

Transformative Moments: Short Stories from the Biodynamic Psychotherapy Room
With Dr Elya Steinberg

Salutogenesis and the Web of Dynamic Phenomena

Learning biodynamic massage means learning to sense and direct non-verbal processes in a partially conscious manner, to transform some of the subcortical processes of the dance into partially conscious processes.

Last week, I wrote about mothers, babies and dance. About the need for biodynamic psychotherapists to be within the dance, within the process, and not to think about it.

For people new to our field, the first stage is the need to relearn 'how to dance'. This means learning how to self-regulate, to feel better about themselves and their bodies, with all their components. Traumatic past experiences often disrupt the unconscious ability 'to dance' in a directed and directional way, with themselves and others.

They must also be aware that this calls for an endless learning process, that each dance is a new one, every moment is changing and dynamic, with direction and directionality, correction, feedback and feedforward, then redirection, until inner re-creation is achieved through a spontaneous process that lets them sense a new vitality. It sets the inner life-force in motion, giving us the sense that it's worth living this life.

A dance of contradictory variables, a combination of creative directions, and dedicating repetition.

Salutogenesis, Synchronization and Desynchronization

The other aspect, supplementary to health in terms of salutogenesis—what causes health rather than what causes disease or pathogenesis— is the creative ability to produce and adapt ourselves creatively to endless changing dynamic processes. Creativity is grounded on desynchronization, and the basis of adaptation is the aspiration for synchronization.

One aspect of health, then, involves more physical and mental regulation, stronger coherence of inner and outer processes, and greater improvement in inter-systemic adaptation processes within the individual's spirit, mind and body, in interpersonal, social, and ecological adaptation processes. There is no single site where one ends and one begins, no single cause or effect. It is a network of numerous myriad

variables with multiple outcomes, multidimensional, with many levels of unending dynamic processes.

Thus, desynchronization implies the option for stepping outside the comfort of flow processes: it is mandatory for survival and for adapting dynamically to changing life-conditions. I have discussed desynchronization elsewhere, and focus here on synchronization and how it can be improved through biodynamic massage, by the quality of touch, intention, and directionality.

Awareness and Healing

Awareness is not equivalent to control. We can work partially out of direction and intentionality, but at the same time the success of the therapeutic art lies in the dynamic balance between direction, and not knowing the direction, so that each moment can be new and authentic.

Analyzing the dance is not the dance itself, and cannot replace the dance itself. The dance itself is healing, and the post-dance analysis can provide support for an authentic and more successful future choreography that is more effective for the client's life. A fresh choreography that may allow greater movement toward health, though it is not healing itself.

Healing itself is a dynamic process consisting of multiple variables that are structured from both constructive processes and destructive mistakes and mutations, which must be spontaneously repaired by a system bent on health.

Our role as therapists, then, is to make possible a more spontaneous synchronized flow of information and energy, to encourage spontaneous, integrative, intelligent physical processes toward conscious intelligence. An intelligence whose power activated evolution that helped the human species to survive for millennia. Intelligence that supports an unending movement toward health from the perspective of salutogenesis (health).

Biodynamic psychotherapy is an art, significant parts of which science can explain. An art composed of techniques that can be summarized in a book about biodynamic massage, but whose final outcome is worth far more than pieces of knowledge that can be objectively written down.

As I have mentioned here, the art of biodynamic psychotherapy has the goal of understanding non-verbal processes, a therapeutic directionality aimed, inter alia, at making possible a corrective experience that in turn enables more effective functioning of the inner regulatory and integration mechanisms. They enable continuing nurturing in neurodevelopmental terms and a movement toward health (salutogenesis). They bring into being support and help for coping with mental crises and distress, some consciously, and others unconsciously, as part of organic cortical and subcortical processes.

Next week I will offer my final blog. I will talk more technically about my thoughts and ideas related to biodynamic massage and biodynamic psychotherapy. I offer my concepts and clinical applications in hopes of stimulating both interest in this process and collegial interactions with you. Please email your thoughts to Nancy@nancyeichhorn.com for posting on the SPT Magazine blog and SPT Magazine's Facebook page. If your post is accepted, she will also request a jpeg file headshot and brief bio to accompany your post.

Dr Elya Steinberg, MD, is Co-Director of the Centre for Biodynamic Psychotherapy (London School of Biodynamic Psychotherapy). She is a medical doctor and biodynamic psychotherapist who integrates body-psychotherapy, Gerda Boyesen methods and bioenergy with psychological trauma work, martial arts, conventional allopathic medicine and complementary medicine. She interweaves alternative and conventional approaches to allow a person to grow as a holistic complex and improve their well-being. In partnership with Gerhard Payrhuber she facilitates the group 'Attending to the Silence' for second and third generation Shoah survivors, perpetrators and bystanders. elya.steinberg@virgin.net; www.biodynamic-bodypsychotherapy.co.uk