
Training in Pessó Boyden System Psychomotor

International Training Curriculum

First year: Basic Training

Second and third year: Advanced Training

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All Pessó Boyden System Psychomotor (PBSP) Training Programs conform to the standards established by the Psychomotor Institute, Inc.* Albert Pessó and Diane Boyden-Pessó founded Pessó Boyden System Psychomotor (PBSP) in 1961 and they hold the rights to the use of the name Pessó Boyden System Psychomotor Therapy (PBSP). In 1972 they established the non-profit Psychomotor Institute, Inc. and licensed it to be the steward and responsible organization to maintain and oversee the standards and certification in Pessó Boyden System Psychomotor, PBSP, and Psychomotor Therapy.

INTRODUCTION TO PESSO BOYDEN SYSTEM PSYCHOMOTOR

Why a body-based psychotherapy?

Recent research on emotion, memory and brain-function, as well as the current understanding of the consequences of physical and sexual traumatization, demonstrates that psychological disturbances manifest themselves in actual life both as mental representations and as bodily experiences, sensations and motor behavior. This underlines the growing interest of clients and psychotherapists in those treatment modalities which take the body information into account in a professionally organized and methodical way (Damasio 1999, van der Kolk 1996).

Many psychological problems can be understood as the consequence of deficits in the satisfaction of basic developmental needs in early childhood. The need for nurture, support, protection, limits and a sense of a place in the world, have to be fulfilled concretely and symbolically at the right time and in the right kinship-relationships -- all experienced in well-fitting 'countershaping' interactions. When these interactive events do not happen, the child cannot sufficiently mature into its adult true self, as it has suffered damaging consequences on three levels: biological, psychological and existential. Psychotherapy should strive to assist people in re-discovering and becoming who they really are, to help them to broaden their consciousness, to trust their body as a reliable source of information, to express emotions in a safe environment -- and further, to have more positive life anticipations resulting from the integration of new, alternative mind-body interactive memories. All this requires the need for an articulated body-based psychotherapy.

Why Pesso Boyden System Psychomotor?

Pesso Boyden System Psychomotor therapy represents the coming together of psycho-dynamic, cognitive-behavioral and system-oriented principles, along with client-centered attitudes, in one integrated philosophy. This unified method is supported by the latest information on both the psychological and physical evolution of human beings. It facilitates the clients' need for fulfillment of long standing deficits in psychological development. Body/mind information and experiences are utilized applying well-defined principles and techniques which are offered to clients in a way that empowers them to stay in charge of their own therapeutic process.

Albert Pesso and Diane Boyden-Pesso have been developing Pesso Boyden System Psychomotor therapy (PBSP) since 1961. Their mind-body approach derives in part from their experience as dance-teachers and choreographers as well as from comprehensive knowledge of working psycho-dynamically. During their work with professional dancers they discovered that the inability to perform certain expressive movements was often related to repressed historical emotional events. The development of therapeutic exercises to support professional dancers to manage these emotions more consciously, was the start of a new form of psychotherapy.

The method has been elaborated upon the treatment of psychiatric patients in the McLean Hospital and the Veterans Administration Hospital in Boston. After acquiring 15 years of experience both with therapy groups for clients and workshops for professional helpers, Albert Pesso has concentrated since 1977 on training psychotherapists in the United States and in Europe.

In addition to the programs given in eight states in the US, Albert Pesso, Liesbeth de Boer PhD, Tjeerd Jongsma MD, and Lowijs Perquin MD-PhD offer training programs in Switzerland, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Denmark and the Czech Republic.

How does Pessó Boyden System Psychomotor work?

Exercises

Clients prepare themselves by means of a series of exercises which enhance their sensitivity to sensory-motor and emotional information. Physical complaints and symptoms shift from being alienated phenomena to being a source of valuable information. The exercises promote the group's cohesion by paying attention to both individual differences and to universality of human needs. The distinct format of the exercises fosters the client's faith in the possibility of change. The group members are trained to apply '*accommodation*', a role-playing technique characteristic for Pessó Boyden System Psychomotor therapy. The technique of '*polarization*', using distinct accommodators representing negative and positive aspects of the same historical person, helps with the disentangling of ambivalence-conflicts. The method offers the client a unique opportunity to experience a broad range of feelings from deep grief to unbounded hatred within a safe *limiting symbolic context*.

