

Seminar 1 : Basic principles of nature

... for he has the great book of nature constantly spread before him.

A.T. Still, Autobiography

It is in his books that Still underlines the importance of studying, understanding and applying the principles of nature. During this seminar, the quote “**Form and Function are a unity**” takes in a central position. We will study the human being in its chronological developmental appearance. We start with the molecules and understand their structural importance for the cell and its functioning. From there we will continue to jump to the overlying dimensions of tissues and organs.

It is the philosophy of Osteopathy that the operator needs; therefore it is indispensable that you know this philosophy or you will fail badly and get no further than the quackery of “hit and miss.”

A.T. Still, Autobiography

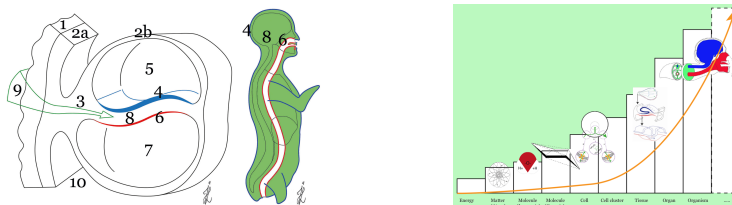
While reading the books of Still, it becomes more than once very clear of how much importance the knowledge of **anatomy** for the osteopath is. And it becomes clear that he meant more than just the macroscopic dimension of the human form (e.g. “The philosophy of Osteopathy, page 16-18)! During this seminar, an adequate reference frame for the different dimensions of this anatomy is presented. This reference frame and its parameters allow the participant an **immediate understanding for the practical application** of the principles that Still describes.

Then doctor Still says

... A healthy state is a state of no pattern. If you’ve got a pattern, you’ve got a strain, a disease, or a problem. If you haven’t got a problem, there is no pattern. ...

R.E. Becker, The Stiness of Life

The content of the seminar is also the fundament for the description of human ontogenesis. Unlike most embryology courses, the approach in the seminars of this course regarding the “**Homunculi**” is of a physical kind. This allows a clear bridge between the principles that Still is talking about and the development of **morphokinetic patterns** as described by Gurwitsch, Driesch and Blechschmidt. These patterns and their practical meaning will be studied in all of their details during the following seminars.



Some colleagues would describe the seminar as a theoretical course. However, looking at the content and the way how it is presented, the labeling of a **theoretical practice course** is more accurate! For every topic that is discussed, the **immediate usability for the daily practice** of an osteopath is illustrated and elaborated.

KEY-WORDS: dimension, texture, direction, pattern, strain, field, form, structure, position, relationship, environment (surrounding), function, metabolism, fluid, cell, blastocyst, entocyst disc, frontier & inner tissue, vascularization, symptom, pathology, ...

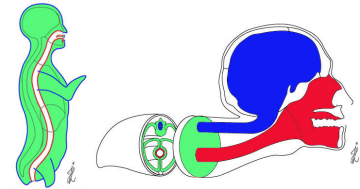
Seminar 2 : Homunculus neurocranii

Osteopathy in the cranio-vertebro-sacral field

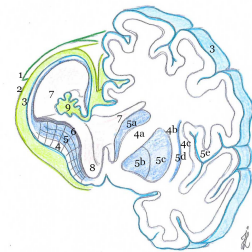
... The method was borrowed from Dr. Andrew Taylor Still in his technic utilized in reduction of ... I have adopted the Old Doctor's wrist technic to that of the cranial; ...

W.G. Sutherland, The Cranial Bowl

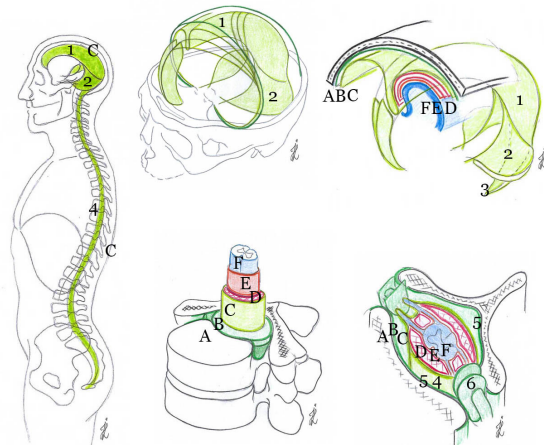
The Homunculus neurocranii stands for osteopathy in the cranio-sacral field. Right from the beginning, it will be clear that this should be the *cranio-vertebro-sacral* field. In doing so, the spine, as so often described as being a part of the parietal system, receives **a complete new meaning**. This opens a wide range of new therapeutical opportunities.



