

Ortho-Bionomy Standards of Practice

I. Overview

Ortho-Bionomy was developed by British Osteopath Arthur Lincoln Pauls. It is based in the fundamental recognition that each human being has an inherent internal capacity for self-organization toward optimal form and function. Ortho-Bionomy is an approach to facilitate and assist the person to recognize, live and function with a greater sense of ease, comfort, and well-being.

As Ortho-Bionomy was developed from an osteopathic approach; hands on work with the structure entails comfortable positioning to slacken tension patterns. This is coupled with a gentle holding toward the joint which engages the proprioceptive nerves found in muscles, joints, and fascia to assist the body to recognize, self-correct and restore healthy balance and functional ease. Isometric and Isotonic movements are used as well as gentle movements for integration of new learning in the nervous system.

As a somatic practice, Ortho-Bionomy addresses the human being through the physical structure and its functional expression. However, we understand that structure is the product of all aspects of experience. We recognize and support the client's internal experience and perceptions as part of the exploration of structural change.

Ortho-Bionomy® is a Service Trademark owned by the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International® that protects the integrity of the training programs and appropriate use of the work in the public realm. It can only be used by members who have completed appropriate training and agreed to the Society's Code of Ethics so that the technique is always used in a safe and beneficial way for the public.

II. Definition of Ortho-Bionomy

Ortho-Bionomy encompasses the principles and practice of assisting the organism to come into relationship with its inherent ability to self-correct. The goal is to facilitate the person's overall well-being and functionality. Ortho-Bionomy accomplishes this by addressing the self-corrective capacity within the structure with comfortable positioning, gentle movement, sensory listening, isometrics, isotonic and postural movement as well as by helping the client find more functional options regarding patterns of movement, perception, and recognition.

III. The Practice of Ortho-Bionomy and the Professional Development of Ortho-Bionomists

What follows are elaborations of certain key terms and concepts.

A. Meeting the Client's Individual Needs

In practice, each session is tailored to meet the client with respect for variations in physical structure and function, patterns of movement, sensitivity, levels of comfort, as well as each client's unique circumstances. As holistic practitioners, Ortho-Bionomists respect that a human being is a self-regulating and self-organizing system, all aspects of which are interrelated and interdependent. Ortho-Bionomists recognize that each person needs time to integrate, and that integration time may vary among individuals.

B. The “Ortho-Bionomist”

Because Ortho-Bionomy happens as a process in the context of the relationship between the practitioner and client, Ortho-Bionomists are expected, in addition to gaining competence in the theory and practice of Ortho-Bionomy, to embody qualities of ease and balance in their own presence and approach. Only following or imitating strategies and techniques isn’t enough.

Ortho-Bionomists are encouraged continually to explore experientially the work they learn in certification trainings and continuing education. The qualities that come from this mixture of theory, practice, reflection, experience, and integration are necessary to the effective practice of Ortho-Bionomy, and are beyond any strategy, technique, or tactic. A person who does not embody and manifest the qualities of an Ortho-Bionomist cannot, by simply following or imitating strategies and techniques, accomplish Ortho-Bionomy.

Ortho-Bionomists have bi-annual continuing education requirements to maintain their membership. These requirements and the work itself naturally encourage members to experientially explore and continue to evolve the modality in their practice.

C. Levels of Training

Ortho-Bionomy is a Registered Service Trademark of the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International which oversees the training and registration of Ortho-Bionomy Practitioners and Instructors in the United States. The Society of Ortho-Bionomy International[→] registers practitioners at 2 levels: Registered Practitioner of Ortho-Bionomy, and Registered Advanced Practitioner of Ortho-Bionomy. The Society of Ortho-Bionomy International also registers Instructors at 2 levels: Registered Instructor of Ortho-Bionomy and Registered Advanced Instructor of Ortho-Bionomy.

Registered Practitioners are trained in a 500+ hour program consisting of coursework, received sessions, documented session practice, and feedback and evaluation sessions with an Advisor.

Registered Advanced Practitioners receive an additional 500+ hours of coursework, received sessions, documented session practice, and feedback and evaluation sessions with an Advisor.

Registered Instructors in addition to the 1000 + hours of Practitioner and Advanced Practitioner training receive a minimum of 250 hours of further training in teaching the Phase 4 components of the work, clarification of technique, classroom dynamics, and the role of an Advisor.

Registered Advanced Instructors in addition to the hours listed above receive further training in teaching the Phase 5 and Phase 6, Chapman’s Reflexes, Cranial, Phase 7, and Ethics.

IV. Limits and Boundaries of Ortho-Bionomy

A. Limits of Ortho-Bionomy

Ortho-Bionomy is not massage therapy. The client is clothed. No lotions, creams or oils are used, nor any soft tissue manipulations or tools associated with that modality. Ortho-Bionomy is not Chiropractic, no manipulation is employed. Ortho-Bionomy does not use strengthening or balancing techniques that are used by Physical Therapists or Athletic Trainers or the equipment they would use.

An Ortho-Bionomist does not diagnose or treat diseases or physical or mental disorders of any kind. Ortho-Bionomy is not a substitute for medical or psychological diagnosis or treatment. Although the client might experience relief of various symptoms, this relief is not a goal of Ortho-Bionomy per se, but rather is a byproduct of the improved capacity for self-regulation within the whole person.

B. Standards of Practice

Techniques, Modalities, and the Standard Practice of Ortho-Bionomy

The specific techniques of Ortho-Bionomy are grouped under the following definitions.