Structures

A *structure* is an individual session in the group, supported by the other participants. The therapist assists the client by emphatically tracking affective expressions, bodily states, verbal statements, core belief systems and internalized prohibitions and commands, to make this information more accessible to the client's consciousness. The actual inner mind-body state, the inner screen, is enacted outside the client with the help of group members, accommodators, in clearly defined roles representing e.g. inhibiting inner voices or supporting functions. This external stage, created in the arena of the therapy-room, facilitates emotional reactivation of unresolved conflicts from early historical developmental phases. Actual expression of bodily feelings in interaction with role players who represent historical figures, helps the client to process stagnated emotions and to grieve about unfulfilled needs and traumatic experiences. In addition the therapist focuses on the client's proactive efforts to bring about those experiences needed in order to heal. The client 'choreographs' the moves of individual group members enrolled as wished for caregivers. They provide alternative symbolic interactions which counterbalances historical events. Though this corrective experience takes place in the present, it is experienced and internally recorded as if it had actually taken place in the past. From these gratifying symbolic interactions -the antidote experience- the client integrates new sensory-motor, kinesthetic and auditory-visual memories, which are stored alongside the original imprints. The availability of alternative synthetic memories will generate more realistic perspectives on self and others and prosper more optimistic expectations and behavior, leading to more pleasure, satisfaction, meaning and connectedness in current life.

Who can benefit from Pessó Boyden System Psychomotor?

- Who ever wishes to achieve more pleasure, satisfaction, meaning and connectedness in life.
- Who ever is curious to discover their personal resources and who wants to enlarge their range of potential and interpersonal talents.
- Individuals searching for better understanding of mind-body connections.
- People who tend to rationalize, somatize, and dissociate from feelings and emotions.
- Clients who feel that a mere verbal therapy does not offer adequate resolution.
- The safe therapeutic working-climate and the attention paid to providing limits makes the method appropriate for clients who carry the consequences of early parental loss and neglect.
- The cautious manner in which the body is involved in the therapeutic process, the attention to the expression of emotions without applying pressure, and the focus on ego-integration, all offer clients who have been physically and sexually traumatized a safe working-method.
- Clients need to be able to distinguish between symbolic experience and reality.

BASIC TRAINING IN PESSO BOYDEN SYSTEM PSYCHOMOTOR

Curriculum of the first year

Who may apply for the first year of the training?

If you wish to expand your psychotherapeutic range by integrating bodily aspects into your daily work, both in individual therapy and in group-settings, you may subscribe to the first year of the PBSP training as an independent module. You are prepared to study the relevant training-literature, to participate in local intervision-groups and to bring in therapeutic work for supervision.

In case you wish to continue with the advanced training (second and third year) the first year will be preparatory. The three years all together form the route to become a recognized PBSP psychotherapist of the National Association for PESSO Boyden psychotherapy. Admission to the second and third year will be in accordance with the requirements of the national PBSP association (see supplement).

What is the goal of the first year of the training?

The goal of the first year is to make you familiar with basic principles of PBSP, to help you to become more acquainted with the body in psychotherapy and to expand your knowledge and awareness of the non-verbal aspects of communication in a verbal psychotherapeutic setting.

- You will be trained in to use PBSP-exercises in a group-setting and in an individual context.
- 'Structures', individual therapeutic sessions in a group, will have an experiential goal in the first training year as a means to help you further to discover your own resources.
- You will be trained to offer a safe therapeutic climate, in which group members feel respected and are allowed to experiment and to discover hidden aspects of themselves.
- You will learn how to assist the client to understand bodily sensations and impulses as important sources of information, like changes in voice-modulation, facial expression, body-posture and movement
- You will be trained how to help to awaken and stimulate the observing, integrating, and executing part of the client's ego (*Pilot Ego*).
- You will receive support in accessing your own bodily information as a source of therapeutic knowledge about what is going on within the client.

The training is practice-oriented:

- demonstrations will support your understanding of theoretical lectures;
- you will master new interventions and exercises on an experiential and a technical level;
- you will enlarge your experience as a therapist by practical training in duos and subgroups of colleagues;
- video feedback, supervision by the trainers, case-discussions and homework in intervision groups are elements for evaluating your learning process.

