate in that change and attempt to direct it or not. If I did not, my brain and body would have increasing difficulty in having a conversation with each other and working together.

I did not immediately remember what Stanley taught me. I spent a considerable amount of time feeling absolutely overwhelmed before I began to understand. But after awhile the skills

Stanley had taught me gradually began to reassert themselves. Those skills were not mental constructs. They were embedded in my experience and would not be ignored.

As the skills Stanley taught me began to reassert themselves, I began to observe myself and look for what I could do. I had no time to stop to ask myself if my responses were appropriate. I had to use all my available energy to engage my body to cope with my changed abilities in order to initiate any action I wanted to make. I had to engage my brain and I had to do it NOW. I had to figure out how to form a life. As difficult as it was, once I could again swallow, I had to figure out a strategy that would allow me to get food in my mouth without spilling it all over me.

Even though I was terrified and in deep confusion and grief, because I had studied with Stanley, I also had some context into which to put this experience. Stanley had taught me and I understood in a deeply visceral, lived way that I was a not fixed object. I knew that my body was designed to change and was always changing. I knew that the shapes of my body and my life would and should change over time. I knew that clinging to a fixed idea of myself would not help me.

Internal narratives are profoundly important and those narratives break when a person experiences a catastrophic injury. The simplest stories about who I was no longer served. I couldn't tell myself a story as basic as what I was going to wear. I couldn't dress myself. Those narratives were radically changing and had to be adjusted. But I could not afford to get stuck in thinking about the loss of my stories. As I was to come to understand, my stories would develop and be adjusted primarily through my own actions, not by thinking about them.

Having practiced the formative exercise with Stanley over the years, though at that time I could not have named it as I can now, when my strokes occurred I already had moment-to-moment lived experience of self-directed neuroplasticity. That too was a huge advantage. Despite what the predominant medical opinion was at the time, which said that I was basically a helpless recipient of a temporary neurological process, I had lived the experience of directing a conversation between my brain and my body. I knew in my bones that it was up to me to find a way to work with what was present. And I knew that if I did, I would support whatever process was underway, even if I didn't understand it.

As I began to take intentional action, I engaged my felt sense and opened my awareness. This too Stanley had helped me learn. He helped me understand how to live in the sensory awareness arising in my own body. The formative exercise had shown me the patterns I held and shown me how those patterns showed up in my direct experience.

Because I had learned to be comfortable with and even curious about feeling difficult things in my own sensory experience I could turn towards the exercises my physical therapists were doing with me in the rehabilitation center. I could choose to participate as completely and as deeply as I could, moment to moment. Even if these experiences were weird and distressing, I could choose not to shy away. These days I now know that this quality of attention, of turning towards, is a fundamental tool in functional recovery.

After therapy I used this capacity to focus on my sensory experience when I was in my room, in my bed. I turned my attention to what I felt. And what I felt began to be a clue for me to create my own, tiny, beginning movements in my paralyzed hand. Lying in my bed I focused on the one little twitch that was developing in one thumb joint in the paralyzed hand. I felt it. I focused on it. I savored it. As I did all this, my brain, and therefore my embodied experience, began to change. After a while the twitch got bigger, and then bigger, and then finally after a few days I could make one very small voluntary motion in that thumb joint. That was the start of the process that has resulted in restoration of complete function in that hand.

Since my strokes in 2002 I have studied a great deal of information about neuroplasticity and the way in which the brain restores function after an injury. What is clear is this: engagement, attention and sensory awareness are the keys to restoring function. Engagement, attention and sensory awareness stimulate the brain. Neuroplasticity is the response of the brain to stimulation and we directly influence the process by our own actions. Stanley was right. We can self-direct a great deal of the neuroplastic process.

Everything Stanley ever taught me was in service of my developing and sustaining a sense of agency. According to his teachings, life doesn't just happen to us. We shape our lives by the way we use ourselves to respond to whatever comes our way. The loss of a sense of agency after a neurological injury is immediate and is reinforced moment-to-moment by the experience of paralysis. Regaining a sense of agency is the beginning of hope.

Stanley had trained me to be an observer of my own processes and to intentionally engage in them. I might have been profoundly injured. I might have had no idea how much functional return I would achieve (and I have achieved a great deal over the years) but, because of Stanley, I knew that I could directly participate in the process of discovery of what would be. And I knew that I was the only person who would ever discover how I could form a life after two brain stem strokes. Hope was alive in me. It was up to me to live what Stanley had taught me.

Three years after the strokes, having already formed a remarkable recovery and a very full life, I wanted to give something back. I knew that I had had advantages that others don't have. So three years after the strokes I began to teach.

The financial reality of our insurance reimbursement system is such that therapy is very limited. The hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people experiencing neurological injuries every year and their family caregivers have little access to ongoing help. And so many have little idea how to help themselves.

What once functioned on automatic pilot, for better or worse, now requires intentional, skillful engagement. Often, particularly in the midst of the trauma when choices of engagement are so critical, people don't know how to and why they should engage. I wanted to share what I have been privileged to learn.

These days I teach both inpatients and outpatients and their caregivers. In an inpatient setting I typically give a 1½ hours talk. That's about the maximum that anyone in that situation can tolerate. In an outpatient setting I created and teach a 6 – 8-week course called "Mindful Stroke Recovery". Whenever possible I co-teach with my friend and fellow stroke survivor, Rita Martin, who helps develop both the inpatient talk and the outpatient course and knows a great deal about forming a life in difficult circumstances. Her injury was so great that her speech center was destroyed and she did not speak a word for a year and a half. Today she teaches.

Some people, when they are inpatients, catch on very quickly. Some require much more training. Some embrace helplessness and will not engage. The other day Rita and I gave an inpatient talk and a badly injured man and his wife attended.

As usual, in an acute inpatient rehab setting we had little or no expectation that we would ever see them again. But the next week we were back to give an outpatient class and the two of them happened by the room we were in and came to see us. They could not say enough good things about what had happened for them as a result of what they had learned from us.

They are quick. They understood immediately what was needed, that neuroplasticity meant that other parts of the brain could be recruited to take over the work of the damaged parts. And they understood the critical importance of their own engagement and the way they used themselves in the neuroplastic process and in forming their lives post injury.

In the week since we had first seen them, this man had begun to regain movement in his hand. In that week he had begun to be able to stand. The therapists in the rehab center are brilliant. Their work with him is the key. But his engagement drives their ability to help him. And his wife's understanding of what he is doing and why it is important eases her stress and brings her own restoration of a sense of agency. She now knows that she can intentionally shape her responses to work with and support the changes occurring in both of them.

Together they will find a way to form satisfying lives as he continues to recover. They can not know what those lives will look like. But they do understand now that what they do matters. They say they will come back for the longer outpatient training. We hope they do. There is much to learn.

Teaching the inpatient group is complex. We never know who will come or what conditions and relationships they will bring into the room. The last class included: a 20 year old woman who had recently been diagnosed with a rare, very difficult neurological disorder and had limited mobility, along with her caregiver mother; an older man with a stroke with mobility issues and his caregiver son, both of them just back from a trip to Europe together; a man who had broken his neck and had bilateral mobility issues and his wife who would be his caregiver; a man with a stroke who had cognitive and short term memory issues, along with his devoted and frightened wife; a woman who had communication and cognitive issues and would periodically utter only the words, "help me" along with her husband who was her caregiver; and a man with one-sided paralysis and his extended family including an eight-year old grandchild.

Many people who come to the class have trouble mustering enough energy to attend for an hour or more. Some require another person to periodically tilt them in their wheelchairs for pressure relief. Many have other serious illnesses in addition to their neurological issues. Nurses come in and out to give medication. Some inpatients are in pain or overwhelm and have to leave. In this setting we have a very short window of opportunity to teach something useful to help them form new shapes that will support their recovery efforts and rebuilding their lives.

The primary method of teaching engagement I use in this context is storytelling. Active storytelling provides lived examples of shapes that inpatients and family members previously may not have considered. These shapes include shapes of active engagement, living rich lives with residual disabilities, finding joy and gratitude in the midst of the trauma, and many others. Because the audience witnesses the story and the storyteller, the shapes resonate in them through the actions of their mirror neurons. These resonances then become a sort of scaffold upon which they can try out shapes that might fit for them. It's an invitation. They can feel for a few moments what it would be like to hold a different shape and how that shape might serve them.

The medical reimbursement model has no place for this class. I have been teaching it since 2005 on a volunteer basis. Rita joined me in teaching it in 2008. Because of the HIPPA laws we have no long-term access to the inpatients and able to follow them unless they come back to see us or contact us some other way. However, the rehabilitation professionals who work at the hospital tell us over and over and over again that we change functional outcomes.

Recently, the rehabilitation hospital leadership has been developing an interest in researching the effects of the inpatient talk. If that happens, then there will be a greater opportunity for us to work with and follow people who attend.

The longer, more structured outpatient class has a known role in the medical model. This class is characterized as patient education for disease management. We are already doing preliminary research on this model, with research grant applications in process for funding for more in depth research.

The outpatient class, taught in a 2.5-hour class over 6-8 weeks with “homework” provides far more opportunity for teaching and learning. We teach 6-9 survivor/caregiver couples at a time, using an interactive circle so that all class members become both students and one another’s teachers. We may have spousal couples, partner couples, parent child couples, sibling couples and/or close friend couples. Whatever the couple configuration each couple collectively brings three entities into the room: survivor, caregiver and the relationship between the two. All three have to be met, respected and managed.

Various methods and practices are taught. Stanley’s formative exercise teaches self-awareness through providing someone the opportunity to directly experience the patterns and shapes we make and self-management through learning how to voluntarily make different shapes.

We also teach this and, given the nature of the challenge and the group we teach, we use a variety of methods to do so. Primary techniques include: training attention, self-compassion, sensory awareness, forming the shapes of our lives, mindful movement and compassionate communication. Like Stanley’s work, these practices are grounded in information about how they work and why they work. This understanding is essential in order to make the skills useful as long-term voluntarily applied methods for shaping the lives of the survivors and their caregivers and their relationships to one another.

When we find the joy and meaning in our lives in the process of making itself rather than in the thing made, when we find our satisfaction in the doing, not the having, we can work with any circumstance. We can restore a sense of agency. No matter what we are given in this life, we can use ourselves to form a rich life.

This legacy, this ability to pass on some aspect of his teachings, is Stanley’s gift to me and to all the people whose lives I have the privilege to touch. It is with the deepest gratitude that I acknowledge this gift. Although I know that I am not and never will be a trained formative psychologist, Stanley’s wisdom continues to live in me and influence the lives I encounter.

BIOGRAPHY

Alison Bonds Shapiro, MBA, is a speaker, author and teacher who teaches recovery skills to individuals with neurological injuries, their family caregivers, and rehabilitation service providers. She is the author of *Healing Into Possibility: the Transformational Lessons of a Stroke*, the creator of the Mindful Stroke Recovery course, and the co-producer of the film, *What Now? Sharing Brain Recovery Lessons*.

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The Sudden Loss of Stanley as Catalyst for Growth

Christina A. Loeffel

Abstract

In 1989, Stanley Keleman described the organismic experience of sudden loss and how we can work with our somatic structure to form a personal ending rather than be lived by the inherited startle and shock reactions. The author describes how she used this talk and Voluntary Muscular Cortical Effort to help form her own responses to the sudden death of Stanley.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, Formative Psychology®, Sudden Death, Shock, Grieving

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My father died at the same age and in the same manner as Stanley: one day I was speaking with him and the next day he was gone. The kind of death we are unprepared for, except perhaps by virtue of their increasing years. This is the loss that Stanley described so deeply and eloquently the first time I met him. It was 1989 at the Zen Center in San Francisco and he was speaking to many people who worked in their Hospice services and a friend of mine suggested we attend. The title of that talk is *Coping with Loss: The Somatic States of Grieving* and I have been listening to the CDs of that talk over and over since he died. The memory of something he said called to me and I searched for it finding unexpected gems too many to enumerate here.

He was talking about our relationships as a physical structure both inside and outside us when he said “*sudden death... is as if somebody ripped out this membrane – reached in and disrupted this inner structure.*”¹ It’s a graphic image of a reality anyone who has experienced the grief of sudden loss would recognize. I learned that Stanley was describing experience as the organism knows it and how that organismic experience forms our subjective reality. That day at the Zen Center I began a lifetime process of learning and experiencing how he understood human experience and how to use what I learned for my own personal and professional life.

He differentiated the sudden death from a death we are prepared for like the one I experienced with my 100 year old mother-in-law several years ago. She lived near us for her final five years and I participated in forming her ending in me exactly as Stanley had described in his talk. By the time she died I had grown a new structure for her to live on in me and so did her son, my husband; our grieving process was short and we were ready to go forward in our lives with her inside us and no longer outside us. There was sorrow and the adapting to her absence but there was not the shock which accompanies sudden losses.

“*In the sudden death basically what you are dealing with is shock... and the cardinal distinction about shock is that it’s accompanied by anesthesia... shock is a total freezing of the organism... every time there is a resolution of some of the shock, you will be flooded with old feelings, old images, old behaviors that come from nowhere as part of the attempt to piecemeal, reorganize, what was.*”

¹ All quotations are from *Coping With Loss: The Somatic States of Grieving*. CDs are available from Centerpress.com

This description applies to all shock experiences and the five somatic formative steps Stanley called Voluntary Muscular Cortical Effort (VMCE) can be used to manage ourselves when we experience this inherited shock reaction. As he made very clear, these steps are a natural organismic function that we can learn to use to participate in the forming of our own lives.

