



# International Training in Biography Work – Handbook

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***Holistic Biography Work ... bringing spirit to life***

# Welcome

Welcome to information about our International Training Program in Holistic Biography Work.

After completing this 3-year Training Program, Trainees are awarded a *Diploma in Biographical Consultancy*.

Potential Trainees start by submitting an Enrolment Form and complete or undertake to complete our *Foundation Course*. This course: *Take Charge – Reflect on your Life Journey* takes you through a process of exploring your own life in a creative and systematic way. Self-reflection in relation to your own life experience is an essential start in being able to assist others.

Over 3 years, Trainees complete: 3 Core Modules, 9 Theme Modules and 3 Practical Projects. There are additional Training Sessions, and there is ongoing support for learning, and for personal and spiritual development. Upon successful completion of their first year, Trainees receive a *Certificate in Biographical Studies*. On completion of their second year, a *Certificate in Advanced Biographical Studies*, and after their third year, their *Diploma in Biographical Consultancy*. Our goal is to assist Trainees to apply the theory and methodology of Holistic Biography Work, in working with others. This Training has been offered and in development since 1998, and nearly 30 Cycles of the Training have been completed across the globe.

We have been running courses successfully online since mid-2020 and since 2023 have Trainees world-wide in all 3 years of the *International Training Program*.

For each of our Modules, we provide a comprehensive *Learning Pack*, which includes: a *Study Guide*, recorded video Lectures, Readings, and Activities. This preparatory study is followed by online sessions that include group-work sharing in small groups of 3 to 5 participants facilitated by a group guide.

Our participants are global, and our accreditation is international – our Training follows the guidelines of the *School of Spiritual Science (Goetheanum Switzerland)* and is also recognised by the *German Professional Association for Biography Work*.

The following pages provide more specific information on this *Training Program*.

The main carrier of this program – Karl-Heinz Finke – has been facilitating Biography and other personal development trainings for over 30 years. Our resources in this *Training Program* are created out of his experience, deep learning, reflection and study over the many Training Programs he has conducted world-wide.

We have developed an approach that acknowledges cultural diversity, the desire for individual development and the impulse of wanting to serve others.

We are willing to share our own learning and understanding over the years of the training journey, and look forward to working with those who feel a connection to this work.



## Karl-Heinz Finke

Experienced Teacher of Biography Work, with additional studies in Adult Education, Anthroposophy and Social Sciences. Has completed nearly 30 three-year cycles of Training in Biography Work globally. Has trainings ongoing in both English and Mandarin. Is a Founding member of ITF (International Trainer's Forum) associated with the School of Spiritual Science, Goetheanum (Dornach, Switzerland), which recognises this Training Program. Is co-author, with Laura, of the *Biography Log-book*, now translated into 8 other languages. Is writing further practical hand-books to make Biography Work more accessible.



## Laura Summerfield

Worked as a Psychologist in Australia for 15 years, counselling all ages. Now provides student support for courses and creates learning resources for Holistic Biography Work. Has post-graduate qualifications in both Psychology and Education. Holds a Masters degree in Steiner Education (awarded UNE, 1998). Completed the 3-year Biography Work Training Program in Australia in 2007 with Karl-Heinz, now her partner in life and work. Sets verses to music, including those of Steiner, and sings them as part of her spiritual practice. Based in Australia with Karl-Heinz.

Contact us with any questions or concerns by using our email address: [mail@holisticbiographywork.com](mailto:mail@holisticbiographywork.com)

Warm regards

*Karl-Heinz and Laura*

For more information see our website  
[www.HolisticBiographyWork.com](http://www.HolisticBiographyWork.com)

# Training – Goals, Aims, Objectives, Philosophy

## Goals

To provide a comprehensive and accessible Training Program in Holistic Biography Work for those interested in:

- Biographical Consultancy work
- Course development
- Professional development
- Personal and spiritual development

## Aims

- To share knowledge of the theory and methodology of Biography Work from a holistic and anthroposophical perspective.
- To provide opportunities to practice and gain skills in understanding individual biographies.
- To support the personal and professional developmental journey of Trainees, including greater clarity around life choices and life purpose.
- To apply different lenses and perspectives of aspects of the human life journey, cosmic and earthly, within the different modules of the Training.
- To prepare for working with others as a Biographical Consultant.