- Phase 4: the practice of identifying specific points and moving the body into specific positions to facilitate the self-corrective reflexive capacity and release of tension patterns.
- Phase 5: the practice of light touch and sensory listening to the subtle movements in the body to engage a self-corrective reflex.
- Phase 6: the practice of sensory awareness and engaging the energetic field of the physical body to facilitate self-recognition, and self-correction of physical and somatic issues.
- Phase 7: the practice of connection and attunement non-locally to facilitate self-recognition and self-regulation of physical and somatic issues.
- Isometric, Isotonic, and Exploration of Movement: movement practices to facilitate self-correction, release, and re-education of movement patterns.
- Posture re-education: the practice of movement education to enhance an internal sense of alignment.
- Anatomy and Physiology: the study of standard anatomy and physiology.
- Chapman's Neuro-Reflexes: the practice of identifying, locating, and engaging with nerve reflexes to assist with self-correction, lymphatic flow, and endocrine relationships.
- Cranial: the practice of connecting with the cranium in a way that facilitates the self-corrective capacity.

C. Principles of Practice:

Ortho-Bionomy is a principle-based form of bodywork where the principles are consistent throughout all aspects and applications of the work.

Osteopathic principles that are foundational to Ortho-Bionomy:

- The integral relationship between structure and function
- The unimpeded circulation of fluids for healthy functioning
- The body has the inherent capacity to heal and correct itself from conditions of pain and imbalance.

Ortho-Bionomy principles of practice:

- Positioning around a tender point is a natural way of offering support and release.
- Position the body in a place of comfort to allow release.
- Gentle compression toward the joint stimulates the proprioceptive self-corrective mechanism.
- Listen with a sensory awareness for self-corrective responses.
- Less is more: Since the nervous system is used to facilitate the self-corrective response, it is best if the system does not become overloaded and confused from too much stimulation.
- Respect that each person will have a different timing and need for rest and integration.
- No pain to release pain. This work is based in comfort. A relaxed body can release effectively.
- No attachment to outcome. In Ortho-Bionomy we respect that the body is intelligent and will release as it feels safe and able to do so. We recognize that each person has their own timing in response to the process.
- Respect Resistance. Ortho-Bionomy is an indirect technique in that we do not perform adjustments nor force movement across a resistance barrier.
- All aspects of the work embody the philosophy and principles.

The standards of practice of Ortho-Bionomy rest in the principles and techniques included in the official Society of Ortho-Bionomy International (SOBI) curricula for any SOBI Training or as taught as part of a SOBI-approved continuing education program. However, this shall not be interpreted to prohibit SOBI Instructors from offering continuing education classes on subjects outside the Standard Practice of Ortho-Bionomy, so long as the elective has been approved by SOBI.

Ortho-Bionomists individually trained in additional modalities not within the Standard Practice of Ortho-Bionomy may use such skills in connection with their delivery of Ortho-Bionomy under the following conditions:

- The modality clearly follows the principles of Ortho-Bionomy and facilitates without force the self-corrective capacity and well-being of the client.
- The Ortho-Bionomist has no reason to expect application of the modality to have a significant detrimental effect on the client at the time it is used.
- The Ortho-Bionomist informs the client that the modality is not within the standard practice of Ortho-Bionomy.

Ortho-Bionomy is a hands-on profession, and the use of mechanical appliances or devices is not within the Standard Practice of Ortho-Bionomy. Ortho-Bionomists individually trained and competent in the use of such means are not prohibited from using them to assist the process of their Ortho-Bionomy sessions, so long as the conditions stated above are satisfied.

A Practitioner of Ortho-Bionomy is expected to:

- Abide by the professional Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Guidelines of the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International.
- Abide by the trademark regulations in all printed and online advertising materials. Practitioners must seek and be granted authorizations from SOBI for any promotional materials, videos, and publications offered for sale to the public.
- Advertise and practice within the focus of the completed level of Ortho-Bionomy training, education, experience, and competency.
- Accurately self-assess competency and willingness to provide specific services, and when doubt, confusion or limited experience arises, agrees to seek out professional supervision.
- Be ethically accountable to themselves, their clients, and other colleagues in the Society of Ortho-Bionomy in their advertising and practice.
- Abide by the legal regulations and state and municipal laws governing the focus of their practice.
- Abide by the professional and social standards of the community in which they practice.
- Maintain membership in good standing with SOBI to practice.

An Instructor of Ortho-Bionomy is expected to:

- Abide by the Professional Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Guidelines of the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International.
- Abide by the trademark regulations in all printed and online advertising and instructional materials. Instructors must seek and be granted authorizations from SOBI for any promotional materials, videos, and publications offered for sale to the public.
- Advertise, practice, and teach only within the focus of the completed level of Ortho-Bionomy training, education, experience, and competency.
- Assess competency to teach Elective classes (outside the standard curriculum) and submit the application to SOBI for approval.
- Assess willingness and competency to provide standard classes and if doubt or confusion arises, agree to seek out collegial advice and collaboration.

- Assess willingness and competency to provide services such as acting in the role of an advisor, and if doubt or confusion arises, agree to seek out collegial advice and collaboration.
- Be ethically accountable to themselves, their students, and other colleagues in the Society of Ortho-Bionomy in advertising, practice, and instruction of Ortho-Bionomy.
- Abide by all legal requirements and state and municipal laws governing the focus of practice and instruction.
- Abide by the professional and social standards of the community in which they practice and teach.
- Maintain membership in good standing with SOBI in order to teach.