Although there was shock for me when I received the call Stanley was gone, I had been lucky enough to have him help me with the sudden losses of both my brother and my father many years ago. Now I would use what I learned and walk myself through the process of using VMCE without Stanley to turn to if I got stuck.

Grieving and mourning are meant to be a reforming of the survivor's relationship to the lost object. Grieving and mourning is a temporary withdrawal from the active field of being engaged with the world because you don't have a proper form inside yet of what was lost. So it requires a withdrawal, or a self-gathering, or a retreat in which you are reorganizing your feelings, how you act and what you think, and the relationship you had with this person. We can get caught in this shock pattern. Grieving is, in its function, an attempt to reorganize what was unformed by a loss.

He shared in this talk his insight that endings are in reality how something new forms, differentiating this from the more familiar notion that we have to end something to start something. It is not a linear process. Inbuilt into the forming process is the ending, the disorganizing of a form, and it is in the unforming that something new appears and eventually takes shape. An example he used is that a baby being born does not begin its infant life at birth but is involved in ending its uterine existence. This insight could only come from a deep interest in organismic life that Stanley possessed. A deep interest he shared with all who would listen.

There was a community of people that formed around Stanley which he described to me as "loosely knit". Many involved themselves with him and his work for decades, in their own ways and timings, some traveling long distances across land and sea to participate in the workshops where he shared himself so generously. Each of us shares the loss of his sudden disappearance and has the opportunity to use VMCE to make something from what is ending, for ourselves and for the community of people still living. Some might find helpful another description he gave of the pain of sudden loss.

An internalization (of a person) is not a picture; an internalization is a field of excitement, a field of feeling that you and the other person have an interior that you share. Well then, a loss is a wound to that structure; it's a wrenching, twisting, breaking of that membrane, that form. There is no surface to react with you... The pain (of an addict) is that the open-ended receptors are searching for the key that will fit in the receptive side so there is a wholeness... When there is... a lack of that, then the person feels out of their gourd. They are in agony because they don't have the surface to respond to. It's the same thing with a loved person... the life field sustained between two people is gone. They are abandoned, deserted, in a desert... loss, especially of a personal event... you have a loved one, you give it personal meaning and then it is pulled out, you are literally pulling a skin off the person, pulling a body out. The sensing organs and the pulsing organs, the heart, belly, skin, no longer expand out and meet a familiar structure but meet nothing – confusion: pull back, reach out, pull back, reach out; obsession.

Listening to this talk on loss, I am reminded that he has been writing and speaking about many of these things long before I met him and that there is an extensive body of work from which I can continue to grow myself and deepen my internal experience of what he communicated both publically and privately. I learned from him that we co-body ourselves in relationship with others and this process is critical for growing ourselves. I smile to remember some of the times and ways that he pushed me to know that he was available for this co-bodily relationship. In retrospect, I see only kindness and caring but at the time more painful feelings were present for me. By listening now to his voice on these CDs, remembering him, myself and others on that day I met him, I am gathering into myself a shape for giving meaning to the years of knowing Stanley and forming a future that contains and gives value to all that he is to me.

He continued to differentiate, deepen and apply his vision of life's organizing processes right up to his last day and for many of us it was a full-time job keeping up with him. Being with him, whatever the context, required my full presence and attention and this co-bodily relationship called on me to voluntarily engage with myself in the present. It is a rare relationship that recognizes us in ways we have yet to experience and supports the forming of attitudinal shapes wanting to be lived. It is even rarer that relationship be with someone who had such a sophisticated understanding of what he himself was doing, an understanding that grew out of his own embodied life, his unfailing interest in embodied life, and his powerful desire to share that with others. He continually gave voice to the process of bodying, an experience universal to all of us. He took pains to order his insights into practical form for all of us to apply in our personal forming, our evolving processes of living. And he made it seem simple despite the depth and complexity of what it is to be human. Stanley and I spoke often of the value of living an ordinary human life and the choices he made to do that. He was many things to many people and in the multiple settings I was fortunate to know him, he was first and foremost a man making the same efforts to form his life as he was helping others to do.

All of us are living in an animate field. We are part of a living field and individually we are like raindrops in an ocean. Each of us is born from a living field, an animate field of aliveness, and each of us has a boundary of aliveness that we share with the bigger ocean. Each of us represents an organized field of life inside a bigger field. Every person as they grow to be an adult sustains a life field, in a life field that sustains them. And this is experienceable as being alive.

He told me years ago that it was okay with him when people hear his voice inside themselves, as he understood this is a natural process of bonding, an aspect of co-bodilying. His voice inside me was strong in the weeks after his death and I knew that what I and others were doing in response to his absence was choosing "...from where comes the value that will help you reconstitute your life – that will be the major crisis...a loss is either a gift, a challenge, catastrophe or injustice. Either you have organized a victim helpless stance or an investigatory stance...you are going to consider an event as a catalyst to your own self-forming or you consider it only as an insult that has to be accommodated."

For me, the choice was made years ago, even before I met Stanley, and he and his work is what got me through the impasses I did not know how to navigate. His deep trust in the organizing formative process of life is growing in me as my memories of Stanley weave a new form inside me from which I will carry him, extend his life as he described it, to my own

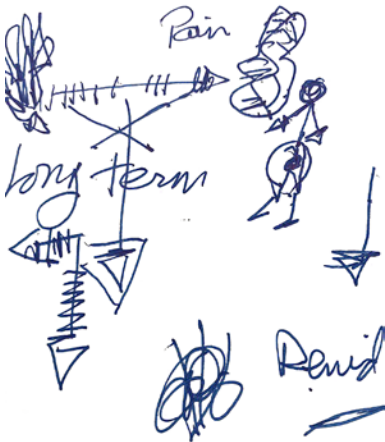
ending. My work now is to attend to and participate in the ending of the physical contact and connection with Stanley. As I shape my grieving, sadness and loss I can enjoy, as I know he would, anticipating how and what will appear as the future reveals what is yet unknown in this asymmetrical open-ended life formative organizing process that I learned from him.

It's in this wave, this field that we know we belong and that even though someone is not here, we're in some big ocean and we're together and we can live and we live again and we keep living...In the pulsatory continuum there is a powerful life intelligence, a source of knowing something that higher centers can use as a reference, a source, so that the pulsation for me, the pulsatory wave, the organizing process is the basic life self that feeds us what we need to think from, to image from, to act from.

BIOGRAPHY

Christina A. Loeffel, Licensed Marriage Family Therapist, maintains a private practice in San Francisco and San Anselmo, CA, including supervision of trainees and interns, where she applies the principles of Formative Psychology® learned from Stanley Keleman.

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Formative Psychology® – an Education not a Therapy

Carola Butscheid

Abstract

Stanley Keleman's Formative approach is an education in and an evolution of personal somatic knowing. It is an approach where experience itself gives rise to meaning and each person can learn to form their experience into the satisfactions and happiness they seek.

Keywords: Emotional Anatomy, Formative Psychology, Embodying Experience, Somatic Practice.

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Stanley Keleman's 1985 book *Emotional Anatomy* and the more recent DVD *Emotional Anatomy* (2014) have established an original way of conceiving and understanding how the soma develops and forms itself. In my role as Co-Director of the "Institut für Formative Psychologie" in Solingen Germany and organizer of Stanley's European programs for the past 27 years I have participated in the evolution of his work and have seen him again and again direct a person to their own experience as the most important source of knowing. His direct and practical teaching about forming somatic experience empowers each person to be their own authority for knowing themselves and growing themselves. There is no stereotyped or idealized way to be. Experience itself gives rise to meaning and each person has the opportunity to learn to form their experience into the satisfactions and happiness they seek.

Over the years Stanley differentiated himself from the general notion of body work as therapy or remedial. He defined and organized his approach as an educational process not a therapeutic process. He did not look for what had gone wrong or needed fixing, his focus was always on experiencing and understanding what is happening now and learning what the soma is seeking to form. He did not impose ideas on the body's experience but sought to understand the language of how the body was speaking.

In 2003 I translated Stanley's article *A New Vision for Somatic Psychology* into German.

Formative Psychology gives a philosophy and method of how to work with our life. We learn to regenerate our emotional and instinctual vitality, to inhabit our body, and to incorporate our excitement and emotional aliveness. The goal of Formative practice is to use daily life to practice being present and to create an adult self and reality. I proceed from the premise that we are each conceived as an adult and that we grow the adults we are meant to be.

To work somatically in this way is to bring about a shift in recognition and to experience the way we organize to be present, to solve problems and to try on the new shapes of expression. It also organizes a dialogue between body and brain which shifts the patterns of meaning and order. We begin to live our destiny, our somatic inheritance. We begin to empower ourselves in forming our adult and its relationships.

In his private practice he conducted somatic conversations with people helping facilitate their own experience and discoveries. In Stanley's Formative paradigm, experience gives rise to psychology not the other way around. In his writing, workshops, seminars and weekly practice classes Stanley has made this distinction very clear.

In the early 1980's Stanley began a weekly class that he first described as **The Bodying Practice** then simply as *The Somatic Practice Class*. For almost 40 years these one hour classes have been a weekly ritual for people committed to this kind of self education. Stanley was emphatic that learning from him was an individual experiential effort. He was patient and gave his full attention to people who were sincere and famously blunt in his dismissal of pretenders. He was insistent that he did not train people and he did not want followers through imitation. His supported individual empowerment through voluntary self forming and his deepest commitment was to support each person's somatic self-education as an evolutionary process of developing our individual and communal humanity.

The Somatic Practice classes we give in Solingen we call in German "Somatische Bildung" – "Somatic Education". It is easy to confuse a process of education with the process of therapy. For me, a former lawyer, licensed as a therapist (HP Psychotherapeut) Stanley's paradigm of learning what is seeking to form rather than needing correction has been an important and defining distinction. In his recent workshops and writings, especially in his two small books of Essays in Formative Psychology, Stanley reaffirms that the basis of his concepts and the intent of his teaching are educational, not remedial or therapeutic. He recognized these may be associated effects but they are not the central purpose of his work. When we last met in July 2018 he shared how much he wanted people working with the Formative principles he had developed to understand and honor this important difference.

BIOGRAPHY

Carola Butscheid is cofounder and director of the "Institut für Formative Psychologie" in Solingen, Germany. She teaches Somatic Practice Classes in Solingen and in Zürich, at the Zentrum für Form und Wandlung and holds a private practice. A current interest is teaching programs in "Forming Our Mature and Older Age" in Solingen and Zürich. Email: Carola.Butscheid@gmx.de, Website: www.formative-psychologie.de

The new German edition of *Emotional Anatomy and Embodying Experience* (2017), *Verkörpernte Gefühle, Forme Dein Selbst*, can be ordered direct from Carola Butscheid.

Recordings of one-hour Somatic Practice classes can be ordered from Center Press in Berkeley.



Carola Butscheid with Stanley Keleman

I Feel, Therefore I Am¹

Madlen Algafari

Abstract

This is an excerpt taken from the foreword of my book *I Feel, Therefore I Am*. I express in it my gratitude to S. Keleman for giving me the courage and the arguments to defend my thesis that the emotional intelligence is more important in our days than the rational intelligence.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Chemistry and Alchemy, Physics and Metaphysics of Emotional Life

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Thank you, Stanley Keleman, for explaining the connection between what is visible in the human being and what is not. Thank you for your visible evidence for the significance of the invisible. Thank you for inspiring all these thoughts and emotions through your books so that I can share them with my readers.

If we did not possess feelings and emotions, we would simply observe life, we would claim life, we would control life, we would register life, we would analyze life, we would plan life, we would navigate life, we would interpret life, we would judge life, we would understand life, we would manipulate life, but we would not LIVE our life.

23 years ago, I wrote an essay for the student newspaper *Westdeutsche akademie* during my studies in body psychotherapy in Switzerland. Its title was I feel, therefore I am! I was arguing with Descartes that it was time we put an end to dualism, that it was time for, “I think, therefore I exist”, to be substituted with, “I feel, therefore I am”.

Stanley Keleman’s book *Emotional Anatomy* gave me the courage to argue with Descartes. It was one of the titles that gave a reason for my intuition to celebrate after searching far and wide for the therapeutic point of view that put together medicine and psychology, the visible and the invisible, without opposing them. Thank you for your support, teacher whom I never met!

I needed to read about emotions, to understand my own emotions, to tell everyone around me that it was not through thinking but through experiencing when we truly ARE. Rocks exist, too, but they cannot be alive without emotions. I read *Emotional Anatomy* and through me rang, “Computers think – that goes without question today. But how do they think? Their thoughts lack moral hues. They exist, too, but they are not. They think but they are not alive! What distinguishes us from the smart machines is our ability to feel. It is time it did. It is about time. Otherwise, thinking is about to obliterate us. It is about to efface us. And maybe even erase us from the face of the Earth. It might even raze the Earth itself. There is a Bulgarian saying, ‘While a man is alive, he constantly piles up his mind but, in the end, he still dies mindless’. That will be true until we learn to think with our hearts and feel with our brains”.

¹ Algafari, M. 2016. *I Feel, Therefore I Am*. Algafari Ltd. Sofia, Bulgaria.

This is an excerpt taken from the foreword of the book *I Feel, Therefore I Am*. It is an essayistic thesaurus of emotions and feeling, aiming to promote emotional intelligence among readers.