During this seminar, the development of the *Homunculus neurocranii* will give a detailed insight into the specific circumstances that are at the basis of numerous patterns. These **developmental patterns** will characterize the Form and Function of this system. It should be mentioned that although these developmental patterns are in general seen as part of the embryological study, their meaning for the functioning of the individual remains throughout his/her complete life. These characteristics can be used by an osteopath in daily practice.



The study of the developmental patterns regarding this system will also explain their importance for the **regulation of the metabolic processes in the periphery**. Numerous symptoms of the locomotor and the visceral system can be seen in relationship to patterns of strain within the cranio-vertebro-sacral system. By using the reference frame and parameters as seen in the first seminar, a much more accurate diagnosis and treatment becomes obvious and no longer requires questions such as ... *what do I do in the case of ...*, or, *what technique should I use ...* .



The **complexity of neuroanatomy** is for many a real dealbreaker to start this part of the anatomical study (certainly its physiology!). However, the physical reference frame of the **morphokinetic concept** will allow the osteopath to acquire a solid and valid insight for the treatment of numerous neurological challenges (motoric development, social behavior, ...).

KEY-WORDS: innervation, vegetativum, segmentation, trajectory, Plexus venosus, Adamkiewicz, dura girdles, endocrine & neurocrine communication, liquor dynamics, cranial movement, ..., migraine, squinting, lumbago, paresthesia, dyslexia, fine motor skills, ...

Seminar 3 : Homunculus vicerocranii

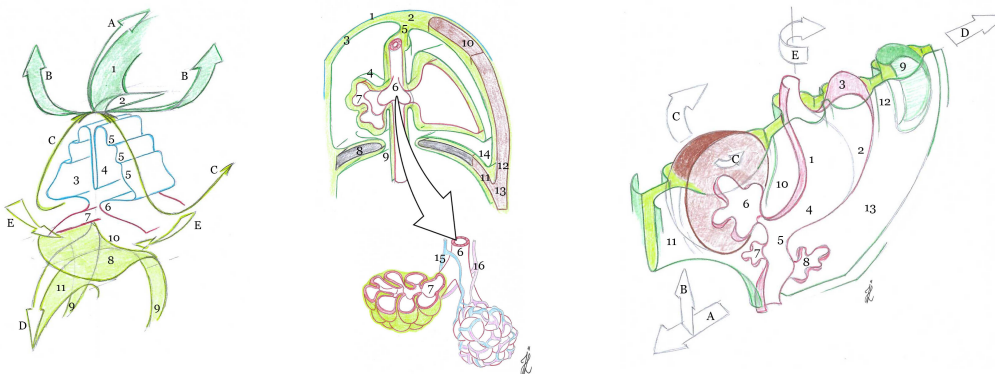
Osteopathy in the visceral (digestive) field

If digestion is the effect of organs, fluids and forces, then the student of nature's law must be governed by well known truths, such as the location of the brain, connection of the nerves to other organs, bringing all parts interested in digestion in mental view. Thus you have a chance to know if one organ has an assisting relation to any other organ or system or if its products are of general or of special use.

A.T. Still, The Philosophy of Osteopathy

During this seminar, the Form and Function of the digestive system will be studied within the context of several morphokinetic patterns. A part of these patterns originates from the development of the **cranio-vertebro-sacral system**. This allows the osteopath to understand that the patient's problem may be located in the gut, but its origin is a pattern of strain in the cranium, spine or pelvis. Another part of the morphokinetic patterns is of a more local nature, which means that it can be located within the anatomical characteristics and features of **the organ itself**. By using the same **physical reference frame** (see seminar 1 & 2) and its specific parameters, the osteopath will be able to evaluate the **chemical nature of digestion**. With other words, problems with digestion will be made **accessible for palpation** in order to distinguish which specific pattern of strain the patient is dealing with.