Overview of the curriculum of the 1st year

- A. 13 training-days**
 - B. Intersession-meetings**
 - C. Leading a PBSP exercise group**
 - D. Studying literature**
 - E. Evaluation**
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A. 13 training-days in the 1st year

The first year consists of 13 training days. These days will cover:

- theoretical introductions and lectures
- explanation of the theory by demonstrating PBSP-exercises by trainers
- experience-oriented learning in structures; each participant one structure in the first year
- training in therapeutic attitude
- training in observing verbal and non-verbal communication
- training and supervision on PBSP-exercises
- studying and discussing literature

General principles

- The mind-body dichotomy: philosophical, cultural and therapeutic implications
- New research on the brain, memory, body, emotions and consciousness
- The inner pressure to enjoy the fruits and rewards of living: pleasure, satisfaction, meaning, connectedness in stead of pain, frustration, despair, alienation
- Affect, emotion and body sensations as sources of information
- Physiology of organismic satisfaction following completion of basic needs
- Basic emotions: disgust, fear, anger, curiosity, pleasure, love
- The world seen by the 'lens' of internalized interactions in the past
- Other therapeutic viewpoints: resolution in the therapeutic relationship; offering insight about the past; resolution in present relationships; parenting the 'inner child'

Therapeutic attitude

- The therapeutic relationship: safety and responsibility
- 'Possibility sphere'; how to provide a psychological space to clients and how to understand body language that becomes apparent in that space
- Micro-tracking: how to see and name affective states and emotional expressions
- How to hear and playback verbal statements which are the foundation of personal values and life strategies
- How to let the client explore 'Inner screens' and develop 'External stages'
- Motivation, Contract, Relationship
- Confrontation, interpretation and clarification; respect for resistance
- Life-history seen from a physical and development-psychological perspective
- Understanding limiting patterns: 'Old Maps'
- Developing possible alternative experiences: 'New Maps'

Terms and theory of PBSP

- History and development of Pesso Boyden System Psychomotor
- Event - Record - Experience - Expression - Map
- Interactive energy
- Genetic nature requirements:
 - Basic developmental needs:
 - place, nurturance, support, protection, limits
 - stages of need satisfaction
 - deficits of need satisfaction: an alternative diagnostic schema
 - Integration and unification of polarities of being; understanding what is required to gain greater mastery of all aspects of one's physical and emotional being
 - how to own and harmonize genetic, neurological, sensori-motor, behavioral and symbolic polarities
 - deficits of integration and unification of polarities of being
 - consequences of early parental loss
 - literal, symbolic and magical bonds
 - Development of consciousness: naming the outer world; internalizing meaning
 - Development of the 'Pilot', the highest order of consciousness: the observing, decision-making and executive ego
 - awareness of the Pilot about Soul and Ego information
 - the need for autonomy and responsibility
 - Realize uniqueness and potentiality: how do we become who we are?
 - the genetic push for self-realization in service to self and others
- Modalities of movement: reflex, voluntary and emotional movement
- Self - Self interaction
- 'Shape - Counter Shape'
- The True Self, the Ego and the Self
- Energy - action - interaction: satisfaction, validation, internalization of meaning
- Interaction, accommodation and polarization: positive, negative, ideal figures
- Overview of structure sequence:
Possibility Sphere, Center of Truth, True Scene, Historical Scene, Antidote
- Internalizing new experiences, re-mapping memories, changing perspective

Practical skills and exercises

- Structured exercises to increase the physical sensitivity and awareness of therapist and client
- Exercises for observing body-language: concrete and symbolic meaning of body-posture and motor movement
- The influence of body-posture and body-position within the therapist-client relationship
- Handling ambivalence by polarization techniques
- Group-directed and individual exercises:

A. Modalities of movement

1. Reflexive Movement
 - Reflex-relax stance (Species Stance)
 - Fall-catch exercise
2. Voluntary movement
 - Conscious voluntary movement exercise (arm raise exercise)
 - Voluntary patterns in the service of interest and curiosity

3. Emotional movement
 - Breathing exercise
 - Emotional movement exercise

B. Spatial exercises

- Exercises concerning spatial placement
- Circle diameter exercise
- Gesture exercise
- Controlled approach

C. Interaction exercises

- Interaction with objects
- Interaction with self
- Interaction with others
- Face telling, Body telling
- Self-self, Self-others

D. Accommodation exercises:

- How to precisely provide -in a role played procedure-, those anticipated responses to emotional needs that give maximum satisfaction
- Positive accommodation exercises
- Negative accommodation exercises
- Ideal parent exercises
- Expressing own sensations and imaging the accommodation wanted
- Limiting exercises

E. Intake and organization of a PBSP exercise-group

B. Intervision meetings

At the end of the second training-block of the first year the group will work during one day as a self-organizing entity, supported by a protocol of intervision guidelines.