Descartes, I apologize once more, but “I think” might be the way to “I do NOT exist”, if we continue thinking so mindlessly, detached from our hearts. Today, “I feel” is the better way. I feel, therefore I am. We can be quite similar to each other in knowing the same things. But there are no two people who have the same experience in the same situation. What we feel makes us individuals, makes us Selves.

23 years ago, I wrote that essay. Since then, I have asked my clients the same question, “What do you feel?” thousands of times, and, as odd as it is, I very rarely receive an answer that really gives a name to a feeling, an answer of the “I am sad” or “I am joyful” type. More often than not I hear, “I don’t know”, or “I’m not well”, or “I’m fine”, or the general, “I am uncomfortable” or “I’m okay!”. Lost in our ever increasing in numbers or depth brain gyri, contemporary human beings lose contact with their experience. And the inability to connect with one’s own body and to define what one feels, leaves a person helpless or utterly unaware of how to express what happens in their body while feeling. Maybe people today are the most rationally intelligent creatures on the face of the earth but the same cannot be applied to their emotional intelligence. Our pets are more emotionally intelligent than we are! Our main tool of communication as living beings is expressing our emotions. Contemporary humans prefer word statements. But more often than not, these statements are devoid of the emotional lining of the experience. Words are not enough. If they were, our eyes would have lost the ability to cry.

Thank you, Stanley Keleman! Your books have given me the strength and courage to defy Descartes. They also manage to convince many of my clients, who are not always able to see the link between body, emotions, and mind: your books give the complete, scientifically supported arguments for overcoming the “body-soul” dualism. They not only show the chemistry and physics of emotional processes but the alchemy and the metaphysics of our emotional life, as well.

Our whole body is a tube which pulsates with the waves of expansion and contraction while breathing. If that tube does not have a wide spectrum of motor agility, we would be restricted in the actions and goals we aim for, as well as in the emotions we feel. They are influenced by our cognitive capacity and our imagination... this way the tube pulsation and the breathing are more than mere anatomical processes – they are states of the consciousness and the mind. (*Emotional Anatomy*, translation by students at the Bulgarian Institute of Neo-Reichian Analytical Psychotherapy based on Keleman, S. 1989. *Emotional Anatomy*. Center Press, U.S.)

Physically, the heart is a muscle-pump, but its metaphysical nature is as a home-symbol of love. It takes in the impure and pumps out the purified blood. We are generators and purification plants for love. We should be pumping and spreading love towards the micro and macro universes within and without us. Although medicine’s highly praised accomplishment, coronary bypasses, which unplug the heart when necessary, are painful. It is not rare that following such surgery patients become depressed, but they also become more sensitive, sentimental and expressive of their experiences. I saw this when my father underwent a triple coronary bypass surgery. My father is a chemist. He finds it difficult to believe a daughter who does not observe molecules and atoms under a microscope, but deals with invisible matters. After reading an excerpt of Keleman’s book, he too, gave the benefit of the doubt to the metaphysical bypasses, which are nothing more than our personal decision to unplug the heart.

Thank you, Stanley Keleman, for making my own father consider that on the chemical level, impure blood becomes oxygenated but on the alchemical level, this is the transformation

of anger into love – the symbolical transformation of lead into gold. And this is what matters. This is the meaning of being.

All three of our brain centers, the cortical-volitional, the thalamic-emotional and the brain stem, regulate breathing automatically. No breathing – no oxygen, no oxygenation – no fire, no fire – no energy, no energy – no life, no life – no spirit. This is why heart, brain and breathing are so closely connected.

Keleman, 1989. Translated from Bulgarian

Thank you, Stanley Keleman, for illustrating this link – between not only spirit and body, but between the organism and mother Earth – grounding – as well.

The word *religion's* etymological meaning (*re-ligio*, lat.) is reconnecting with our origin. When we connect feeling and thoughts in one body, we connect with God, whom we are all part of. We, ourselves, become God when we feel love. Our mind carries the theory, but it is through emotions that the living experience builds our system of moral values which are the stairway to God.

You cannot reach God with a material ladder.

BIOGRAPHY

Madlen Algafari is a Neo-Reichian Analytical Psychotherapist, President of the Board of Directors of the Bulgarian Institute of Neo-Reichian Analytical Psychotherapy, author of eleven books. She is the new Editor in Chief of the International Body Psychotherapy Journal. Email: madlenalgafari@yahoo.com, Website: www.madlenalgafari.com



My Meeting with Stanley Keleman Socrates Nolasco

Abstract

The author talks about how his meeting with Stanley Keleman helped him form his own authority as an adult man and understand culture as an embodied event.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, masculinity, culture, subjectivity, violence, Formative Psychology®

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When I attended one of Stanley's workshops in Berkeley, I heard him talk about the steps one could take to form one's own personal life. I consider this one of the most important achievements for an adult. Before traveling to Berkeley, I had had my first contact with him in Rio de Janeiro, when I attended his lectures and workshops, organized by the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology. The themes were Emotional Anatomy and Forming an Adult Life.

Using voluntary muscle functions to intervene with the organization of emotional life became a field of interest to me. In his books *The Body Speaks its Mind*, *Somatic Reality* and *Love: a Somatic View* I found useful content which helped me understand the motives by which certain behavioral patterns establish themselves as a roadmap for the lives of many people. The closer I came to Keleman's work, the more I confirmed I was facing innovative and consistent work.

In my Doctorate research my goal was to analyze the involvement of men in violent situations. Masculinity, paternity and violence were some of the key words present in my work. I had several conversations with Stanley about this and used several concepts of Formative Psychology in my own writing. The object of investigation of my dissertation consisted as much of my theoretical path as well as of my observations of the presence of violence among men. I am a grandson of immigrants. My grandfathers came from Lebanon and Portugal to Brazil. Some men in my family felt responsible for their families and at the same time not able to meet the expectations placed upon them. This intense pressure combined with a lack of resources to understand and deal with what was happening created a lot of tension, increasing irritability and stress.

In my book *From Tarzan to Homer Simpson: Education and the Male Violence of the West*¹ there is a section called "Individualism and Subjectivity: Foucault, Baudrillard, and Keleman, The Problem of Identity for a Subject without a Body". In this chapter I explored the problem of male identity together with Stanley Keleman's vision of culture as embodied experience.

I understood in my research that if we wish boys to grow into manhood with the experience of capability and resourcefulness, they should have good tools to take their lives in their own hands, and make life an experience of joy with themselves and others.

I have learned that nothing is achieved without effort, and that without effort we do not own our autonomy. Feeling gratitude for what I had formed in my life and also interested in

¹ Sense Publishers, New York NY 2017

growing my own authority and developing myself, I arranged a few sessions with Stanley.

He came into the waiting room, asked me to come into his office and asked me what brought me to him, and how he could help me. I told him about how my father and grandfather exercised their respective authorities, as well as how this affected me. In the face of very large men, sons may feel small and not know how to build their own way.

At one moment he asked me to stand up from the chair, walked over to my side, gave me his hand and said to me, "Let's walk together". And so we did in his office room.

The effect that this had on me was greater than I could have imagined at the time. Until today I feel his presence when I walk through life on my own legs. Neither my father nor my grandfather could do this. I understand it must have been very difficult for them, as immigrants, and orphans; they received very little. However, life brought me to someone with whom I started a change that enabled me to become the person I am.

From this meeting, I remember three things that Stanley said. 'Walk on your own legs', 'Live all the good things inside yourself', and 'Always form your own happiness'.

BIOGRAPHY

Socrates Nolasco PhD, Professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Licensed Psychologist, APA Member, author of several books, including *From Tarzan from Homer Simpson: Education and Male Violence in the West*. He maintains a private practice in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Email: socratesnolasco@gmail.com



In Honor and Memory of Stanley Keleman Sonja Sutherland

Abstract

The author describes how, on both a very personal level, as well as on a professional level, Stanley Keleman has influenced her and her life deeply. Professionally, her years of experience and embodied understanding of Stanley Keleman's Formative Psychology® perspective and approach provide a foundation for her Feldenkrais® practice and also for the creation of her social emotional curricula for children.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, Formative Psychology®, Feldenkrais, somatic education, elementary education, social-emotional learning, children

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The body is a poet giving
expression to the organizing process
of our inherited and personal life.
Players at the interface of living and dying
many shapes forming a personal
existence within one life.

Stanley Keleman, *Forming Your Aging Porosity and Poetry*. (2018), p. 26

Stanley Keleman lived an exquisite, embodied participation in the incredible gift of aliveness — of living and dying, of being a part of the pulsing dynamic of the universe, from the cosmic to the quantum. He developed a unique perspective and understanding of the universe within us, in our own anatomy.

Stanley's Gift To Me

In his writings, videos, and teachings, Stanley shared his rich and layered understanding of human anatomy as human behavior — as how we grow, develop, and form. He developed an embodied understanding of how to participate in, generate, and influence the pulsing rhythms within us, in our behavior, and in our relationships with others. This was Stanley's gift to me — helping me to recognize, generate, and influence the pulsing dynamic of my own bodily existence — the ebb and flow of my excitement and vitality, the waxing and waning of my body states, the waves of my emotional anatomy— and to form, with my own voluntary muscular effort, a personally rich and satisfying life.

Bringing Learning Home

Stanley always helped to bring learning home — to what was important for each of us in our own life, to how we could create meaning and value for ourselves and with others. He was deeply committed to his Formative perspective and approach, and its functional application to one's own self in whatever circumstance you were in — whether interacting with your loved ones, recovering

from injury, managing a conflict or a crisis, leading a group, doing something athletic or artistic, enjoying a sunset, or engaging in an everyday activity like eating and sharing a meal with others.

Formative Psychology® as a Foundation

Both on a very personal level, as well as on a professional level, Stanley has influenced me and my life deeply. Professionally, my years of experience and embodied understanding of Stanley Keleman's Formative Psychology provide a foundation for how I approach my Feldenkrais practice and also for how I create social emotional curricula for children.

In my Feldenkrais practice, people mostly come to me with physical aches and pains after accidents, injuries, surgeries, strokes, or chronic conditions from which they are seeking relief. Feldenkrais is a method of somatic education that uses movement as a means for learning. Through hands-on and verbally directed practices, I guide people in how to move through their life with greater ease and comfort. Over the years I have found that while it is wonderful to help people feel better, it is also very important to support them in how they relate to their experience and emotional reactions to their situation, as well as in how they can participate in the forming of their own way forward.

An Understanding of Anatomy as Pulsing, Emotional Behavior

Formative Psychology offers an understanding of anatomy as pulsing, emotional behavior. While the Feldenkrais Method focuses primarily on how we learn from a neuromuscular skeletal perspective, Formative Psychology emphasizes the importance of our fluid, visceral, pulsing nature of our emotional anatomy and how this informs how we function, feel, and behave. Human beings are mostly made of water and we bathe in the pulsing movements found in all our cells, tissues, organs, and viscera. Our whole being pulses — our heart beats, our brain and every neuron pulses, all our organs, viscera, tissues, and cells pulse. We pulse within ourselves and with others.

Formative Psychology recognizes how pulsation give us a dynamic, flowing structure, a frame for organizing and orienting how we are within ourselves in our own bodies, with others in our relationships, and with the world around us. This unique formative perspective provides an important foundation for how I recognize, approach and relate to how my clients function, feel, and behave.

An Added Essential Dimension

Stanley Keleman's Formative Psychology adds an essential, fundamental dimension to my work with clients because people come to me not only with their aches and pains, but also with how they physically relate to their dilemmas and to themselves — to their disappointment, shock, fears, and hopes. The formative approach gives me a way of working directly with how they react to and approach their situation and for empowering them to recognize, value, and influence how they form their attitudes and emotions.

Empowering Self-Influence

As I work with clients I can still hear Stanley saying, as he often liked to remind me:

“Empower self-influence. Even if your client can only create 1% of self-influence, help them do this.”

Through personal and professional experience, I have learned that the formative approach empowers self-influence on the most fundamental level, opening the door to new ways of

perceiving, approaching and engaging yourself. On this level of self-influence, 1% makes a big difference in your inner experience and in how you can relate to your circumstance and to others. Particularly in difficult dilemmas, engaging in the formative approach to influence your self, even incrementally, can cross the threshold between hopelessness and hope.

Hope ... is in the ability to regulate, with voluntary muscular effort, a pattern of expression, a new way to act that gives the organism a different orientation of faith in its self to invent behavior, to act, or find an orientation to live with what is.

Personal email communication; Stanley Keleman, June 2012.

A Body-based Approach to Social-Emotional Learning for Children

For twenty years, I have been developing and teaching “Creative Learning through Movement”, a body-based approach to learning for elementary age children. By “body-based” I not only mean experiential learning through doing, but also how your body can be a resource and the lab for your learning. My desire to address and support the children’s emotional needs in movement classes led me to focus on creating age-appropriate somatic practices and body-based games to help the children recognize, relate to, and influence their emotions in action.

While steeped in weekly formative practice classes, regular workshops, professional meetings, and individual sessions with Stanley, I began creatively applying principles from Formative Psychology to my weekly classes with children.

Empowering Personal Choice versus Compliance

In recent years, I have noticed that there is a trend in elementary education toward teaching social-emotional skills in schools. I appreciate this interest in supporting the children’s emotional development. However, in my experience visiting classrooms, I find an emphasis on corrective teaching — telling students how they need to behave, or how to get into the “right zone” where they are calm and quiet. Similar to Formative Psychology, I am interested in empowering self-influence over time, fostering personal choice versus compliance.

