



Karuna Institute

# Professional Training In Craniosacral Biodynamics





Karuna Institute

## Professional Training In Craniosacral Biodynamics

The two year training leads to a professional qualification in Craniosacral Therapy consisting of ten five-day residential seminars

The Karuna Institute is a postgraduate training centre located in the beautiful Dartmoor National Park in Devon, England. The Institute endeavours to provide a safe and stimulating learning environment for its students. Students stay at the Institute during seminar times and all fees include residential accommodation at the Institute.

Franklyn Sills MA, RCST is the course director. He, along with the Karuna teaching staff, has pioneered the theoretical and clinical teaching approaches used in this course, which have influenced trainings around the world. The course is recognised by the Craniosacral Therapy Association of the United Kingdom and the Craniosacral Therapy Association of North America, among others. Successful completion of the course leads to a diploma in Craniosacral Biodynamic Therapy and eligibility for accreditation by these and other practitioner Associations. The training is also affiliated to other biodynamic training institutions worldwide via the IABT, the International Affiliation of Biodynamic Trainings.

## Craniosacral Biodynamics

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Craniosacral Biodynamics is an approach to the teaching and practice of Craniosacral Therapy that acknowledges the deepest foundations of the human system. We, as human beings, are seen to be an expression of the wholeness of life itself and of the vast forces at work in the universe. In this concept, a spiritual essence called the Breath of Life is perceived to generate a subtle tide-like organizing force called primary respiration that, in turn, manifests as a biodynamic potency and organizing force within the human system. Primary respiration is expressed in the body as a series of stable and palpable tidal rhythms. This intrinsic health integrates all cellular and tissue function from the moment of conception until death. It is considered to be the human system's basic ordering and healing principle and is constantly at work maintaining the best possible balance even in the most desperate circumstances.

The intention of the work is to re-establish the relationship between chaotic mind-body states and the potency of the Breath of Life. The emphasis of the work is to sense how the body is expressing this Health, even in the most acute resistances and pathologies. This idea is seen in Chinese Medicine where jing is the essence within the body whose role is to maintain order, integration and healing processes. It is also seen in Tibetan Medicine where the “wind of the vital forces” is the unconditioned blueprint energy of the human system.



## The Teaching of Craniosacral Therapy

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Craniosacral Therapy, as taught at the Institute, is based upon this profound biodynamic understanding. Students learn to establish a truly empathetic and negotiated listening field in which the deeper forces and clinical issues within the client's system can safely emerge. This is also a journey into our own wounding, that which keeps us away from intimacy and joy in life, and the nature of our own self-organization. In this context, students learn the art of listening. You will first learn to perceive primary respiration and the subtle rhythmic pulsations and motions that it generates. You then learn to orient to the client's history, which is clearly expressed in the dynamics of the fluids, cells and tissues of the body, and to relate clinically to patterns of trauma, distress and pathology within the context of intrinsic health. In this process, you are taught to encourage the body's own healing resources and to facilitate a reconnection to natural biodynamic forces and the stillness from which they arise, within any pattern of dysfunction and distress.

In this work the intention is not to fix or cure anything, but to encourage new levels of order and balance in mind and body. This work is truly an art of listening to the language of the body, sensing and understanding that language, and appropriately responding to the healing intentions of the human system. In this context, you also learn to facilitate the client's vitality and constitutional strength by encouraging a fuller expression of the potency of the Breath of Life. Treatment is comprised of a gentle listening touch, which is both diagnostic and therapeutic. Client's may feel deep relaxation and become aware of alterations in fluid pressures, tissue motions, heat, tingling, feeling-states and energy movement. The client's awareness of his or her personal process is also an integral part of this work. The work is not only about physical distress, but is an experiential exploration that encompasses our mental processes, feelings, emotions and their physical manifestations.

## THE TWO-YEAR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Comprised of ten five-day residential seminars

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The professional training in Craniosacral Biodynamics is taught in ten five-day seminars, over two academic years, meeting approximately bimonthly. During the course, students are required to produce homework assignments and a clinical project, and to undertake practice sessions between seminar meetings. Supervision, feedback and course handouts are provided throughout the training. Students are continuously assessed and are required to achieve a professional standard of practice before graduation. Formal tutor assessments occur halfway through the course and towards the end of the training. Upon successful completion of the course, graduates are eligible to join the Craniosacral Therapy Association UK and some other international practitioner associations. The Institute is also affiliated with the IABT, the International Affiliation of Biodynamic Trainings.