For didactical reasons, the content of this seminar is subdivided into **3 major parts**: 1) the face region, 2) the thoracic region, 3) the abdominal region. Eventually, these three regions will become one unity during the developmental study of the so-called "**repositioning of the Septum transversum**". The developmental study of the future abdominal diaphragm is besides the "**cerebralization process**" (see previous seminar) the second most important event in human ontogenesis. During this seminar, it will become apparent that both events are key moments. Both cannot be seen as individual phenomena, and this will remain as such during complete lifetime. The intimate relationship in Form and Function will be clear during the study of the **central tendon**. This tendon is all too often described as a simple rope-like structure. It is not correct. Because it represents numerous **spiral-diagonal patterns** of different texture: viscosity = blood vessels; turgor = muscles; tension = fascia and ligaments. The study of these patterns will open new horizons regarding relationships with digestive consequences and adds a new dimension to the treatment of digestive problems.



KEY-WORDS: chemistry of metabolism, secretion, endocrine and exocrine gland, organ, temporo-nasal hammock, diaphragm, organ mobility, ..., polyp, laryngitis, pneumonia, reflux, constipation, ...

Seminar 4 : Homunculus interni

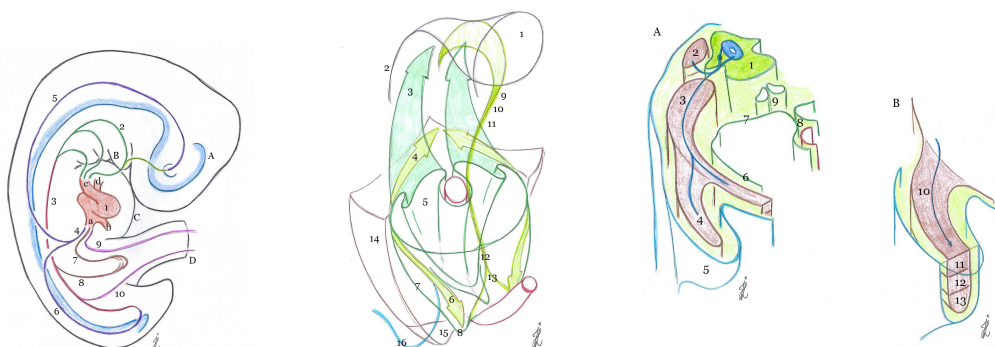
Osteopathy in the trajectorial field: vascular, urogenital, locomotor

The key word during this seminar is “**trajectory**”, which means “*main direction*”. This term refers to the directional characteristics of a pattern of strain. The directional characteristic of such pattern becomes imprinted within the anatomical form. Consequently, it has a meaning for the functional features of cells, tissues, organs and even the complete human organism. A large majority of trajectories were already studied during seminar 2 and 3. Some of them will be described now in even more detail because they have a meaning for the Form and Function of the urogenital organs and the locomotor system as well.

VASCULAR TRAJECTORIES – In this chapter, the **fluid dynamics** and **fluid kinetics** are described in more detail. The study of these features will underline the importance of the statement that the very first skeleton is the vascular tree. The study also leads to an understanding of the venous and lymphatic importance of the circulation. The heart at the beginning of the study, appears in the context of these dynamics and kinetics as an organ of a lesser importance than usually given! After the study of this topic, it will become clear how to understand numerous veno-lymphatic clinical signs and how to deal with them in daily practice.

UROGENITAL TRAJECTORIES – Right at the beginning of this chapter, it becomes clear that the urogenital system is most likely the most complex region of the human body. This is a direct consequence of the **numerous positional relationships** these organs have with the other parts of the body. However, it also becomes clear that a profound knowledge of the morphokinetic patterns of the cranio-vertebro-sacral and visceral digestive system have a direct imprint on the Form and Function of these urogenital organs.

LOCOMOTOR TRAJECTORIES – This will be the last and final chapter of this course. The reason why this topic is not the first one that we start with (as it is in general the case) is in its essence quite simple: it is not possible to understand the Form and Function of the locomotor system as long as the developmental patterns of the other systems are not fully understood. The fact that we can observe in practice a large majority of articular problems (or muscles, or ...) being treated by a cranio-vertebro-sacral and/or visceral manual approach should not make you wonder anymore after this seminar. In the context of the human ontogenesis, the Form and Function of the locomotor apparatus is **a trajectorial consequence of patterns originating from the Homunculus neurocranii and viscerocranii**.



KEY-WORDS: veno-lymphatic pump mechanism, kidney, ascensus, repositioning testicles and ovaries, uterus, Lig. latum, pelvis minor, bladder, ... blood pressure, hemorrhoids, dysmenorrhea, incontinence, pubalgia, tendinitis, ankle sprain, ...

Impressions of the past