In my classes the children discover, explore, and learn for themselves about how they shape their attitudes and emotions. “So what do you do when you are frustrated? What kind of body shape do you make? Show me.” I play the drum and the children move around the room in their frustrated ways. When the drum stops, the children freeze-frame their body attitude and I guide them in modulating the intensity of their body shape to experience how this affects how they feel. When the drum plays, they discover how this informs how they move, act, and interact with others. Each time the drum stops, I guide the children with questions and open-ended directives. Each time the drum plays they explore and discover how they shape, experience, and form their own behavior. Instead of trying to learn the “right way” to behave, the children learn how to participate in the way they are behaving and to develop self-influence.

Addressing the Bodily Act of “How?” and “How Much?”

I also notice in classrooms how children who are having difficulty sitting quietly in a group setting are often given fidget toys and other sensory tools to help them focus better. They are taught to take “body breaks” where they take time out to “shake your sillies out”, stretch, or take deep breaths as a means to “reset” themselves and then return to focusing on the class activity. While these tools may be useful, I am interested in supporting the children in recognizing and relating to their bodily act of how they pay attention.

Drawing from Stanley Keleman's Formative approach, my classes address the "How?" and the "How Much?" of behavior. The children learn how to differentiate their body shape and how this influences how they feel. They explore how they shape themselves along a continuum of body shapes. They discover how their body shape and inner state affect each other, and how they can influence their expression, their experience, and how they relate to their world within them and around them.

A few years ago, I began writing blog posts and developing *Thinking Bodies, Moving Minds* with visual aids to support teachers in bringing this perspective and approach into their classrooms.

Stanley as Role Model

Stanley Keleman was a highly creative person who was prolific and generative in his work and life. He was a master of creating, growing, pruning, shaping, and forming his embodied understandings and insights into his own Formative legacy over his lifetime. He was always forming forward. Just shy of his 87th birthday, Stanley had recently published a new book *Forming Your Aging: Porosity and Poetry*. He had just finished his annual July workshop and was preparing for his next workshop just a few weeks away. Stanley kept on generating, creating, and forming himself and his work right up until he passed away.

What happens when we accept our continual forming instead of seeking permanence? We discover that our lives are an adventure, an emotional odyssey.

Stanley Keleman, S. 1981. *Porosity and Poetry*. p. 25.

Words cannot express how appreciative I am of all Stanley embodied and co-bodied with me, for how much he shared and cared. I will always remember his generosity and commitment to engaging, to relating, to forming with me. He will always live in my heart and in the marrow of my bones. With every voluntary muscular effort I make, Stanley will be right here with me.

BIOGRAPHY

Sonja H. Sutherland, MA, GCFP, has been an experienced Feldenkrais practitioner® since 1997. For 18 years, Sonja studied with Stanley Keleman in Formative Psychology®. Sonja maintains a private practice in Berkeley, California where she offers individualized hands-on sessions for children, adults, and seniors. She also leads somatic workshops and retreats. She holds a black belt in Aikido and a Masters in Choreography and Dance Education. This is Sonja's 20th year developing and teaching a body-based approach to working with elementary school children. She is currently writing a series of publications focusing on social-emotional somatic curricula for children under the title: *Thinking Bodies, Moving Minds*. (*ThinkingBodiesMovingMinds.com*) Email: sonja@learninginaction.org, Website: www.LearninginAction.org

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Less is More In Remembrance of Stanley Keleman Max Strecker

Abstract

The author summarizes some of the major aspects of Formative Psychology and gives a personal review on encounters with Stanley Keleman and his way of working.

Keywords: Formative Psychology®, Stanley Keleman, embodiment, personal evolution, living your dying

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Anybody who has attended a workshop with Stanley Keleman, will probably remember him at some point saying, 'Less is more'. And when people gathered at his center in Berkeley on August 19th in light of his sudden death, some recalled this memory too. And this has confirmed and strengthened my resonance on this little saying in connection with my teacher and mentor over 18 years. So I want to use 'Less is more' to frame some aspects of his work. My selection is personal and incomplete but may illustrate the tremendous and life changing impact that Stanley Keleman has had on a large number of people in very specific and personal ways. It is not for nothing that he was no friend of curricula or Institute building.

Less is more – at the beginning of my work with Stanley these words sounded like a bitter although unavoidable medicine. But the more I proceeded they sounded sweeter, like a proven remedy and a promise.

Less is more. Less stories – more embodied experience

All life is embodied life. All human life is embodied. Most, if not all people working with different approaches to working somatically with clients, would agree on this common ground. And still, it seems to me, that a theory about the body sometimes dominates in body therapy.

Stanley Keleman on the other hand was radical in doing our embodied existence in personal exercising, using what individually (genetically and situationally) shows up.

To understand human embodied existence, Stanley used a typology by which a person is predominantly ectomorphic, mesomorphic or endomorphic.¹ For me, as a heavily ectomorphic person who is strongly connected to his cortex, categorizations and radar system, I had been proud of my theoretical smartness, my story telling, my brain stuff. With Stanley on my side, I would reconfigure and use my cortex instead as a decision making and confirming part of myself

¹ William Sheldon, in his theory of constitutional types, describes three temperaments based on the three embryological layers of the body. In the endomorphic, metabolic type, the hormones and tissues of digestion and respiration predominate. This temperament is oriented toward nurturing and intimacy. In the ectomorphic type, the neural hormones and organs of sensation predominate. This temperament is oriented toward collecting sensory information. In the mesomorphic type, hormones of action, large muscles, and bones predominate. This temperament is oriented toward action.

Stanley Keleman, *Myth and Body*, Center Press, Berkeley, California, 1999, p.9-10.

when investing experientially into stopping, identifying my action patterns and learning from them. Only from there could I become aware of the seduction mechanisms of cortical narrating and image making. Philosophical smartness, indulging in associations and cortical pleasures did not count for Stanley. Learning experientially how you go from embodied form to embodied form did, and through that, developing your embodied life and eventually a new life story as consequence and by-product.

Less is more. Less method, more function

With Stanley as your therapist or teacher you learned some very useful tools such as the 5-step exercise, also called the accordion exercise. It consists of identifying what is, intensifying the muscular tonus in discrete steps, disassembling it in small steps, waiting for the resonance and implementing what you learned.

But you would learn this not as a method like, “Do these three or five things and you will feel better”. Instead Stanley taught you to exercise in such an individual way that you trained a function. A little child learns to walk in an individual way by investing muscular effort. It falls down and stands up again and starts walking again until its doing becomes an automatic behaviour. To be able to do this it learns to inhibit a movement and to influence the innate arousal patterns. And doing this it deals with its pulsation, waves of expansion and contraction that move through the living organism: it deals with the cellular tissue qualities that are unique in each person, which constantly change from motile, to porous, to rigid, to dense. This function within us human beings is re-evoked and trained by VMCE, (voluntary muscular cortical effort). You use VMCE in the accordion exercise. Stanley Keleman pointed out that VMCE is the royal road to self-management, controlling and differentiating your life and having a say in your developmental process. For many of us It was not easy at the beginning to honour the seemingly small achievements of regular exercise, and to stick with it, as this training of a function needs continuous effort - while also not overdoing it. Less is more. Stanley has been a brilliant motivator to do this precisely and help you find your own special way to combine intensity, speed and duration in order to enhance your personal development. It was heart-warming how he could rejoice over the steps his students or clients would take in developing a personal and satisfying life style.

Less is more. Less macro, more micro

In contrast to other somatic approaches Stanley Keleman was not emphasizing macro movements such as swinging an arm around or kicking the feet. He would rather use involuntary macro movements that showed up when a person would talk about him/herself as a starting point. Often when we talk we make gestures with our hands and arms. At certain crucial points in a person's talking about issues of his or her life, Stanley would ask the person to freeze the movement and then work with micro movements, which are discrete movements in the tension patterns of muscles and tissue. I was amazed to experience and learn how tiny movements in intensifying and de-intensifying the muscular tonus in my hands would spread in very personal, complex and sophisticated ways into all different parts of myself and how this would indicate many ways I could handle myself and discover choices in behaviour which go together with feelings and thoughts.

In his last workshop this past July, Stanley talked about macro and micro dimensions. The astronauts saw a tiny planet Earth, he would say, but when you are living on this planet it is huge. And then, the other way around, when you look at tiny particles under the microscope they become enlarged and are big universes in themselves. So, when we deal and learn to experience

the micro world in ourselves, we dive into a stunning complexity and come in touch with what surrounds us. Stanley had explored the quantum theory of scientists like Planck, Bohr and Heisenberg and he called the multidimensional experience around the micro world the 'human quantum experience'. The more refined and discrete your way of personal exercising becomes, the more you learn the dialogue of voluntary effort and involuntary resonance, and the more you are in connection with the micro sphere and the quantum world that is you.

Less is more. Less healing, more evolution

In the 70's and 80's Stanley Keleman kept his own course of trying to understand better, and using more fully, the formative function of human existence when being confronted with approaches of body therapy that you might call esoteric or magic. 'To free the inner child' or 'to free the real self' were slogans that influence therapeutic work right up until today.

Stanley Keleman was always very clear that for him there existed no 'real self' that could show up after all the distortions and deformations of education and biography had been peeled off. His sober analysis was that there existed no healing in the sense of finding the perfect condition under the surface area of alienated existence. So you have to deal with what you have developed so far, involuntary and voluntary. The good news is that you can continue in your personal development by applying VMCE. You will create new voices that speak to you, that help differentiate your under-bound and your over-bound structures. You learn to control and stabilize yourself which for instance is especially important for people who suffer from traumatic stress. And you learn to influence yourself step by step. Self education is the key. Stanley, more and more, called his work educational rather than psychotherapy although he saw the importance of the therapist-client-relationship which he reframed as 'co-bodying'. He definitely refused any ideas of catharsis or rebirthing but would encourage people to engage in a process that leads to personal growth. And this growth gives you a changed life perspective. This developmental growth is what personal evolution is about. Stanley was also excited about researching the implications of personal evolution in the field of epigenetics for instance.

Less is more. Less spirituality, more poetic beauty

For me as a theologian, Stanley Keleman's view on religion and spirituality was challenging and inspiring. As I experience myself as a liberal-progressive protestant I have no problems to deconstruct and let go of any rigid tenets or dogmas. I like Paul Tillich's idea that religion is not one of the columns of the architecture of life amongst others like politics, economy, culture, etc. but religion (or I could say spirituality) is the force of life itself that is energizing all aspects of humanity. I understand Stanley's reluctance to embrace theological theories that are not grounded in the concrete experiences of subjective daily life. Stanley was, for his own good reasons, very cautious and would not go into spiritual map making. And still he would use words like 'sacred' rather often in his workshop papers. The wonder and multidimensionality of life, the openness of development and evolution on many levels of existence would make him express himself in poetry and metaphors – which then he tied in carefully to experience and exercise, so as not to be misunderstood.

I remember a participant in a workshop in Solingen, Germany, about six years ago, who got stuck with some spiritual metaphor Stanley used. She spoke up, "Stanley, what is this? Do you want to lead us to God?" Stanley's clear answer was, "No. Who am I to do so?" His answer sounded to me as if he was setting a boundary to cortical speculation, and staying with human modesty and the experiential ground.

As I love the language and the images from the Bible as well as from other spiritual texts, I sometimes tried to get Stanley into a discussion of the experiential value of these images. Sometimes he would say, “Thank you, no interest on my side “. And later I often understood that in this moment the direction of our talking about concrete personal experience had been the better choice.

Sometimes Stanley was up for a ‘mythological-philosophical’ talk and it was fascinating for me how he could dive into these waters without losing touch with the ‘here and now’ of our embodiment. Sometimes we found a ‘compromise’ together, a word with religious roots, which was also valuable in the formative world. I remember one time when ‘creation’ was this word. In his book *Myth and Body*, a result of seminars he did together with mythologist Joseph Campbell, Stanley looked for the body, its development and its growth, in the myth of Parsifal. The human organism has created the myth, this piece of literature, to announce a developmental task. Stanley showed some curiosity when I had the idea to read the biblical stories as organismic tasks of human beings as well.

Less is more. Working on dreams

I know people who were especially waiting for the next dream workshop each year. It felt so natural and intuitive to start with a personal dream, sometimes just dreamt the night before the workshop, and from there go into formative work and a personal exercise, which everybody could go along with, pick up, imitating or adapting it. The atmosphere that was created by exercising we called ‘sitting in the soup’. Probably Stanley had come up with it himself first and he used it, too. For Stanley a nightly dream was a personal myth, a task the organism was presenting to itself. Often a dream comes and goes but if you embody it and work with it somatically, you really get to the core of its purpose and by doing the 5-step-exercise you can work on your own development.

‘Less is more’ sounds so true about Stanley’s work with dreams. When I did my first dream workshop in Weggis/Switzerland in 2000, Stanley would let the person tell the dream backwards and sometimes not even to the end of the dream. By telling the dream backwards the dream was no longer in a linear sequence but was a multidimensional event. Some years later Stanley would often not even let people tell the dream. When they recalled their dream internally, just for themselves, Stanley would take the posture that they showed when they were just about ready to tell the dream and lead into exercise from there. At the end of the work the dreamer would often rejoice about all the insights and experiences the dream had given her/him – although not a single word of the dream had been told.

Less is more. Living your dying

In his book *Living your dying* (1974) Stanley Keleman unfolded the discovery that ‘living your dying is the story of the movement of your life’. “We are always dying a bit, always giving things up, always having things taken away. Is there anyone alive who isn’t really curious about what dying is for them? Is there anyone alive who wouldn’t like to go to their dying full of excitement, without fear and without morbidity?”¹ Less is more in living your dying means to take little moments and episodes in your life to experience yourself in preparing your dying.