### Purpose Of the Training

- ✓ to provide a nurturing and safe residential learning environment in a setting of natural beauty;
- ✓ to nurture and encourage the personal development of both tutor and student alike;
- ✓ to provide an integrated training in Craniosacral Biodynamics that includes the insights of many practitioners in the field, with influences from other relevant fields, and clearly orients to the healing principles of the Breath of Life and its manifestation in the human system;
- ✓ to provide an in-depth understanding and appreciation of these principles and to be able to safely apply them within a clinical context;
- ✓ to teach, within this context, clearly defined palpation and therapeutic skills with the ability to apply these skills in a clinical context;
- ✓ to graduate skilled, safe and therapeutically effective practitioners.

### Teaching Format

- ✓ Small class sizes of up to 22 students are maintained.
- ✓ A minimum of a five-to-one student teacher ratio is maintained in order to provide in depth feedback on palpation and clinical skills during practical sessions.
- ✓ Small and large group feedback generally occurs after practical sessions.
- ✓ Teaching and learning methods include lectures, the use of visual aids, demonstrations, guided sessions, visualisation work, small group, exploration and feedback, table exchange sessions, supervision feedback, all with an emphasis on student observation and exploration.



“Franklyn is truly masterful in articulating and clarifying the inherent forces that he has illuminated as Craniosacral Biodynamic Therapy. He brings both meditation and healing together and forges the art of true healing in a simple yet profound manner. For his teaching I am truly grateful.”

Tez Sawicki  
Craniosacral Student



- ✓ Tutorial and supervision sessions are included in each training module. Each student is assigned a tutor who may be consulted for personal feedback.
- ✓ Practical clinical applications are emphasised with over fifty percent of class time given to hands-on practical work.
- ✓ Students are encouraged to meet as a peer group each seminar and to elect a student representative. This representative is nominated to give course feedback and suggestions from the peer group to the course co-ordinator. Students are also encouraged to individually give course feedback at any time. Written course feedback forms are part of some homework assignments.

### Course Work and Student Evaluation

- ✓ Homework is assigned each training module. This includes both written work and reading. Students are asked to write up a minimum of two practice sessions as part of each assignment. Students are expected to complete all homework on time.
- ✓ Students are expected to undertake a minimum of two practice sessions a week outside of class time. These are with practice clients who enter into a non-paying, non-professional relationship with the student. Practice clients must understand that the purpose of sessions are solely to support the student's learning process. If the practice client needs professional help they are referred to a qualified practitioner. Students will receive supervision feedback in small groups during seminar time.
- ✓ Students are continuously evaluated throughout the course. Relational, palpation and clinical skills and the student's personal readiness to practice, are tracked by tutors and appropriate feedback and help is offered
- ✓ There are two formal practical assessment/feedback sessions scheduled during course time. These are individual sessions where students practice the work on tutors for approximately 30 minutes. Clinical palpation skills are the focus of the assessment sessions. Students are given tutorial feedback and their skills are assessed. These occur towards the end of each training year.
- ✓ There is a written clinical project in the second year of the training.
- ✓ There is a final exam given as a closing homework assignment at the end of the training.
- ✓ Students are encouraged to form local study groups that meet between seminar times. Study groups with tutors can also be arranged at extra cost.
- ✓ Students are required to experience at least ten sessions from a qualified practitioner within the two years of course time.

# COURSE SYLLABUS

## Ten Five-Day Seminars

### Seminar One

#### Relationship, the Neutral and the Breath of Life

The intention of this first seminar is to create a ground for the rest of the training. The development of awareness, the growing ability to rest in stillness, and relational and perceptual skills are the heart of course work. Interpersonal relational skills are introduced in seminar one, as are concepts of the nature of being and self. Within this context, students learn to enter a neutral “being” state from which to meet and relate to the client's system, and from which to establish a safe and empathetic listening field. The nature of empathy within relational contact is discussed and explored. Skills of negotiation of contact and of palpation are introduced. The encouragement of both practitioner and client resources is also explored. The importance and skill of maintaining a wide perceptual field is introduced and the perception of primary respiration and its various tidal manifestations is also introduced. Within this context, a perceptual awareness of the fluid tide is initially emphasized. The role of stillness within the work is also introduced as a fundamental concept, perception and skill within Craniosacral Biodynamics.