Depending on geographic situations, two or three intervision-groups will be formed to meet three days to practice PBSP-exercises. This as a follow up of the demonstrations given during the training days. An instruction book containing a detailed description of the exercises, and the guidelines for optimal work within an intervision-group will be available.

C. PBSP Exercise therapy-group

During the first block of training days, therapist-pairs may be formed with the aim of starting an experience-oriented exercise group with clients. During the last 4 months of the first year, this group will get together on six to eight evenings for two or three hours. The sessions of these exercise-groups will be videotaped for the purpose of supervision within the training-days.

D. Study of Literature

In total 400 pages of literature will be studied. Three readers will be available as part of the training. Two books on PBSP have to be bought by the trainee.

E. Individual evaluation at the end of the first year

The first training year is concluded with individual evaluation. During the last training block, each trainee either directs a PBSP exercise with the participants of the training group or shows an PBSP-exercise on video within a client-group. Based on concretely described criteria, the trainee receives feedback concerning therapeutic attitude, clarity of instruction and technical direction. Trainers will give motivated advice concerning suitability for the second and third training-year. The progress during the basic training will form part of the assessment.

In general, recognition as a psychotherapist according to national standards is handled as a prerequisite for participation in the advanced PBSP training. A limited number of candidates, who are not registered as such, may be accepted for the subsequent training, based on their experience, a specific affinity or suitable previous schooling.

ADVANCED TRAINING IN PESSO BOYDEN SYSTEM PSYCHOMOTOR

Curriculum of the second and third year

Who may apply to the second and third year of the training?

You have a clear identity as a psychotherapist, trained in a recognized form of psychotherapy. You completed the first training year in Pesso Boyden System Psychomotor successfully. You are motivated to be trained to become a PBSP psychotherapist, who will be guiding structure groups. You want to further expand your therapeutic possibilities by integrating bodily aspects into your regular work. You are prepared to study the relevant training-literature, to participate in local intervision-groups, to set up a PBSP-structure group and to bring in therapeutic work on video-tape for supervision purposes.

What is the goal of the second and third year of the training?

The goal of the second and third year of the training is to assist you in deepening your insight with basic principles of PBSP. You will learn how to assist the client to do self-monitored spontaneous emotional expression with satisfying, appropriate interactions provided by role players. You will be enabled to guide a PBSP Structure-group with a colleague.

The training curriculum is in accordance with the international training regulations. Completion of the training provides access to membership of the National Association for PBSP psychotherapy. Certification will recognize you as a PBSP therapist on an international level.

- You will be systematically trained in applying the steps of a therapeutic session (structure). During the training days you will practice how to lead segments of structures co-led or supervised by the trainers. Video-fragments of parts of structures are discussed within the training group to answer your technical and theoretical questions.
- Two more structures for your self-experience are guided by the trainers during the training days. You will discuss the content of these structures with the trainer and the group members for learning purposes.
- You will learn how to set up intake talks for a PBSP-group, how to collect biographical information in accordance to PBSP and to developmental insights, how to establish a treatment-plan with the client and how to introduce the method within a group.
- You will be trained in guiding an opening go around, handling group-dynamics, supporting clients in applying therapeutic experiences into day-to-day life and in organizing regular evaluation of the therapeutic process.
- The learning-therapy for your self-experience, regular meetings with your intervision group, and guiding your own therapy-group under supervision, will contribute to your in-depth training in practice.
- In the last training-block you will demonstrate a video-recording of a structure. This forms the conclusive evaluation.