Stanley was a role model for this approach. He also adjusted his workshops to his own aging process. When I stepped in, they were a week long – in the last years they consisted of three half days. Less is more: Stanley’s ability to create a workshop had been developed over the years so immensely that we as participants were not missing anything. And he was still so available to so

¹ Keleman, S., *Living your dying*,..., front cover

many people. When, once in a while, I had a question, we would skype and he usually answered my emails within a couple of hours. I remember, years ago, having talked with others about the prospect of Stanley getting older and we imagined how it would be when he was ninety-five or even older. We would gather around his armchair and he would give a ten minute' workshop that would satisfy everybody.

And now he has died. And his 'living his dying' was different, and it surprised and shocked me. It feels so sudden and final. But undoubtedly it has been his own death.

In July, at his last summer workshop his new book *Forming your aging – Porosity and Poetry* was released. In an email a few days before his death he wrote to me, "I do hope the Aging book speaks to you". I wrote back that I was learning to slow down and had just begun to read it, in a very experiential slow pace, taking it in, digesting it, enjoying it, piece by piece.

Over 18 long and very fruitful years with Stanley I have learned, step by step, what it means to live in the mode of 'Less is more'. And the journey continues.

Thank you, Stanley!

BIOGRAPHY

Max Strecker, after studying theology, politics and education, became a protestant minister. He worked ten years in a Lutheran congregation in Wuppertal and 15 years in the campus ministry at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Since 2016 he has worked as a hospital chaplain in the Alfried-Krupp-Krankenhaus in Essen. In 2007 he was certified in Formative Psychology by the Institute of Formative Psychology in Solingen, Germany. In 2016 he was certified in Psychological Counseling in Life counseling, couples counseling and family counseling.

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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

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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.
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Stanley Keleman and the Forms of Existence

Peter Kralev

Abstract

This article is inspired by Stanley Keleman's attitude towards the human body, emotions and organism – a complete form of psycho-physiological existence. And this existence is a series of forms – from the protoplasmic history and the processes that build the cell's structure to the forms of human life. Forms, according to Keleman, are manifestations of a united process which encompasses emotions, thinking and life history in a structure, and they are marked by, among other things, the meeting of our inner world with the outer one. In his Formative Psychology he introduced order and forms in which we can recognize ourselves. By undertaking the “formative journey” a person can get acquainted with one's own innermost depths. With the help of the HOW methodology we can discover our own organizing process and learn how to use ourselves more successfully.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, order, forms, structure, existence, formative journey, organizing process, the HOW methodology

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I don't know another psychologist and educator who speaks and writes so beautifully and in such an inspired manner about the human body, emotions and organism as Stanley Keleman. In an article he says that even depression is a complete form of psycho-physiological existence – as an almost creative continuum of anatomical and emotional behaviors that accompanies the feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, despair and resignation which have structured the person's organism and the posture of his or her body in a certain way.

I have always been impressed by Keleman's ability to see and present existence as a series of forms – from the protoplasmic history and the processes that build the cell's structure to the forms of human life. The citation by Gail Godwin, which is also the motto of *Emotional Anatomy*, always comes to my mind whenever I think of Keleman: “Show me the shapes and forms a man gives to his life, and I will tell you whether he is a master or victim of that life”.

Keleman was an artist whenever he introduced order and forms in which we can recognize ourselves. He participated together with Vincent Perez to illustrate his views of the human anatomy and of the ways the formative method works. And the metaphors he used to describe the process of contraction and relaxation, of organizing and disorganizing in the cell and in the different layers of the organism are really textbook examples. Forms, wrote Keleman, are manifestations of a united process which encompasses emotions, thinking and life history in a structure. They are marked by love and disappointment and by the meeting of our inner world with the outer one, from where begins the drama of existence.

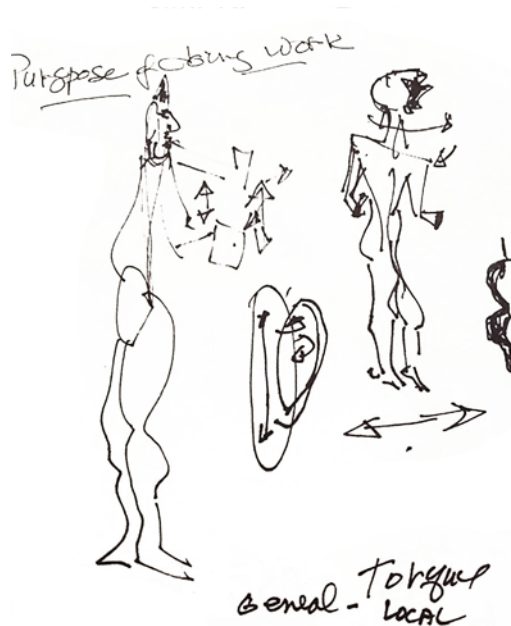
In one of his other books, *Embodying Experience: Forming a Personal Life*, Stanley Keleman

presented his approach as a “formative journey”, which includes getting acquainted with one’s own innermost depths. We have organized models of acting and expression in a most sophisticated way. For example, anger has its own programmed models of heartbeating, shouting, crying or hitting, and control – of inhibiting, hiding and prohibition of certain social responses. And to understand them, to become aware how we use ourselves in different situations in life, to discover our own organizing process, we can use the HOW methodology – a fascinating for me exercise in five steps: 1) HOW am I doing what I am doing in given situation; 2) HOW do I use myself muscularly; 3) HOW do I disorganize the structure that I don’t need any more; 4) HOW do I create a new model; 5) HOW can I use the new knowledge?

BIOGRAPHY

Peter Kralev is a master in psychology and a Neo-Reichian psychotherapist who graduated from Westdeutsche Akademie in Lugano, Switzerland. He is certified as a consultant on addictions by the international Stefan Batory Foundation, Poland. He has completed a course in transpersonal psychology and holotropic breathwork at EUROTAS. He has published four books, three of which are in the field of psychotherapy – *Psychotherapy of Alcoholism, Ayahuasca* and *The Punctured Boundaries: In the Therapy of Boundedness and Borderline*.

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Stanley as Sculptor Gene Hendrix

Abstract

As an editor of Stanley Keleman's works, Hendrix describes how sculpture was a metaphor for his work, the work of giving shape to the various stages in life. For Stanley this was the hero's journey, the formative journey.

Keywords: sculpture as metaphor, shape, formative journey

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If you visit Stanley's office, the garden at the Center for Energetic Studies or his home you will see examples of Stanley's metal sculptures — pieces of steel that Stanley shaped and reshaped until the result he wanted was achieved.

For me, sculpting is a metaphor of what it meant to edit Stanley's work. As an objectively trained academic I approached editing as a rational task — correcting spelling mistakes, seeking clarification when something was unclear, deleting repetitions, adding when necessary. But with Stanley that approach had limitations, because after reading the edits, he would often come back with a different meaning or head in a different direction. Many times, this caused me confusion.

But when I use the metaphor of sculpture, all becomes clear. A piece of metal has a shape, and a shape to-be. Using arc welding, a sculptor tries to do two things — release the shape that is within, as well as craft his image of what is emerging. Thus, a sculptor applies the heat, melts the iron, waits, looks at what is there, and then applies more heat to reveal the shape either of the sculptor's imagination or the shape that wishes to emerge.

Using this metaphor, editing with Stanley becomes clearer. Stanley would write or say something that I would transcribe and edit, then he would look at it to see what shape was there or what shape wanted to emerge —and that emerging shape might go in quite a different direction! So, editing with him became an adventure and a mutual exploration to find the shape that wished to emerge.

The sculptor image also helps explain Stanley's journey from athlete, to chiropractor, to bio-energetic practitioner, to somatic clinician and creator of Formative Psychology®, all the while continuing to engage his artist and poet in giving shape to the changing stages of his life. One could say that Stanley's journey was a series of shapes, one morphing into the other, as he shaped both his daily life and his intellectual work culminating in his masterpiece, *Emotional Anatomy* and its companion workbook *Embodying Experience*.

For those who followed Stanley closely, whether at the Center for Energetic Studies in Berkeley, or Zurich School for Form and Movement, the Centro de Psicologia Formativa do Brasil in Rio de Janeiro, and the Institute for Formative Psychology® in Solingen, Germany, his work continued to reshape and refine its form as he shaped his own accumulating years.

If I ask, does the image of Stanley the sculptor also apply to his work with individuals? The answer is yes. When a person came to present their dilemma to Stanley, it was a shape that

represented their life struggle, but to Stanley's trained eye there was, most importantly, a shape seeking to emerge and to be formed. Stanley called this formative journey a hero's journey, because for each person it is their personal adventure to form the unknown. A poetic, mythic vision suggests that formativeness is both what the sculptor sees and creates, and the journey of seeking to shape one's life.

Several times a year, Summer, Fall, Winter, Stanley conducted public workshops. For each of these, he wrote a thematic paper and as the workshop opened Stanley would ask participants to use the paper's image to respond with their questions or comments. As he lectured and conducted exercises or worked with individuals, Stanley created an image — a living sculpture — that embodied the workshop theme, his article, the exercises, and individual responses into a whole. In this way each program formed its own living sculpture.

Stanley was at once a creature of the psychology of the 60's as well as a critic. In the psychology of the day, using the sculpture metaphor, what was required was to find the hidden image, to uncover the mystery. And then what? For the sculptor knows that what lies in the steel and what appears after applying the welding arc, require acts of imagination, seeing the shape within and forming it. The shape of the iron requires the sculptor's imagination and effort to become a piece of art.

And thus, I finally realized, editing with Stanley was a formative process just as it was a formative journey that Stanley took in shaping his own life, his aging and perhaps even his dying.

To see what shape was there, to see what shape was emerging, to see the contradiction between hanging onto the past or helping the new emerge, to let go of old images of performance, and explore and support what is unfolding — all these are part of the formative journey. It is fitting that Stanley's 2018 writings and Summer Institute were on the subject of aging as he embraced his own and shaped it into his final journey.

BIOGRAPHY

Gene Hendrix, PhD is an organizational consultant and retired academic who served as Stanley's editor, in particular for *Emotional Anatomy* (1985) and its companion book *Embodying Experience* (1987). During the years 1976-1995, he participated in all the Center's workshops, audiotaping many of them, as well as traveling with Stanley to Europe for his workshops in Cologne, Zurich, and the Black Forest. He currently cultivates his own garden in Berkeley, California.

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Sculpture by Stanley

The Unforgettable Lessons of Stanley Keleman How to Be Humans by Embodying Our Life instead of Passively Going through It Christina Bogdanova

Abstract

In this article I present some aspects of Stanley Keleman's work that fascinate me and that have practical and theoretical importance for me. Being pulsatory organisms we can form ourselves and our life; thanks to the pulsation process we organize being in the world and we can moderate how we live. Our bodies are the only true story-tellers of our lives and by feeling and understanding them we can determine our destinies. We, humans, are unique source of self-creating realities. We are voluntary participants in creating consequences and experiences and we can enrich life by making new patterns of acting and new understanding of embodied life. The embodied experience of the organizing process, intrinsic by nature, enables us to turn ourselves into human beings, to develop and grow instead of living in stagnation, dissatisfaction or illness. So, we can consciously choose to undertake the formative journey with its "Five Steps" for better self-understanding of our current state of being, for personal evolution and for forming a sensible living self.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, pulsation, pulsatory organisms, organizing principle, embodied experience, formative journey, Five Steps, the HOW methodology, accordion process, somagram, story-telling

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A couple of years ago I came upon the introduction to a video from the *Emotional Anatomy DVD* by Stanley Keleman. A statement there completely caught my attention. "We are all agents able to influence, to a bigger or lesser degree, how much we can change being in the world, and feel empowered, not simply a victim to forces that come to us." At that time, I had just started to explore in much depth the issue of "victim" and "victimization", and the question of how it is possible to overcome the sense of being a victim and to take back control over your own life was of a great interest to me, both theoretically and practically. So, I listened to all the videos with Stanley Keleman I found on the Internet, and read some of his articles, his landmark book *Emotional Anatomy* and the one that later became one of my favourite practical-oriented books *Embodying Experience: Forming a Personal Life*. For me it was at the same time a challenge, a responsibility and a great pleasure to translate this extraordinary book into Bulgarian for our Institute, which Keleman generously allowed for the sake of the dissemination of pure knowledge.

While doing all of this I realized that I was fascinated by his idea that the human being is the source of self-creating realities, that we are voluntary participants in creating consequences and experiences and enriching life by making new patterns of acting and new understanding

of embodied life. We can learn to treat ourselves properly in order to overcome emotional distress or dissatisfaction, the self-perception of being a victim, illness. We can learn to understand, somatically and cognitively, the ineffective patterns of behaviour in our daily life, and then choose to disassemble them and reorganize new forms of behavioural responses. By doing this we become able to develop and grow instead of living in stagnation. We can influence our personal destiny and not be victims of events, social norms, undesirable or frightful past experiences, inadequate relationships.

He develops the concept of the organizing principle as fundamental to life and by its realization and conscious implementation, we are able to turn ourselves into human beings. Furthermore, this organizing process, because of its intrinsic nature, can be the foundation of one's personal life and personal identity. The embodied experience of this process "here and now" is a kind of guarantee for volitional living based on personal choice and not on fate or other outer circumstances. And in order to facilitate this, Keleman proposes the accordion process and the HOW methodology, which I started to use for myself and my clients. I believe that they are very useful in evoking one's ability to form a personal somatic life, a life of free expression and relevant feelings beyond norms or past experiences.