## Learning objectives

- Graduates gain sufficient knowledge and skill to run Biography workshops/courses/seminars, and
- Graduates have a helpful framework and many tools to work with individuals as Biographical Consultants.

## Philosophy

*Holistic Biography Work* reflects on individual biographies or life stories against the backdrop of the archetypal developmental journey of humanity.

Looking at a life story in a creative and systematic way can be done individually, with a group of trusted companions or in therapeutic settings. This provides valuable insights into the themes, changes and turning points in a life journey. Strengthening and deepening self-knowledge, it offers keys for future change and growth.

*Holistic Biography Work* is beneficial for personal and professional development. Participating therapists, teachers, facilitators and consultants have found that seeing everyday experiences embedded in a full Life Story and in context with the theory provided in our courses, results in a deeper understanding of phases and layers in a life and opens new perspectives and approaches in work.

*Holistic Biography Work* is therefore a useful tool within careers counselling, coaching, couples counselling, family therapy, curative work; and in consultancy work with individuals, groups or organisations. The development of groups and organisations follows similar patterns and phases to individual development.

*Holistic Biography Work* offers a healing and curative approach because it helps us to view life in a clearer and more conscious way. It helps us to develop self-acceptance, it invites us to take new directions, to reinvent our goals and to create meaning. It can become a part of individual Counselling, Art therapy or Psychotherapy. It aims to work, at a soul level, towards the integration of difficult and unique life experiences. Alongside archetypal general laws, there are individual laws and patterns resulting from one's destiny, which can be explored as personal private work or in one-to-one sessions with a trained Consultant.

## Our Spiritual Perspective

*Holistic Biography Work* offers a resource that may be seen as a practical form of psychology. The underlying philosophy for what is generally known as *Biography Work* is Spiritual Science or Anthroposophy. Its founder, the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner, gave many descriptions of human development which form the basis of *Holistic Biography Work*, for example: the seven-year life phases; the rhythms and cycles of development; significant turning points in life; the mirroring of early experiences in later phases of life; and the transformation of our experiences into soul and spiritual faculties. He also gave a cosmic picture – the influence on us of the stars, planets and heavenly hierarchies. Biography Work based on Anthroposophy can therefore provide a rich and satisfying picture of the meaning of our life and possible mission on earth.

In *Holistic Biography Work*, we examine our 7-year life phases in detail, keeping in mind this spiritual perspective. In each phase, we develop a new capacity, that enables us to understand more of the world and ourselves – Rudolf Steiner introduced this as *Life Ages as Organs of Perception*. In the process of maturation we meet our life themes and questions in different ways. We face developmental tasks. We can regard our life as ‘*a journey of initiation*’. Through our conscious activity we can develop our capacities and create ourselves anew. We can discover ourselves as spiritual beings. Steiner describes anthroposophy in a powerful way as: ‘*a path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe. It arises in the human being as a need of the heart, of the life of feeling.*’

In his books (for example, *How to Know Higher Worlds*), Steiner describes a phenomenological method of working with biography, which Gudrun Burkhard elaborated using life charts and suggestions for working with life events through dialogue and artistic expression. The aim is to bring memories to light through our conscious ‘I’ activity. By making concrete, detailed pictures of both the inner and outer phenomena of our life and looking at it all with an observer’s perspective, or as a *witness*, we can begin to discern a greater truth. When we review our past and make an effort to separate the essential from the non-essential, we can digest and integrate the events in our life, and access deeper aims and intentions. We can find a new relationship to the past, awaken to opportunities meeting us in the present, and engage more fully with our onward life journey.