Overview of the curriculum of the 2nd and 3rd year

- A. Training-days**
 - B. Learning therapy in subgroups**
 - C. Intersession meetings**
 - D. Leading a PBSP structure-group**
 - E. Supervision**
 - F. Studying literature**
 - G. Evaluation**
-

Schedule for the 2nd and 3rd year

Elements of the training during the 2nd and 3rd year	Time-requirement
A. Training days: Lectures, demonstrations, self experience Coaching in setting-up and directing a structure-group	200 hours (28 days)
B. Learning therapy	42 hours (6 days)
C. Intersession-meetings	24 hours (6 half-days)
D. Leading a PBSP structure-group	120 hours (40 evenings)
E. Individual supervision	30 hours
F. Studying literature, 600 pages	60 hours
G. Evaluation at the end of the 3 rd year Test by means of a video-recording of a structure Two final training days	30 hours (4 days)

The above schedule is explained in detail in the following paragraphs:

A. 28 training-days in the 2nd and 3rd year

The second and third training year consist of 28 training days. These cover:

- theoretical introductions and lectures
- elaboration of the theory by demonstrating PBSP-structures by the trainers
- experience-oriented learning in structures during the training days; each participant two structures in the training group
- live supervision about parts of structures discussing literature

Content of the training days

General theory

- Deepening of the knowledge about Genetic Development Requirements
- Elaboration on the subjects: 'Shape - Countershape' and 'Antidote'
- Elaboration on: Energy - action - interaction: satisfaction, internalization of meaning
- Elaboration on: Event - Record - Experience - Expression - Old Map and New Map
- Body-parts and body-language; bodily expressions of repressed needs, wishes, drives and fears; how to deal with them without enforcing defenses
- Interactive energy: the three circle notion
- Metaphors of action and internalization: feeding, fertilizing, killing
- Soul projection
- Projection of the anticipation of happiness in heaven, reincarnation, previous life, death, other Planet or other time in history
- Respect for resistance; transference and resistance
- Theory about concrete, symbolic and magic levels of experience
- Elaboration on the subject of 'Polarities'
- Structures: motivation and contract, 'pre-structure issues'
- The concept of Ideal Parents
- 'Holes in roles'

'Structure' preparation exercises

- Possibility sphere exercise
- Witnessing exercises
- Training in affective vocabulary
- Defining voices: voice of control, criticism, dissociation, guilt, judgement, voice of negative prediction, reasonableness, reproach, suppression, truth, warning etc.
- Defining fragment figures: ally, helper, contact figure, containing figure, limiting figure, permission giving figure
- Antidote exercises: place, nurturance, protection, support, limits
- How to propose and lead an exercise within a structure
- From exercise to structure
- Mini-structures

Leading 'Structures'

- Basic therapeutic attitude as the leader of a group and as a structure leader
- The sequences of a structure in a step by step training model:
Possibility sphere, Center of Truth, True Scene, Historical Scene, Antidote, Integration
- Creating a new personal history with the basic format of Ideal Parents
- Inner Screens and External Stages
- Energy seeking and tracking consciousness
- Working with a 'Witness-figure' and 'Fragment-figures'
- Polarization and the use of role figures: parent, partner, 'sibling' etc.
- Self-Self interventions
- Predict - Produce - Recognize interventions
- Contact and Contract interventions

- Determining clients' modality of operating: sensory, auditory, visual, kinesthetic, ideational
- Assessing which level(s) the client is working on: structure-level, actuality, transference, regressive, 'acting out'
- Phasing and rhythm of a structure: structure hypothesis, forming, testing, rejection, confirming
- Negative reconstruction, 'As if'-structure, 'magical solutions'

Organization and composition of a structure group

- Application, working together as colleagues, brochure, financial contract
- Preparation phase from exercise group to structure-group
- Intake and indication: life history in PBSP terms and developmental-psychological terms, therapeutic working hypothesis
- Motivation and contract, goals for actual life and therapeutic goals, treatment plan
- Composition of a group, group-contract, 'book-keeping of roles', homework
- Leading the sharing process; feedback about a structure
- Half-year evaluation: progress, group evaluation, feedback by therapist, feedback towards the therapist, redefinition of goals, application of the therapy in actual life
- Group dynamic issues within a PBSP structure group
- Transference and counter-transference at various levels
- Cooperation as a team of two therapists during structures and outside of structures
- From structure to actuality: family, work, partner; homework, logbook, pictures
- Illness, holidays, farewells
- Variations: workshops, mini-structure-group, exercises during the structure, short modules, PBSP in an individual context