According to him, the formative journey with its "Five Steps" helps us live with our own "organismic-emotional truth, grace and beauty". The Steps provide a tool for better self-understanding of our current state of being, of personal evolution and of forming a sensible living self. As Keleman puts it:

To work somatically in this way is to bring about a shift in recognition and to experience the way we organize ourselves to be present, to solve problems and to try on the new shapes of expression. It also organizes a dialogue between body and brain which shifts the patterns of meaning and order. We begin to live our destiny, our somatic inheritance. We begin to empower ourselves in forming our adult and its relationships.¹

And another way to know the formative process is through somagrams – these somatic-emotional images of one's story that reveal our individual or collective sense of existence. Stories help us maintain order, sense, meaning, continuity of organization and form. They reveal the different levels of each event in our life – anatomical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioural. By looking at one's own story by the HOW methodology it is possible to understand the organization of one's present structure based on previous experience. Keleman believes that story-telling is "a powerful way to communicate, share, and integrate knowledge and experience as well as a means of creating personal reality". I am really fascinated by how this tool – the somagram – makes people more aware of themselves, and capable of understanding the messages that they are sending out into the world and how they are receiving the demands of others.

I never met Stanley Keleman in person, to my regret. Still, I feel as if I have known him for many years now. His words are simple and enlightening at the same time: they provoke me to think more deeply, to feel more, and to be real and authentic. And that is very close to the theory and psychotherapeutic legacy of Waldo Bernasconi, the founder of the Neo-Reichian analytical body psychotherapy. With his work, Keleman validates each person's right to form him or herself and his or her life. And in Keleman's understanding, all of this

¹ http://www.centerpress.com/articles/a_new_vision.html

is not a mental but a physical attitude – he speaks with so much love and respect of “the organism as a structure in the world”.

The most important thing that I have learned from Keleman’s work is the notion that our bodies are the only true story-tellers of our lives and the only people that can determine our destinies are we ourselves. And not because of anything else but because of the fact that we are pulsatory organisms. The pulsation process is the way we organize being in the world and the experience of how we engage others and ourselves and every expression that we make, and it is the means, thanks to which, we can moderate how we live. Leila Cohn has put it excellently in an article where she writes that based on sound theoretical grounds, Keleman presents a whole new psychology of a body’s life, the emotions’ role and man’s search of meaning and how all of this makes out of the human being an embodied subjective process, self-organizing and continually evolving.²

BIOGRAPHY

Christina Bogdanova is a psychologist and a Neo-Reichian analytical body psychotherapist. She has also completed a course in Solution Focused approach and studies Art Therapy. She is a full member of the Bulgarian Neo-Reichian Psychotherapeutic Society and of the EABP. Her professional experience is mainly in the field of anxieties and of interpersonal relationships. Christina is the editor of *Look at the Empty Plate. Psychology of Eating* by prof. Zaharina Savova and the translator of *Understanding Your Eating* by prof. Julia Buckroyd. She is co-author of several psychotherapeutic articles.

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² Cohn, L. Meeting Stanley Keleman and his Emotional Anatomy. Somatic Psychotherapy Today, Fall 2014, Volume 4, Special Supplement, pp 11-12.

Three layers in my relation with Stanley Keleman

Erica Cavour

Abstract

The author talks about three important moments in her relationship with Stanley Keleman and his Formative Psychology.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, Formative Psychology®, human evolution, gratitude

In 1997 I attended Stanley Keleman's talk on Formative Psychology in São Paulo, Brazil, organized by the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology.

Driven by what I heard, my heart beat intensely and I fell in love with this approach. I started studying Formative Psychology with Leila Cohn at the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology in Rio de Janeiro. I started learning Formative Psychology, and using it in my life and work. I have lived and vibrated with this knowledge ever since.

Attending a second workshop with Stanley Keleman, I perfectly recall having been hooked by curiosity about human evolution. Keleman spoke about his cosmology, his description of the cosmos and of the origins of life. By then, every cell in my body responded with noticeable pulsations. I was moved.

During our last interaction via Skype, at the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology Professional Class in Rio de Janeiro, I asked Keleman how he saw human evolution in view of all of the knowledge and experience he has gathered in 86 years of living, working and doing research.

He stressed that our capacity to create and to share knowledge transforms us. He mentioned the theory of relativity: 50 years after Einstein's epiphany, Relativity was common sense all over the world. This is an evolutionary leap.

I will always be grateful for his scientific and artistic contributions, which have driven my personal growth, and for his avant-garde vision about human evolution.

BIOGRAPHY

Erica Cavour has a degree in speech pathology and works as a systemic family therapist in Rio de Janeiro. She is the co-founder of three development programs: Temas e Metas, (Themes and Goals) Roda de Mães (Circle of Mothers) and Odisseia. Erica has studied and practiced Formative Psychology with Leila Cohn at **Centro de Psicologia Formativa do Brasil** in Rio de Janeiro Brazil, for many years. She is currently a member of the **Formative Psychology Professional Class** at the Center.

Embodying Life in Aging Artemis Marinho

Abstract

The text talks about my personal experience of aging in a formative view.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, Formative Psychology®, Aging Woman, Formative Process

From astonishment to curiosity ...

From the fear of the time that is coming, to the discoveries of what is forming in me...

From motile restlessness, my desiring body, to calm and warm enjoyment, with a filled pelvis.

Learning new rhythms, savoring new tessitura,

Becoming intimate with the foreign body...

New choreographies of living ...

Recognizing, modeling, sustaining,

Forming my mature, warm, pulsing woman in a hologram of possibilities...

BIOGRAPHY

Artemis Marinho – Licensed Social Worker CRESS 3599, retired Professor at the School of Social Work (UFF), a master in Social Work (PUC-RJ). Holds a private practice in Rio de Janeiro, has been working formatively since 2003. Professional associate member and lecturer at the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology, directed by Leila Cohn. She participated in Stanley Keleman's workshops held in Brazil and at the Center for Energetic Studies, in Berkeley. Research in the areas of Gender and Aging.

The Role of Fascia in Shape Johannes Carl Freiberg Neto

Abstract

This text relates part of my conversations with Stanley Keleman about the studies that I have been doing about Fascia as mechanosensitive tissue and voluntary cortical muscular effort.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, Formative Psychology®, Fascia, Mecanoreceptors Proprioception, Interoception, Cortex, Astuteness

As a means of speed variation by constructing degrees of resistance and contraction, Fascia has a wide spectrum of gradient strain as well as tensile strength.

It was the topic I brought to Stanley Keleman during one of our discussions at the Brazilian *Center of Formative Psychology®* in Rio de Janeiro, coordinated by Leila Cohn. After listening to me and considering my points, Stanley invited me to experiment. He said, "Open and close your hands". The theme was the experience of multiple layers and the different tensile strengths that happened in hands. This exercise, which was constructed in various degrees, provided us with the opportunity to talk about the speed and nuances of several possibilities

of body strength in its own adaptation process.

The cortex and the VCME (voluntary muscular cortical effort) inducing and mobilizing – through the alternation between contracting and expanding in different degrees, generating fascia resistance and freedom – propitiate a certain plasticity and mobility manifested in different degrees and depths. Fascia has flexibility and ability to influence changes in tissue shapes related to it. As a Rolfist and Fascial Fitness Trainer, I have included in my work the micro movements, which I have learned with the formative practice, through ‘Stretchings’, to enable the fascial systems in accordance with muscular activity. Nowadays, Fascia is considered as a wide sensory organ, full of mechanoreceptors. The Stretchings provide a proprioceptive and interoceptive activity, generating an extensive cognitive field so that the body Image can be formed.

BIOGRAPHY

Johannes Carl Freiberg Neto – Physical Education Professional and Structural Integration Rolfing. I have been a member of the Formative Psychology® Professional Class coordinated by Leila Cohn at Center of Formative Psychology in Brazil for four years. I have been working with Rolfing practice for fourteen years and I have also been teaching practice classes which include fascia as a motor element. I am a member of Plastinarium Fascia Project group in Germany, a project of the Fascial Research Society under the supervision of Robert Schleip and Carla Stecco.

Somatic Intimacy - The Master of the Formative Process Denise Passos

Abstract

Somatic intimacy is the master of the formative process, it guides us in the direction of a personal life, a formative life. Intimacy is an agent in the continuous of the formative person.

Keywords: Formative psychology®; Teacher; Intimacy; Quantum Dynamics; subjectivity; Stanley Keleman

“Somatic intimacy is an informing agent of each person’s continuing evolution. It enables recognizing the present moment, the elastic time of a created past and a now brooding shape with an unknown promise of tomorrow’s appearing.” Stanley Keleman in *Maturity, Solitude, Intimacy -Essays in Formative Psychology*

In June 2018 on the occasion of the virtual meeting with Stanley --- organized by the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology in Rio de Janeiro and coordinated by Leila Cohn --- Stanley talked about quantum dynamics and that theme touched me deeply. He said:

“When you get into the small world of micro movements you get into the intimacy of quantum experience. This means that you form subjectivity and the power to work with small things that make up the larger body.” (Keleman, 2018)

Days after this conversation with Stanley, I wrote this poem that has guided my personal work as well as my work with people.

INTIMACY*Actions open up glades**Restless, shaking what was known a second ago.**I turn inside!**The right path to the uncertain**Diving in the hot ocean of change**Vibrant and fluid tides draw the ways**Deep, deep what I do not know.**From what I do not know, a glimpse of knowing.**The fluid streams of me seek to condense.**Condensed floats, searching for surface.**From the inside out, spinning!**Turned, I let the emerging waves draw the new me**Where I knew something about myself yesterday.*

June / 2018

BIOGRAPHY

Denise Passos is a Licensed Social Worker and a member of the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology Professional Class coordinated by Leila Cohn, since 2015. She has had a private practice in Sao Paulo, Brazil since 1995. Founder and Coordinator of "Formative Dialogues - studies, practices and supervisions" in Sao Paulo, Brazil, based upon Stanley Keleman's formative thinking. Denise has participated in all Stanley Keleman's workshops in Brazil and has also in Berkeley, California in 2017.

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MY FORMATIVE JOURNEY**Iracema Teixeira****Abstract**

This text is a personal sharing of a journey towards my inner world. I speak of a pulsating growth; of the experience of expansion and retraction in myself, embodying my formative soul and laying the foundation to the construction of my adult.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, Formative Psychology®, journey, body, love

My first contact with FORMATIVE PSYCHOLOGY was in 1995, when Leila Cohn founded the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. I felt an immediate connection with it. "The body is a living process, constantly organizing itself", she said. With an approach both from phenomenology and biology, Formative Psychology spoke straight to my soul.

I then started my formative journey involving personal work and study. I started working formatively in 2003, after graduating from the first professional class at the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology: "Formative Psychology® Professional Course" (1998-2003). To this day I continue to participate in pedagogical and clinical activities organized by Leila Cohn, and I have had the honor and the great satisfaction to have participated in Stanley

Keleman's workshops in Brazil and, also in California in 2010, when I had a private session with him. Moreover, as a member of the professional group of the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology, I have taken part in various meetings and clinical discussions with Stanley Keleman over the internet.

Throughout this journey I've learned to form a relationship of acceptance and cooperation with myself. I also learned to find the joy of living even amidst adversities and, mainly, I learned to love and to be loved.

Stanley Keleman's creative sensibility - be it for conceiving a new paradigm in the science of psychology or for one of his deep poems - taught me how to receive and give body to my formative soul, and to take my life in my own hands. Stanley was a true master for me.

It is an honor for me - and I feel extremely grateful for being able to take part in this journey of formative construction - to be a faculty member of the Centro de Psicologia Formativa® do Brasil (Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology®), to have "learned from the master himself", and to have established a collaborative partnership of personal and professional growth with Leila Cohn. Through this relationship I live, I delve more deeply into, and consolidate both my formative journey and Stanley's presence in me.

I feel grateful!

BIOGRAPHY

Iracema Teixeira is a psychologist holding a PhD in Psychology (UFRJ) and an MA in Clinical Sexology (UGF). She was the project coordinator of "Conversas sobre o AMOR" ("Talks on LOVE"), and of the digital course *As Teorias do AMOR* ("The theories of LOVE").

She teaches at the Centro de Psicologia Formativa® do Brasil (Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology) and was President of the Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos em Sexualidade Humana - SBRASH (Brazilian Society for Human Sexuality Studies) 2014-2015.

Lecturer. Consultant for Brazilian Magazines and collaborator with Globo Radio Station.

Gracefulness Comes to Meet Me: Meeting with Stanley Keleman Sônia Andrade

Abstract

The author expresses her gratitude for the legacy received from learning from experience while attending the programs at the *Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology*® and from her interactions with Stanley Keleman. It addresses how formative thought and method offer the possibility of self-knowledge, and personal and professional growth from what is experienced in the body.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman; Formative Psychology®; body; re-bodying; meeting; gracefulness; intimacy; gratitude; human being.

I met Stanley Keleman for the first time in Rio de Janeiro, in 1999, in a workshop organized by the Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology, and I was very impressed with the description he gave of himself.

He said he was a therapist, a writer, and an artist. Soon it became evident to me, from his speech, how important it is to learn by experience, and that his work and his method had originated also from his own experience. Right there something unique was conveyed to me on a deeper level: an invitation that encouraged me to be myself and live my life process as a work of art.