### Seminar Two

#### The Ground of Resource and Motion: The Holistic Shift, the Mid-tide and Motility

The intention of this seminar is to begin to appreciate the specific tissue manifestations of the action of the Breath of Life within the human body. Students learn to relate the fluid tide to tissue motility. All tissue structures express an inner motility, or inherent motion. Initially, palpatory awareness of intraosseous motility is explored within the major bony structures of the cranium and pelvis. Specific palpation sessions relating to the reciprocal tension membranes and the temporal, frontal, parietal, occipital and sphenoid bones and the sacrum are undertaken. The dynamics of the sphenobasilar junction are also introduced. The importance of embryologically derived organizing fulcrums is also introduced. Within this context, students begin to explore the overall organization of the fluid-tissue field.



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### Seminar Three

#### The Heart of Healing: the Neutral and the State of Balance

The potency of the Breath of Life naturally expresses itself within states of wholeness and equilibrium. This seminar introduces some of the most important clinical concepts within craniosacral biodynamics: the neutral, the state of balance and the role of stillness. These are explored within the understanding of the inherent treatment plan. Rather than having to resort to the use of analysis or diagnosis to gain information, students are oriented to perceptual processes that directly allow them to observe the arising of healing intentions from within the client's system. The concept and perceptual experience of natural, automatic shifting fulcrums is explored along with reciprocal tension motion within the tissue field. Student's are taught initial processes that help them orient to inertial fulcrums from which an awareness of inertia and inertial issues is developed. From this base, students learn to appreciate the state of balance, a systemic neutral oriented to particular inertial issues in the system. It is within this state that the healing forces of primary respiration can manifest within particular conditions. An introduction to Dynamic Stillness as a ground of emergence for healing processes is also undertaken. Focusing skills are reviewed and their use within a therapeutic context is explored.



### Seminar Four

#### Augmentation Skills

In this seminar students learn additional clinical skills. The work from the previous seminar is continued as students explore further ways of relating to inertia and conditional forces. The concept of the state of balance as a gateway to deeper embryological organizing forces and the Long Tide is explored. Various clinical approaches to fluids and tissues are taught as skills that resonate with and augment naturally occurring processes and organizing forces. As this process deepens, students learn to offer options within the natural pacing of healing processes and to help the system access its innate potential for health. These skills include the augmentation of space within the forces and conditions present; and fluid augmentation skills such as amplification of fluid drive and the use of lateral fluctuations in clinical process. Additional attention is also placed on the therapeutic role of deepening states of balance and stillpoints. Students explore the nature of inhalation and exhalation oriented stillpoints. Trauma skills based on the work of Dr. Peter Levine are also introduced.



## COURSE SYLLABUS

continued

### Seminar Five

#### Birth Process and the Coalescence of Structure

In this seminar, students are oriented to the shifting of potency within the fluids as a particular focus in clinical work. The main emphasis of the seminar is birth dynamics and the impact of birth process. This is introduced as a theme that continues throughout the second year. The pre- and perinatal experience is discussed as a formative ground for personality development. In this context, the dynamics of the occiput, atlas and axis are explored via palpation. Cranial distortion patterns are explored and clinical approaches presented. The influence of birthing forces, trauma impacts and clinical issues relating to cranial base patterns are presented. Trauma skills relating to hyper-arousal states are discussed.

### Seminar Six

#### Around the Core: The Midline and Vertebral Axis

In this seminar, orientation to the Long Tide as a starting point in session work is introduced. Concepts of midline phenomena and embryology are also explored as a vehicle for understanding the organisation and health of the human system. The midline as an archetypal concept is explored. The primal midline, an embryological ordering principle at the heart of tissue organization, is introduced via direct perception. Within this context, the motility and mobility dynamics of the dual tube, pelvis and vertebral column are explored. The embryology of the vertebral column and its relationship to the notochord is emphasised. Students are introduced to clinical approaches to fixation and inertia within these dynamics. Trauma skills are continued as clinical approaches to states of hypo-arousal, immobilization and freezing states are introduced.

### Seminar Seven

#### Introduction to the Central Nervous System and Birthing Impacts further Explored

In this seminar Dynamic Stillness is explored as a starting point in session work and the innate ground from which all healing processes emerge. The main emphasis then focuses on the dynamics of the central nervous system. CNS motility is explored from an embryological viewpoint and the palpation of its motility is emphasised. Issues of CNS facilitation and hypersensitivity are explored clinically. Students learn to orient to CNS shock affect and shock discharge within healing processes. Students also learn to further orient to the Long Tide and to field phenomena that it generates as initiating forces in healing processes. Birth related issues are also further explored. The concept of birth forces as traumatic impacts that lodge within bony tissues is introduced, and the intraosseous dynamics of the occiput, temporal bone and sphenoid bone are explored. Clinical trauma skills in relationship to dissociative states are also introduced.