Following the concept of *Salutogenesis*, this is *preventative medicine*. We can start to work consciously to transform conditions and tendencies that otherwise might manifest as illnesses. We can become more active in working with spiritual powers and take more responsibility for our life and our ongoing journey. This can strengthen resilience and have healing effects. Our biography becomes an individual's artistic creation that can also inspire others.

And according to Steiner, working on our biographies in this way: *will make us love the human being under every circumstance and will strengthen and increase mutual interest*’ (Steiner, Lecture 14/09/1918).

It is support for the strengthening of the activity of our ‘I’, that spiritual aspect of us, that is the essence of *Holistic Biography Work*. We provide a schooling path that strengthens our ‘I’ capacity, and develops our faculties for meeting our fellow human beings: capacities of observation and thinking, of tolerance, empathy and interest. We can come to feel gratitude for all that comes to meet us, and open a pathway for the sensing of karma.

Understanding human life stories, and developing our understanding for destiny at work in our lives, enables us to work with others with greater compassion and sensitivity.

We have such a longing to understand ourselves and others, and the human life journey and its meaning for us.

*Holistic Biography Work* offers many ways of understanding and working with our own journey and that of others, acknowledging fundamental longings to be seen, to be heard, to be understood, and to be loved.

As such, we offer our tools, our knowledge and our courses, as resources for this journey. We are inspired by Bernard Lievegoed’s challenge: *to make anthroposophy – the wisdom of the human being – operational.*

# Training Program – Overview

The 3-year *International Training Program in Holistic Biography Work* leads to certification in Biographical Consultancy. Part-time study is offered online, globally. It follows the guidelines of the *School of Spiritual Science, Goetheanum*.

It has been found helpful within many professions: *Health* (Medical & Allied), *Education* (Teaching, Administration), *Business* (HR, Management), *Therapy* (Psychotherapy, Arts Therapy, Counselling, etc). It also supports personal and spiritual development. Applications are accepted world-wide.

## Brief Overview

- Pre-requisite – Foundation Course in Holistic Biography Work – *Take Charge: Reflect on your Life Journey*.
- 3-year Training Program, 12 modules, plus Foundation course.
- Self-paced learning starts for each module with a comprehensive Learning Pack. This is followed by online sessions that include guided small group-work.
- Completion of the Foundation Course, 3 Core Modules, 9 Theme modules, and 3 Projects.
- 4 modules are completed each year, plus 1 project.
- Additional Training sessions each year to support practical learning.
- Self-development work and spiritual practice is encouraged and supported.

## Core Modules

- 3 Core Modules have more complex content, and more online support sessions – 4 x 5-hour sessions, total of 20 hours. 1 each year.

## Theme Modules

- There are 9 Theme modules, on specific topics. 3 each year.
- Each has 3 x 5-hour online sessions, total of 15 hours.

## Project Work

- A project supplements the practical learning each year.
- Projects are completed each December, with presentations and written assignments.

## Personal and Spiritual Development

- Activities and exercises each year support such development.

## Year 1: 380 hours, including 110 hours of online and training sessions.

BGO-10	Take Charge: Reflect on your life journey.	
BGO-11	Typologies	(Jan – Mar)
BGO-12	Mental Health Challenges	(April – May)
BGO-13	Communication Skills	(June – July)
BGO-20	The Helping Conversation (Core)	(Aug– Sep)
Project 1	Biographical Interview	(throughout year)

Intervision: 80 hours. Supervision: 40 hours. Student support: 40 hours.

*Successful completion leads to – Certificate in Biographical Studies*

## Year 2: 340 hours, including 100 hours of online and training sessions.

BGO-21	Life Encounters and Relationships	(Jan – Mar)
BGO-22	Trials and Thresholds	(April – May)
BGO-23	Destiny and Karma	(June – July)
BGO-30	Destiny Learning (Core)	(Aug – Sep)
Project 2	Biographical Analysis	(throughout year)

Intervision: 75 hours. Supervision: 45 hours. Student support: 40 hours.