Specific themes and subjects

- Chronic pain and Somatization
- Dissociation
- Sexual abuse
- Suicidal wishes and tendencies
- Consequences of early loss; magical marriage
- Eat, Merge, Marry, Murder
- Omnipotence and Limits
- Religious issues
- 'Soul projection'
- Humor

B. Learning Therapy: self-experience

The learning therapy is an essential part of the training. To personally undergo a number of themes and to be part of colleagues' structures is an enriching experience, which can be of essential value in later work as a structure-leader. The learning therapy provides for three structures per participant. The goal of the learning therapy is to get acquainted - from the inside - with the position of a client with the PBSP method. A learning therapy group consists of 6 to 8 participants of the training group, which convenes six days as a minimum. The learning therapy is guided by a certified PBSP-therapist or trainer.

C. Intervision-meetings

In the intervision group literature is referenced and mini-structures will be conducted. There is also a possibility to invite -on a voluntary basis- an experienced PBSP-psychotherapist to sessions in order to exchange practical knowledge and to gain inspiration. Trainers recommend to continue an intervision-group for as long as possible as an inter-collegial group.

D. Leading a PBSP structure-group

During the 2nd and 3rd training year the participant will direct a continuous PBSP structure group during a minimum of 120 hours (i.e. 40 meetings of 3 hours). Preferably the group is being guided together with a colleague of the training-group. Video-recordings are made of these structures for supervision purposes.

E. Supervision

Live- as well as video-supervision will be scheduled as part of the training days (48 hours). Separate from this, the participant is to attend to 30 hours of individual supervision with a German speaking PBSP-supervisor. You will demonstrate structures on video-tape and discuss learning points. The colleague-participant who shares in guiding the structure-group, is to participate in the supervision. A major part of the supervision will take place after the conclusion of the training days.

F. Studying of Literature

See 'Literature for the training', page 17. During the past years a large number of PBSP literature has been printed, such as congress documentation from Amsterdam (1992), Atlanta (1994), Basel (1996) and Oslo (1998). See the extensive literature list for references.

Additionally there is a growing number of publications from neuroscience concerning emotion-research, memory and traumatization, all areas that have been of influence in the development of the PBSP method.

During each block of training days one should account for approximately 6 hours of literature study. This corresponds to 60 pages per training block, or 600 pages in total.

G. Evaluation

During the last block of the training, every participant will show a video-recording of a (part of a) structure. This recording will be evaluated by the trainers and will result in a - in principle - assessment of the trainee's abilities to function as a future PBSP psychotherapist. Certification will recognize you as a PBSP therapist on an international level.

Trainers

Albert Pessa and **Diane Boyden-Pessa** founded Pessa Boyden System Psychomotor in 1961. Since their work with professional dancers they developed their method treating psychiatric patients in McLean Hospital and the Boston Veterans Administration Hospital. After 15 years of experience with therapy groups for clients and workshops for professional helpers, Albert Pessa has devoted himself to the training of psychotherapists in the USA, Brazil and Europe: Switzerland, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Denmark and the Czech Republic.

Al Pessa was a guest-lecturer in Harvard Medical School and has been with Diane Boyden-Pessa a pre-conference institute leader for the annual psychological trauma conference since 1997, and a presenter at grand rounds for Boston Medical School, department of psychiatry. He has written three books and various articles on the method.

Lowijs Perquin, MD, PhD (1950) is a psychiatrist-psychotherapist and coordinating trainer of Pessa Boyden System Psychomotor System (PBSP) in Europe. He studied medicine, psychiatry and psychotherapy in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He is a Director of Education and lecturer at the Faculties of Medicine, Neuroscience and Psychology of the 'Vrije Universiteit' in Amsterdam. His activities cover the fields of Community Mental Health Care, research into decision-making processes and mind-body approaches to personal development. He works in six European countries as a senior trainer in PBSP in three-year courses for psychotherapists and applies the method to executives who want to become better leaders. He has published on decision-making models, the process of change in organisations and mind-body approaches to personal development and is a regular keynote speaker at congresses in Europe.

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Literature in English

Pesso Boyden System Psychomotor ®

Selected for PBSP-training purposes

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