This profoundly resonated with my experience with dancing. I say that in dancing the body that is formed is a space-time for reflection and creation, each form-movement is a revelation, a reencounter with itself... it is the very action reaching deeper layers of oneself.

Here is a poem I have written to express my embodied experience.

We don't have bodies. We are bodies.
 A certain body. This is my body.
 We are spirits that do not soar.
 We are there.
 We are matter, we are spirits, we are humans.
 Bodies that last, that shine, that burn.
 Flame that calls its own nature to be close to
 itself
 Body, matter of light.
 Body, aware that it is matter,
 Aware that it is energy,
 Aware that it is light.
 Body that gives life.
 Body energy of light reflected in a continuum of color.
 Body: iris of love.

With my gratitude and affection
 Sônia.

BIOGRAPHY

Sônia Andrade holds a MBA in Higher Education Teaching and Management. She is a clinical psychologist, a dance artist and a professor at the Clinical Psychology Graduate Studies at Universidade Santa Úrsula, in Rio de Janeiro. She is a faculty Member at the Centro de Psicologia Formativa® do Brasil (Brazilian Center for Formative Psychology), where she attended seminars, workshops and groups for 20 years. She is the founder and director of the Escola Gestalt Viva Claudio Naranjo, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Thank you, Stanley Terry Cooper

Abstract

Stanley died like Stanley lived, without drama or fuss, in an ordered and organised way. He often said, “the body knows how to die”.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, *Living your Dying*, relationship with self

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It is fitting that the man who wrote the book titled *Living your Dying* died as a fully intact, late life, ageing adult, with all of his faculties and being himself. Stanley lay down on his couch one afternoon to take a nap and did not wake up. Stanley died like Stanley lived, without drama or fuss, in an ordered and organized way. He often said, “the body knows how to die”.

What Stanley did or didn't know about his dying doesn't really come into the picture, this is how he did his dying. He understood more than anybody the uniqueness of each individual, how their body lives them, as well as how they lived their bodied life.

“It is a democratic relationship” he would say, a mutual consultation and feedback of back and forth, discussions and give and take responses, an intimate dialogue of felt knowledge and cortical response both voluntary and involuntary, created and unbidden.

The greatest gift I received from Stanley was how to have a relationship with myself, how to be present, and how to engage brain and body in a cooperative effort to respond to and manage all aspects of my internal and external bodied life. However much we might concoct stories, thinking we had discovered the whole truth about something, Stanley would open the frame and bring you back to your humanness. His intent, always to give you something of yourself rather than reinforce your abstraction of yourself.

He taught me the skills to be with how I experience myself, how to learn from myself, how to influence and shape who I am and who I become, to be a full participant in my own making, which is the most empowering skill to learn. I believe this to be one of Stanley's greatest contributions to the world of personal growth and development, and the missing link in many other therapeutic approaches.

The ‘how exercise’ Stanley formulated goes right to the core of how we function and who we are. It is an eloquent and simple methodology which, when practiced draws our attention to what is, and not what should be. Through the use of the how exercise our relationship with our self becomes receptive rather than seeking, attending rather than analyzing, eliminating judgment and interpretation, patterns which so often become a premature closure reducing what we can learn from our experience.

I learned from Stanley how to value myself and how to be my best friend and counsel. This was not my goal, it was an outcome of learning how to accept and engage with myself, to talk with myself about myself, to differentiate and regulate experiences and to give myself

TERRY COOPER

more form or less form, to be in charge of myself and not become a victim to my own personality or anybody else's.

The day I heard of Stanley's death I cried on and off for most of the day. The day after, I woke up feeling full of Stanley and at peace with his departing. I am thankful for having been left so much; so much of him in so much of me.

Thank you, Stanley. Thank you for all the effort, passion and giving you brought to our worlds and for all the green pastures you took us to.

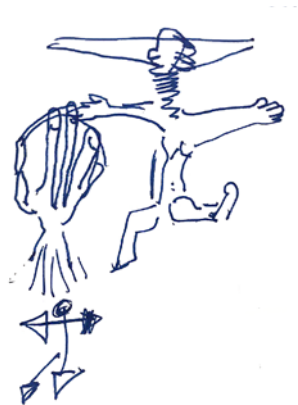
Love from your friends in London, England.

BIOGRAPHY

Terry Cooper Since the early 1970's Terry has studied formative psychology with Stanley Keleman the originator of formative psychology, at the Center for Energetic Studies in Berkeley, California. Formative psychology remains Terry's main focus of professional study, his theoretical frame of reference and forms the basis of his therapeutic work.

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Forming Your Aging: Porosity and Poetry¹

Introduction to Preface

Marilyn Haller

Stanley's most recent edition of *Essays in Formative Psychology, Forming Your Aging: Porosity and Poetry*, appeared in June, 2018. The intent of this collection is to speak about a time of life he felt was misunderstood and undervalued. For Stanley aging was not simply a decline of what was, but a fresh opportunity to form the next stage in nature's given continuum of living.

Stanley is an author whose subject comes from his lived experience, and speaking from that direct experience gives an authenticity to his particular charismatic style. During the 45 years I have known him, embodiment has been his teacher, his guide and the empowering source of the authority he claims as master of his craft.

Many people have their individual stories of first encountering Stanley, and not infrequently people say they didn't understand a word he said but they resonated with something powerful, some recognition of a profound truth about life. Different stages of living brought particular emphases and truths to the fore, but over the years Stanley was unwavering in his commitment to his central theme: Understanding and addressing how human beings form themselves.

As Stanley said early on, the body speaks its mind. And learning its language was a continuing challenge he took very seriously. Diligently and courageously, he wrestled with translating his experiences and insights into an expressive language. In that process and over the years, he created a descriptive somatic vocabulary. He was deliberate in his use of language and careful not to cross over into psychological or medical terminology that did not fit his formative vision.

As Stanley accumulated years, his interest in subjectivity and self-intimacy, maturity and aging gave him a freedom of expression that fit his desire for soaring inward. He was especially pleased that this recent book of essays illustrates the creative possibilities of the older body in its season of innate and increasing porosity — a body time of softening boundaries with more ebb and flow of time and experience. He enjoyed swimming in his sea of subjectivity, sometimes diving deep, often returning with new creative expressions that made his blue eyes twinkle.

In this preface, Stanley revisits his early biological vision and the trajectory of developing Formative Psychology®. I think he would also be very pleased with this opportunity to share his discoveries in this edition of the journal.

Marilyn Haller, Fall 2018

Preface

Stanley Keleman

The ability to remember, reassemble, edit and rebody experience is at the heart of growing a new dimensionality of human experience and embodying its values. Each person's lived anatomic history is the narrative of forming the different somatic shapes of their embodied existence. Voluntary participation in the body's forming process is the tool to investigate and develop the world we are, and the one we are forming even when we cannot know for sure what the outcome will be.

¹ Center Press, Berkeley California Copyright 2018 ISBN 978-0-934320-22-1

From the earliest days of my professional work I sought an image of mankind upon which to base my own life. Having trained in both the healing sciences and athletics, I looked to understand the body as the basis of our existence and satisfaction. Whether the mind dominated the body or the body dominated the mind, a popular debate of the time, did not fit for me. Nor could I accept any attempt to reduce humans to a materialistic event or other metaphysical and idealistic notions of the body. This dissatisfaction eventually led to the idea that experience itself would inform the conception I needed. Just as Einstein was required to reject the language of Newton, I thought, so must I reject both the mechanistic and spiritualistic languages concerning the body and seek to develop a vision and a cosmology from actual experience of living.

Taking epistemology as a functional guide and using my own experience as a reference I began to realize I was both one body and many bodies. Different life situations required similar yet different responses and behaviors. I was living both a prepersonal biological inheritance and a particular individual style. I lived a professional life, a family life and an artist's life. I was a social person and a private subjective person. Experiencing myself as this multiplicity I realized I was continually organizing myself bodily to act in different situations and thereby creating the shape and form of my life. I was an embodied biological process capable of organizing a chain of experiences called me. It was then I realized I was involved with the mystery of making a body with multiple dimensions of action, feeling and possibility.

I had learned from my friend and mentor Nina Bull (1880-1968), founder of the Attitudinal Theory of Emotion, to pay attention to the relationship of the act of doing something and the associated emotional and feeling states. How I was organizing myself seemed to be an ongoing interactive conversation between the body's inherited responses and the cortex's ability for voluntary choice and novel creation. Nina's original research was discovering that instinctual anatomical movement patterns give rise to emotion and feeling, not the other way around. In the 1950's, this scientific discovery was very counterintuitive, and it led me to a next step, which was understanding that delaying the trajectory of an action in progress not only vivifies experience, it also creates a pause place, a state of muscular-neural dynamic tension, and this organismic state is where choice and possibility reside. Experientially and conceptually I found these discoveries sensational.

Over time these and other anatomical concepts became the foundation of my investigations. In brief they are understanding that (1) the body organizes present acts from remembered motoric expressions, (2) muscle and brain/cortex converse in a sentient pulsatory language of the body speaking with itself about forming itself, and (3) the body's innate forming process is a dynamic morphological continuum of anatomical shaping, with phases of instability and stability. These discoveries from lived experience became the basis of a cosmology that, for me, is at the very heart of understanding the formative language of living and also has practical application for anyone seeking to engage in self-forming.

Building upon these insights, I was led to the notion of a formative biological process grounded in human anatomy. Seen outwardly, it is the development of the different bodies we are in our lifetime; inwardly it is the unseen dimensions and interweavings of our subjective life. Biological forming, involuntary and voluntary, is the process we are, and it is manifested as all the bodied events and experiences that make up our lives.

The concept of the human as a formative biological process seeking completion and

satisfaction filled me with an awe and respect for the sacredness of how life forms. I was no longer bothered by arguments for a body/mind split or other ideological and spiritual notions. I felt free to explore how a person forms themselves and their experience by their life activity, their language, feeling, emotion, desires and images. I wanted to know what kind of life body a person was trying to shape, what was being communicated in their actions and expressions. I looked for what a person was trying to develop, how desire sought satisfaction, how action became feeling or thought.

In the course of my work I recognized that the soma is more plastic and malleable than we had been taught to believe, and the human is capable of many reorganizing. At the same time, I was struck by the fact that life is situational. We live in a sea of continually altering situations, and our soma is challenged with changing internal and external realities that require both responsiveness and constancy. Helping people learn to participate in the body's formative process and to voluntarily influence their experience, became a quantifiable ritual that offers choices and the learned ability for being and acting in ways that are not programmed. This becomes a way to be the artist and the poet of your own life.

I have spent more than five decades developing a language and a methodology that encourages the growth of this kind of individual — procedures that honor the ancient, deep biological experience we share, and encourage an individual style of personalizing that inheritance.

Early on I called these procedures *The How Exercise*. This has evolved into *The Bodying Practice*:

1. Notice what is and give your experience a muscular shape.
2. Slowly differentiate your shape by increasing and decreasing its muscular pressure or intensity.
3. Pause. Wait for sensations and feelings to inform you.
4. Practice. Repeat Steps 1-3 to stabilize and solidify tissue memory.
5. Take new form into your world.

The intentional action by which a person engages these steps I call *voluntary muscular-cortical effort* (VMCE). VMCE is a nonverbal sentient conversation between muscle and cortex that opens the door to the inner anatomic landscape of the body's multi-dimensional, pulsatory malleability with its many-layered, inclusive dimensions of morphing shapes, expressions and felt meanings of the universe we are and the one we live in.

As biological organisms we are an inherited, prepersonal, living process of continually changing structure and experience. As human beings we can be participants in forming our personal life shapes, our values and satisfactions, from young to mature and through all the stages of aging and even into our dying. Each person has their inherited biological destiny and the ability to influence, to a degree, that destiny.

There is a special kind of empowerment that comes from learning the skills of self-forming, it is a force that creates meaning and deepens satisfaction. Living my own aging and continuing to apply the principles of self-forming continues to engage and surprise me. In myself and in my work, in small ordinary ways and sometimes dramatic ways, I witness the formative approach generating experiences that birth the optimism of a future yet to be formed. These formative principles of learning from one's own experience are perhaps even more relevant and urgent in our contemporary society where few guidelines are established for living one's later life. This collection of writing is the upwelling of my experiences — and forming them — as I continue charting my own new territory.

MARILYN HALLER, STANLEY KELEMAN

The poet's vibrato arises from the
eternal humming, undulating, droning
of the body's osmotic world where
swarms of pulsatory travelers
swim across the synaptic seas.

Permeating unending existence
with a new song of life means
giving body to our personal poem.
This mystery of giving and receiving
is what wants to be formed.

The poet is the voice of
the organizing process of
inherited and personal life.

It speaks as a motile wind
both gentle and growling, intense
hot and cool singing, chanting
bathing, penetrating resonating me.



Reviewed by Phil Seab

I still am giving birth, still hungry to say good morning to another day of my body's arising to give shape to my own horizon.

Keleman, *Forming Your Aging*, 2018

Stanley was an explorer of our interior landscapes and a singer of songs and writer of books and poems. He spoke of his inner porous arousal generating feelings of fullness and a satisfying happiness in experiencing the generosity of being alive. He filled his days with songs of life by giving body to his personal somatic poem.

Forming Your Aging: Porosity and Poetry, was published by Stanley when he was 86. He wrote the words in the last years of his life, but he had been working on this book for a long time. He says he spent more than five decades developing a language and a methodology for growing an individual who is the artist and the poet of their own life. His methodology, like our body cells, is a process which itself embodies growth and evolution through self-learning and self-forming. Stanley says that as we acquire years in every season of our bodied life we gather our expressions, feelings, and images to develop a personal fleshed space-time dimension within our body. Becoming older is a formative process and we are either forming ourselves or being formed.