*Successful completion leads to – Certificate in Advanced Biographical Studies*

## Year 3: 390 hours, including 120 hours of online and training sessions.

BGO-31	Mission and Meaning	(Feb – Mar)
BGO-32	Mental Health Crisis	(April – May)
BGO-33	Process Design	(June – July)
BGO-40	Meeting Conflict (Core)	(Aug – Sep)
Project 3	Biographical Study	(throughout year)

Intervision: 70 hours. Supervision: 75 hours. Student support: 40 hours.

*Successful completion (and therefore of the Training Program) leads to:*

*Diploma in Biographical Consultancy.*

*Total of 1110 training hours, including 330 hours of online and training sessions.*

*Plus: Inter-vision, supervision and student support.*

## Student Support

- Peer support organised. Regular communication via WhatsApp and email.
- Support during modules and training sessions, with Q&A sessions.
- Individual sessions support progress, and provide project feedback.

## Course Fee

- *Total Annual fee: \$1990, payable in instalments during the year*

# Training Structure

## Three threads are woven together in the design and delivery of our Training Program

- Experiential learning.
- Adult learning principles.
- Anthroposophical schooling for personal and spiritual development.

All 12 Modules of the Training Program are available each calendar year – with a Learning Pack supplemented by online sessions.

The Foundation course Learning Pack is offered all year round, with online sessions twice a year.

The modules in each year are delivered in a specific sequence (see Training Program overview).

Each module is delivered with a comprehensive **Learning Pack** followed by 3 or 4 days of online sessions, with Plenum (whole group) and small group sessions, as well as short lectures on daily themes, demonstrations, time for questions and reflections.

### Learning Packs contain

- Detailed Study Guide with links to video Lectures from Karl-Heinz Finke
- Visuals used the Lectures
- Suggested Readings
- Optional background Readings
- Creative and Self-reflective Activities
- Activity support sheets
- Indications for preparation of sharing in small groups during online sessions.

Trainees work with the Learning Pack at their own pace.

Estimated independent study time is:

- Core modules – 60 hours.
- Theme modules – 40 hours.

### Online sessions for each module:

- Include guided small group-work sessions in ‘real-time’ to relate content to individual life experience, and to share learning with colleagues.
- 3-5 participants in each small group., usually facilitated by a Group Guide.

- Core modules – 20 hours online over 4 days, Thursday to Sunday, 5 hours on each day.
- Theme modules – 15 hours online over 3 days, Friday to Sunday, 5 hours on each day.
- Small group-work is supported by small WhatsApp groups for sharing artwork and for regular communications.

**Training sessions** are scheduled after each module to support the learning process and the practical Project work, usually 2 hours. They include:

### Practical experience – 3 major Projects

3 major projects are completed during the Training – to build practical skills in working with others and in applying the tools and methodology of biographical analysis. Projects are:

Year 1: Biographical Interview – with fellow Trainee / Study Buddy.

Year 2: Biographical Analysis – of a whole life overview of a deceased individuality.

Year 3: Biographical Study – consultation with a volunteer ‘client’.

### Student Support

Trainees have a Study Buddy for each year of the Training Program.

Peer support is organised amongst Trainees.

- There is a WhatsApp group for sharing amongst the whole Trainee group for that Training cycle, over the entire 3 years of the Training. It is used for Q&A, and ongoing communication.
- Trainees learn skills related to Peer Inter-vision.

Further support is available as needed from Trainers throughout the year.

Questions are answered regularly.

Ongoing personal and professional support is offered after graduation:

### Personal and spiritual development

Trainees are supported with different skills and experiences each year for personal and spiritual development.

These occur during module online sessions, during preparation for and sharing in small groups, and in regular Training sessions.

Details are included as part of the Curriculum details.

# Underlying Methodology

Our general underlying methodology is described well in an article by Gudrun Burkhard (from her book *Biographical Work: The Anthroposophical Basis*.)