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### Seminar Eight

#### The Face. Hard Palate and TMJ Dynamics

Students are introduced to the dynamics of the face, hard palate and TMJ. The relationships of the face and hard palate are presented as a unified dynamic. Students gradually build up a complete picture of these relationships as they explore the specific motility of the frontal bone, ethmoid bone, sphenoid, vomer, palatines, maxillae and TMJ. These are seen to be a unit of function whose dynamics are totally inter-dependent. Clinical skills already learned are applied to these relationships and to the inertial patterns found within them.

### Seminar Nine

#### Connective Tissues, Joints and Viscera

Students explore the fascial dynamics of the body via its fascial tracts and transverse diaphragms. Clinical approaches to joint dynamics and relationships throughout the body are explored within the context of skills already learned. An introduction to the organ system and visceral relationships is explored via palpation sessions. Dynamic Stillness is further oriented to in the context of “reciprocal balanced interchange”.



### Seminar Ten

#### Ignition Processes and Completions

Sutherland oriented practitioners to a dynamic ignition of potency within the fluids of the body. Three primal ignition processes emerge during embryological development and birth process. The first primal ignition occurs at conception, with the ignition of the energetic blueprint that supports the generation of the form of the embryo. A second primal ignition occurs at the end of the first month in utero, as the embryonic heart enfolds into the form of the embryo and meets the midline. This is called heart ignition and signals the embodiment of being, or spirit, in form. An amplification of the ignition process naturally occurs at birth, where there is an intensification of potency within the fluids of the infant which empowers the new being to be an independent physical entity. The augmentation of the ignition process at birth is explored as a clinical priority. Issues related to umbilical shock are introduced in this context. Clinical sessions oriented to conception issues are undertaken. Approaches to work with infants and children are also reviewed. Practice management skills and ethical issues are discussed within the context of a professional craniosacral clinical practice.



## Course Director

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Franklyn Sills  
MA, RCST,  
Course  
Director.

Franklyn is the author of Craniosacral Biodynamics Volumes One and Two, and has been working in the field for over 25 years.

He has 25 years experience in teaching on-going trainings. He is considered to be one of the innovators in the field and his energy has helped nurture the development of the work by making its principles available to a large variety of teachers and practitioners. He was one of the early teachers of the work of Dr. Randolph Stone DO and has written a book on his work. Franklyn is also a qualified psychotherapist and teaches on the professional training in Core Process Psychotherapy, a Buddhist influenced therapy form. He has a background in Buddhist teachings and considers them the foundation of his approach to being in the world.



*The ambiance we were looking for was a space that could hold a quality of attention and stillness. We kind of wanted it to feel like a meditation hall. A space where people can settle in, that could hold the stillness .. That had a certain quality that actually brought that out.* ”

Franklyn Sills, interview with Tommy Walsh, Channel 4 Programme



## Admission Requirements

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### Required:

- ✓ Submission of the Institute's application form for the training in Craniosacral Biodynamics
- ✓ Practitioner status in orthodox or complementary fields of medicine or therapy is highly recommended.
- ✓ A sound training in and knowledge of anatomy and physiology is required (extra tuition may be required of you if your anatomy and physiology is not up to practitioner standards).
- ✓ Understanding of pathology and symptomology is recommended (extra tuition may be required of you if you have no experience in this area).
- ✓ At least two years professional practice in your own field is recommended.
- ✓ An interview is required. Ideally this occurs in person at the Institute, but can be given via telephone for foreign applicants.

### Highly Recommended:

- ✓ Experience in a body oriented therapy form.
- ✓ Personal experience of Craniosacral Therapy.
- ✓ Experience of other holistic forms of therapy.

## Application Form

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The Application Form together with the dates and course cost is contained in the accompanying disc.

## Advanced Post-Graduate Seminars

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Every year the Karuna Institute presents continuing professional development seminars for practising Craniosacral Practitioners. These are five-day residential courses that vary each year. For further details, please visit our website and look at the accompanying disc.

## Advanced Diploma

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Qualified Craniosacral Practitioners can earn an advanced diploma in Craniosacral Biodynamics. For further details please see the accompanying disc.



## Karuna Institute

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