Stanley embodied and lived what he writes about in *Forming Your Aging*. In his seminars and papers and in conversations with him he expressed his formative perspective on any subject he discussed. Voluntary self-influence is self-empowerment that forms a new identity based on lived experience and growing new functions from our body's pulsatory experiences. Stanley used formative language and frequently reminded people to describe their experiences and thoughts with words that supported what was present in them and allowed a formative process to grow from that. He encouraged each person to use a formative perspective to create meaning, satisfaction and optimism for themselves.

In *Forming Your Aging* Stanley explains that our body has an under bodied cortical neural map, a shadow body, and that the metamorphosis of the under formed shadow body arises in the older body as a porosity and malleability that wants to be recognized by our cortex. Stanley stressed the importance of practice for both cortical and somatic memory to be embodied and used in a resilient way. He evolved his earlier steps of *The How Exercise* into the steps of *The Bodying Practice* for using voluntary muscular-cortical effort (VMCE) for self-learning and self-forming. He set these out in the Preface to his book which is included in a separate article of this issue.

These steps describe an embodied conversation between muscle and cortex. The self is a remembered, morphological journey from conception to death, from our birth to the end of our personal embodied time. How one engages these steps evolves with aging. With aging, the forceful quick expressions of youth shift to a slower arousal and response time that reorganizes one's identity and values. *The Bodying Practice* is an intra-somatic dialogue of possibilities for understanding and influencing behavior. By working formatively with our behaviors like shrinking, rigidifying, squeezing, or forming porosity, we can influence our intentions and emotional associations. *Forming Your Aging* is Stanley's prose and poetry about his deeply felt sentient experience of living this process, and practical suggestions for those of us who are in our late life.

Stanley says that re-forming and rebodilying are still the tasks of late life as they are during the alpha stage of adulthood. In late life our bodily appearance and structure changes to be softer and

¹ With - Center Press, Berkeley California Copyright 2018 ISBN 978-0-934320-22-1)

more porous. Our memories are tissue maps within our bodies, places of bodying and rebodying again and again. These cycles of aliveness are the embodiment of a personal self-knowing process and the forming of our identity. Late life porosity is a time of gathering information and editing intensities and intents of our formative possibilities. Sometimes the uncertainties of getting older may be disturbing, but working with them we find that they are a kind of softening, a porosity and slowness that brings a different satisfaction to our life.

In his book Stanley writes that the challenge of late life aging is to develop voluntary skills to form somatic structures that add to and support the body's more porous and poetic somatic expressions. Skills that we can influence and live. Using voluntary effort, voluntary differentiation gives us a way to respond to and influence our emerging porous structures to form a later adult shape using our experiences that have a feeling of personal truth. The process the organism uses to make its personal shape alters its destiny.

The formative biosphere creates bodies with an embodying process from which grows the self-forming adult, which is the evolution of the human as a rebodying organism. The human adult in all its life stages is the personalization of life's formative process in its life seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter. Being intimate with oneself is a life-long formative journey that offers the gift of forming a personal life that personalizes the inherited pre-personal and influences the socially learned.

Stanley lists 14 statements, embodying truths, in his chapter on "The Wonder of Body Shapes Appearing and Disappearing". These are truths about the many individual body shapes of our own life, and for our memories of those who are no longer with us. Four of them are:

- Body shapes changing is a wonder and a narrative of each individual's life story.
- An ending of bodily appearing is also anticipation of an unknown appearing.
- Endings contain the desire to participate in the continuity of experiencing.
- What has ended still has a presence in the collective embodied memory.

For Stanley, living with somatic emotional embodying truths acknowledges the privilege, deepens the gratitude and sweetens the experience of being alive. He says voluntary muscular-cortical effort helped him contain his inner waves of porous arousal and generate feelings of a satisfying happiness.

At his last seminar in July he was full of the aliveness and porous tenderness he describes as part of the evolution and embodiment of his late adult. He taught as much by his presence as by his words. His book mixes poetry and practical advice. His poetry, some of it in prose form, sometimes sounds like abstract thoughts, but is actually descriptions of his deep experiences of his interior life. He could return easily to those places he called his interior landscape because of his many journeys there using his bodying practice. He often said his interest was not to give answers, but to empower others to find their own answers grounded in the truth of their own form and experience. One of the poetic beauties of a self-empowered embodied aliveness is its ability to be passed on to others and to the next generation. I see this in my children and now in my children's children, like ripples in a pond growing ever wider in time and space. I learned from Stanley how to also continue these ripples in my personal time of my late adult life into my last days.

BIOGRAPHY

Phil Seab is a retired clinical neurologist living in San Francisco. He was privileged to know Stanley since 1970. He received his M.D. from The University of Texas Medical School in Dallas, Texas.

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Maturity, Solitude and Intimacy¹ **by Stanley Keleman** **A Book Review by Conn B. Hickey**

Abstract

The author combines his personal experience of Stanley Keleman's Formative perspective with a summarization of the essays covered in this book.

Keywords: Stanley Keleman, Maturity, Solitude, Intimacy, Formative

I first met Stanley Keleman in 1969 at a Bioenergetics workshop at Kairos in San Diego County. I was 24 and he was 37. Twenty years later, in 1989, I met him again and began attending his teaching programs and workshops at the Center for Energetic Studies in Berkeley. For as long as I have known him, embodied experience has been Stanley's teacher and the source of knowing from which he teaches others. For the last 30 years I have had the privilege of being challenged by and participating in the evolution of his thinking and practice and applying these to forming my own personal life.

As Stanley accumulated years so did I. I began as an alpha adult, learning from him how to form a mature adult, a life stage he had already formed for himself. And now, how lucky I have been as an older adult to have learned how to be formative in making the transitions and meeting the challenges of this next stage of living.

Over the last ten years or so Stanley began gathering his experiences and thoughts about being older, writing essays and poems to express what he was living. *Maturity, Solitude and Intimacy* is the first in a series of Essays in Formative Psychology.

In this short book Stanley puts into words what he was learning as he sought to know and influence his own inherited biology and to form his own personal somatic style, and along the way learn some universal truths of living. A central message in these essays, as in much of his work, is "*when we lack the tools for self-forming, life forms us rather than we form our life.*"

In these essays he encourages us to develop the empowerment and the optimism that accompanies the learned ability for self-influence, which means learning to influence how we are somatically shaping ourselves and our situations through all the stages of living.

MATURITY

In the first of the three essays in this collection, Stanley describes a life stage he calls the mature adult. He describes maturity as a life stage between the alpha adult and the aging adult. Using his own life experience and what he learned from working with others, he lays out the qualities of this stage of life and helps us to recognize and grow our own relationship to forming a mature life.

In this essay, he explores the wonderful riches and satisfaction that are inherent in differentiating and to some extent disassembling our alpha adult structures to form and support the slower, more porous, pulses of the mature adult. He shows how looking at the changes that accompany this age as loss is to become a victim to our own built in changes. And he points out how, by hanging on to and fearing the loss of the alpha adult structures and

¹ Keleman, S. (2014) *Maturity, Solitude and Intimacy*, Center Press, Berkeley. ISBN 0-934320-18-7.

behaviors, people often cling to a rigidity that no longer serves the organism. He describes how this easily leads to collapse, depression and feelings of loss, all of which serve to mute the natural vitality of the body.

He offers an alternate perspective on this phase of life, namely to support our innate formative function by using voluntary muscular effort to generate and support new structures and expressions, to experience “*the power of life’s instinctive urge to form itself...to develop...this vital stage of our existence.*”

SOLITUDE

Solitude is not a withdrawal from the world, a removing of oneself from society and others creating a self-imposed loneliness and distance. Instead, Stanley describes it as “*A membrane joining to form a boundary, making an inside and an outside...the beginning of separateness – a separateness that maintains a connection to a bigger [outside] world and a smaller [inside] world. This Formative act is the mother of solitude.*”

He goes on to point out that solitude is an anatomical, boundary-making behavior and shape that has the possibility of generating new experiences from what we gather inside the containment of the boundary. By applying to solitude his basic insight that all of life is active, Stanley enriches us with a way to experience the value and satisfaction of the natural gathering into ourselves that can accompany the maturing years. He uses the term “dynamic stillness” to capture the depth and managed aliveness that he experienced as qualities of this solitude.

SOMATIC INTIMACY

“*Intimacy as a structure is a semi-porous-rigid layered anatomic organization. It is an experiential knowing arising from one’s own tissues.*” Over the last few years of interacting with and learning from Stanley, it became clear that the function of gathering inward and experiencing the body’s inner pulsatory environment became more center stage. For him developing this kind of self-intimacy with one’s own biology is a way to know, from direct experience, the depths and layers of our own humanity.

Putting this collection of essays together with the latest series he wrote called *Forming Your Aging*, one can see the evolution of his experience and thinking about the centrality of porosity as the creative force in the ongoing pulsation of living.

I had the privilege around the time these essays were published to co-body my 95 year old mother through her own process of leaving behind her alpha adult, and to plumb with her the depths of the porosity and receptivity of maturity and aging, the nourishment of the dynamic stillness of solitude, and the gift of somatic intimacy, both internally and shared, that are so fully explored in these essays. Throughout this five year process, Stanley shared his insights with me into how these wonders were forming from the disassembling of previous structures and habitual patterns. Recognizing and giving shape, support and language to what appeared as a result helped me to help both of us to deeply appreciate and taste the richness of this time of life that was not available to either of us in our alpha stages.

BIOGRAPHY

Conn Hickey, age 73, retired in 2014 from a career as an IT executive in the banking industry and has spent the last four years collaboratively forming a charter elementary school in the Bay Area using a formative perspective to help grow the structure of this educational endeavor.

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Books by Stanley Keleman

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Books by Stanley Keleman

Forming Your Aging: Porosity and Poetry Essays in Formative Psychology \$17.00

Stanley Keleman takes us on his artistic journey as he explores different embodied experiences of giving shape and meaning to living older age.

ISBN 0-934320-22-1 paper (2018), 69 pages

Maturity Solitude Intimacy Essays in Formative Psychology \$12.00

This small book of somatic essays opens a large world enveloping the past, the present and the time to come. It is brimming over with somatic wisdom Keleman has gained over the decades from listening to and teaching others and from listening to and teaching himself.

ISBN 0-934320-18-7 paper (2014), 31 pages

Myth & The Body: A Colloquy with Joseph Campbell \$19.95

Stanley Keleman says in the introduction, "Myths serve a practical function. They enable people to organize the experience of their own bodies. Myths are a collective dream of a culture and are no different than a personal dream."

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A companion volume to Emotional Anatomy, this book describes the methodology that accompanies Keleman's somatic theories. Using a systematic guide, the reader is encouraged to identify his own somatic patterns and to learn from his experience.

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Emotional Anatomy \$39.95

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ISBN 0-934320-10-1 paper (1985), 176 pages

Your Body Speaks Its Mind \$16.95

This book is about the emotional language and biological language of the body, which Keleman puts together. He says, "We do not have bodies, we are our bodies. Emotional reality and biological ground are the same and cannot, in any way, be separated or distinguished." Life incarnate is a process of individual human experience manifesting in the body.

ISBN 0-934320-01-2 paper, 192 pages

Somatic Reality \$14.95

Transitions--crises--changes, and turning points--are part of each human life and they include bodily transitions and experience. How life changes are expressed somatically is the theme of Somatic Reality.

ISBN 0-934320-05-5 paper (1979), 128 pages

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This is Keleman's first book and the one which covers the most basic aspects of his work and philosophy. In a style that quickly engages the reader, he weaves a picture of human form and experience--the many ways people take on self-definition. Short, concise chapters include many case histories and therapeutic dialogues from Keleman's workshops.

ISBN 0-934320-02-0 paper (1971), 195 pages

Living Your Dying \$19.95

Formerly published by Random House and now in its sixth printing, Keleman's popular book examines attitudes toward dying, styles of dying, and styles of living.

ISBN 0-934320-09-8 paper (1974), 158 pages

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The Organism as a Pulsatory Continuum London 2007

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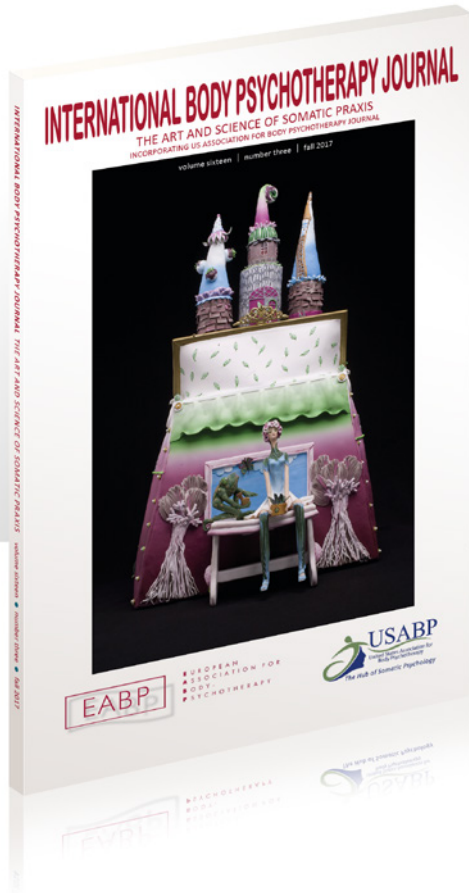
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