The methods used in *Holistic Biography Work* are based on the phenomenology described by Rudolf Steiner.

The phenomenological approach, as developed by Steiner in the footsteps of *Goethe*, is used in biographical work when we observe the events in a life. To benefit fully from the Goethean practice of observation, one practises observation of oneself, as indicated in some of Steiner's lectures.

What is the purpose of this observational practice? Firstly, Steiner described *imaginative cognition*, where one sees a single event, a seven-year period, or one's whole life, in a panoramic view through images, forms or colours. This view, described by Steiner as the *Panorama of life*, is like the one we have after death. Some people experience such a panoramic view when they suffer shock or an accident, in which their etheric body detaches from their physical body.

Often after such an event, this person's life will change, with the urge to take new directions. The *panoramic view* gained through biographical work is the first step for a person to make changes, such as redirecting their activities and setting different goals in life.

The second step relates to *inspired cognition*, which one obtains following observation of the phenomena. We are invited to look at what we have done so far, who we have met and what was our influence on them and theirs on us.

Thirdly, a spiritual researcher or an initiate such as Rudolf Steiner, also gets in touch with *intuitive cognition* in order to encompass all the laws relating to the evolution of the earth, cosmos, human being and spiritual beings. These spiritual laws are reflected in our biography through *rhythms, mirroring or synchronicity and metamorphosis*.

These laws are introduced and described in the workshops and trainings of *Holistic Biography Work*. In summary, the acquisition of a *panoramic view* is the first step in working with our biography. The second step is made through an understanding of how life after death is reflected in our biography, or in other words, the influence of *destiny and karma*. The third step is achieved through a deeper understanding of the spiritual laws which govern biography and of the ways in which certain life phases transform or reflect others, or *synchronicity* (a causal ordered-ness).

Life is itself *a path of initiation* which becomes more meaningful when it is lived in full consciousness, in a way that can be achieved through working on one's biography.

## A Phenomenological approach

*The Training Program in Holistic Biography Work aims to prepare Biographical Consultants to accompany others in the challenging or decisive moments of their lives.*

*Biography Work* is a preventative or salutogenic process. It is not a therapeutic modality or therapy substitute as such. It provides a method of clarification that is often experienced as helpful, with therapeutic 'side-effects'. We can become more whole after 'falling apart' and come to better terms with ourselves and the world. We are 'heard' and 'seen' and gain a helpful perspective through such a process.

In individual or group work, the experiences of the past, the current life situation and future development opportunities are systematically examined and mapped, in order to develop steps and goals for the future.

Various perspectives and themes are introduced and used throughout the training process. Check the Curriculum for more details.

We use a phenomenological approach that incorporates questioning and self-reflection. The systematic stock-taking of different aspects of our life contributes to an individual search for meaning. It is also helpful in considering vocational choices, partnership dilemmas, life challenges, destiny moments or coming to terms with ill-health.

Our personalised *Life Panorama Chart* provides a condensed life overview and enables an *objective overview* to be undertaken.

Participants in our Training Program learn to use the resources and tools developed within *Holistic Biography Work*, and are able to share them with others.

The methods of Biography Work can be applied in the field of human resources in organisations or for the systematic development of a corporate biography and identity.

Participants of our *Holistic Biography Work Training Program* examine their life experiences through different lenses, over a period of 3 or so years, and deepen their understanding of the human life journey. They learn to become helpful companions for others facing questions or challenges.

# Curriculum Details – Themes and Outcomes

## Pre-requisite

### BGO-10 – Foundation Course in Holistic Biography Work

Take Charge: Reflect on your Life Journey.

Applying the resources of Holistic Biography Work.

- Supported **Self-reflection** looking at events, gifts, challenges, and golden moments. **Strengthens Self-knowledge.**
- Differentiate **more important from less important**, finding the essence.
- Important life incidents, data collection and recording – the **first lens for creating life overviews.**
- Differentiate life **incidents** (outer) from life **experiences** (inner).
- Understand **3-fold Human Being** of body, soul, and spirit.
- Incarnation and Excarnation, use of the **U-Chart.**

- **Life Phases** (Septennials) and their relation to the **9-fold Human Being**, depicting the **Development of Consciousness.**
- Use the 9-fold or 12-fold Life **Panorama Chart** to create an overview, explore mirroring between the life phases.
- Notice inter-connections, repetition, patterns.
- **Verbal and non-verbal** approaches: biography Timeline, River of life, envisage flow of the river into the future, Septennial mood drawings.
- **4-fold Human Being** (physical, etheric, astral and 'I') supported by a **4-level Plant Observation Exercise.**
- **Self-reflective exercise** as introduced in Knowledge of Higher Worlds.
- **'I-function'** and **Witness**, the observing faculty enabling **self-observation.**
- Special developmental years: 2, 3, 9 ... **mile-stones for the incarnating 'I'**

## Year 1

### Module BGO-11 – Typologies

Understanding Self and others.

Exploring temperaments, soul types, qualities, rhythms, and cycles in life.

- **4 Temperaments** related to the Etheric-body.
- **7 Soul-types** related to the Astral-body and the 7 Planets.
- **Rhythms, Patterns and Themes** giving a dynamic life perspective.
- **Planetary Cycles** influencing life and biographical cycles and rhythms.
- Planetary Spheres and Karma. From the cosmic perspective: **Moon or Nature, Sun or Affinity, and Saturn or Direction Karma.**
- Planetary Spheres and Karma. The earthly perspective: **Karmic Demands, Karmic Encounters and Karmic Fulfilment.**
- **Exploring Karmic Keys** and **Following Themes** seeded by the above in life events – the **second lens for creating life overviews.**
- Deepening understanding of interconnections between **Life Events and Life Phases** – seeing **Life Phases as Organs of Perception.**

### Module BGO-12 – Mental Health Challenges

Understanding common mental health issues.

Recognising symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress.

- Different lenses to look at mental health issues and challenges: lived experience, **Anthroposophic Medicine**, psychological understanding and strategies, clinical definitions, psychiatric considerations.
- 4 Elements, 4 Temperaments and **4 Main Organs** to characterise and sort mental health issues.
- **Re-defining Illness** not as opposite of health, but an imbalance between loosening/warming and crystallising/cooling influences. Balanced through the resilience of the Individuality.
- **Salutogenesis, Sense of Coherence** and the importance of the 'I'-function in Biography Work. The importance of making sense for resilience.
- **Phenomenology** in Biography Work balancing diagnostic approaches.
- Criteria for being mentally ill as a matter of **culturally influenced definition** – DSM-5 and ICD10.
- Recognising common mental health issues by **understanding symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress.**



## Module BGO-13 – Communication Skills

Sensing with four ears in human communication.

*Discriminating 3 elements of verbal communications – Listening to Thinking, Feeling, Willing.*

- Discriminating **3 Elements in Communication**: content, interaction, and process (procedure).
- **3 Levels of Listening**: Conceptual or Informative Listening, Critical or Discerning Listening and Empathic or Therapeutic Listening
- Distinguishing and listening to **Thinking, Feeling and Willing** in communication. Their relation to **Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition**.
- **Listening with 4 Ears to**: Factual Information, Relationship level, Appeal implied, Self-revelation.
- **Listening beyond Facts** to develop and trust **Imaginations, Inspirations, and Intuitions**.
- Prepare skills needed in **The Helping Conversation**.

## Module BGO-20 – Core Module – The Helping Conversation

Deep listening and empathy in encounter.

*Practising 3 levels and 7 qualities in helping conversations.*

- Integrating the ability to listen reflectively, to **distinguish and perceive elements of Thinking, Feeling and Willing/Intention**.
- Understanding how to **guide through a process of exploring and making sense of concepts, emotions and intentions** related to a presenting issue.
- Develop Empathic Listening or **Deep Listening**.
- Developing and applying capacities for **imagination, inspiration, and intuition**.
- Creating and holding **open spaces** and to pose **open questions** in work with others.
- Applying **7 Planetary Qualities** to assess and enrich transformative encounters.
- Introducing the 3-Level Archetype related to Thinking, Feeling and Willing and follow the Archetype in the **3-step Helping Conversation Process**.
- Using the **Incident and the Feeling-Bridge** to deepen understanding.
- Implementing **Polarity and Progression** concepts to explore resolutions.
- Pre-requisite is the **Communication Skills** module.

## BGO-14 – Training Component

**Project 1: Biographical Interview**

- Work with a fellow Trainee as **Study Buddies**/Interview Partners.
- Obtain life data from partner by creating an **interview process**.
- Develop **note taking** without recording sessions.
- Create an **overview** of partner's biography, and apply the **Life Panorama Chart**.
- **Analyse** the life data using tools and methodology of Holistic Biography Work introduced in Year 1 of Training.
- Sharing analysis with Interview partner.
- Reflect on the process used and **note and share good practice** for interviewing, note keeping, analysing, reflecting back to partner, and self-reflection.
- Submit Overview, Analysis, Process reflection and Self-reflection as a written assignment.
- *Note*: Ideally Interview partner is also Study-Buddy for this first year of Training.

## Personal and Spiritual Development

- Importance of **Moments of Self-reflection** and distinguishing the important from the less important.
- Keeping a **Learning Journal** and note keeping in general.
- Applying **Mind-mapping** as a summarising tool.
- **Differentiating outer and inner**, or incidents and experiences.
- Steiner's **6 Subsidiary exercises** – as Basic exercises or practices.
- 10 Exercises from **Overcoming Nervousness**.
- Ability to perceive basic concepts of Karma, e.g. Nature, Affinity, and Direction Karma, in daily life.

## Year 2

### Module BGO-21 – Life encounters and Relationships

#### Individual and community.

Exploring the impact of people, places, and situations.

- Content inspired by the concept of **Sun or Encounter Karma**, related to the Soul-Developmental years (21 to 42) between Moon or Nature Karma or Karmic Demands (birth to 21) and Saturn, Direction or Mission-Karma, or Karmic-Fulfilment (the years after 42).
- This Module builds on explorations done in the *Foundation Course* – collecting biographical facts, and the *Typologies* Module – exploring interconnections and themes, and is a **third lens for creating life overviews**.
- Reflecting on life stories through the lens of significant **encounters with people, places and situations** based on the concept of encounter, affinity, or sun-karma.
- Reflecting on the social and natural environment at birth, the family of origin, friendships in childhood and adolescence, intimate relationships, work relationships, and visions for old age, based on the concept of **Karmic Demands, Karmic Encounters, and Karmic Fulfilment**.
- Exploring the **process of individualisation** using dependent, interdependent, and independent relationships as a framework.
- Understanding **Developmental Phases in Relationships and Groups**.
- Understanding **cosmic developmental phases** and related developmental process phases of the human being - from human being as a hermaphrodite, to the division into male/female and the future 'oneness'.
- Examining concepts of **male and female, masculinity and femininity**, anima and animus, gender identity, on the physical, etheric, astral and 'I' levels, and the limitations of these polarities.
- Understanding **polarities as creative potentials**, e.g. in regenerative, artistic, scientific, or philosophical expressions.
- Understanding the spiritual dimension of polarity and gender as a developmental challenge.

### Module BGO-22 – Trials and Thresholds

#### Awakening to initiation through life.

Reflecting on peak, abyss, and transition experiences.

- Exploring trials experienced throughout life through the lens of the dynamics related to **Fire, Water and Air trials, as part of a process of Initiation through Life**.
- Understanding the concept of the **inner and outer thresholds** and the **12-senses as doorways to the spirit**.
- Understanding the **Mystic Path** (inner threshold) and **Ecstatic or Shamanistic Path** in relation to the Inner and Outer Threshold.
- Understanding how the two thresholds relate to the 12-senses, as well as **Imagination, Inspiration, Intuition, and three levels of consciousness**.
- As threshold-experiences often have super-sensible elements, understanding how to use the 2 Thresholds, the 12 Senses, and other **tools to better understand the nature of Spiritual Experiences**.
- Understanding the importance of awareness and the capacity of the **'I'-function to integrate and make sense** of Spiritual Experiences, and how these help to better understand mental health issues.
- Considering the nature of inner and outer thresholds, and how they may be **safely crossed into spiritual realities**.
- **Exploring safe spiritual practices** to enrich daily life.

### Module BGO-23 – Destiny and Karma

#### Learning holistic concepts of Destiny and Karma.

Differentiating Instrument Karma and Incident Karma.

- Content inspired by the **3-Level Karma Exercise** exploring **Affinity or Instrument Karma – Rudolf Steiner's first Karma Exercise and the first direction of Karma**.
- Experiencing an approach to **understanding destiny and karma as a developmental tool**.
- Enhance **recognition of potential destiny signposts** or karmic-keys in life events.

- Understanding the **2 Directions of Karma** and discriminating **Instrument or Affinity Karma, and Incident Karma**. The first related to how we have been 'tuned' through previous incarnations and the time between death and re-birth as an 'instrument'. The second related to the kinds of incidents that come to meet us.
- **Exploring individual affinities** to times in history, relation to different cultures, philosophies and religions, and cultural artefacts like art, garments, tools, weapons, buildings etc.
- Applying the concepts to understand how individual **Affinities and Oddities** emerging during life may be karmic keys.
- Pre-requisite for **Destiny Learning** module.

### Module BGO-30 – Core Module – Destiny Learning: Learning from Life.

*Identifying karmic keys and destiny events.*

- Content builds on the Destiny and Karma Module and the concept of Incident Karma, related to **Rudolf Steiner's 4-Day Karma Exercise and the second direction of Karma**.
- The 7-Step Process is inspired by the **4-Day Karma Exercise** exploring **Incident Karma**.
- Explore and deepen the understanding of **Incident Karma** related to the kinds of incidents that come to meet us as individuals.
- Understanding how elements of the **Double or Shadow** relate to unresolved karmic issues may be balanced by recognition, and the transformation of attitudes and patterns.
- Understanding how attitudes and patterns are part of the subconscious and can relate to the **Karmic-Double**, meaning the pattern was acquired in a previous incarnation.
- Exploring biographical examples – **Incidents** – to identify patterns, especially repeated unsuccessful patterns and using one for a transformation exercise.
- Experiencing and applying a **7-Step Transformative Process** (Destiny Learning) in working with such patterns.
- Noticing Karma and Destiny events as part of everyday life and spiritual reality. **Becoming more conscious of karmic keys in everyday life.**

BGO-24 – Training Component

### Project 2: Biographical Analysis

- Studying the **complete biography** of someone of interest, and no longer alive.
- As during the Training and in work as a Consultant we work with parts of biographies – **in this Project a full life is explored**.
- Researching one or more written biographies on the chosen personality. **Collecting sufficient life data**, ideally from the first septennial onwards.
- **Exploring mirrorings** by working with someone who died older than 42 years.
- Creating an **overview** of the person's biography and applying the **Life Panorama Chart**.
- **Analysing** the life data using tools and methodology of Holistic Biography Work introduced in Year 1 and Year 2.
- **Presenting biographical analysis** to a group of fellow Trainees or colleagues.
- **Reflecting on the process used and noting good practice** for a Biographical Analysis.
- **Reflecting** on what was learnt about **process and personal resonance**.
- **Submitting a written assignment** – Life Overview, Analysis, Process reflection, Self-reflection.

### Personal and Spiritual Development

- **Trials and thresholds in life** – Knowledge of Higher Worlds, Chapter 2.
- **Karmic recognition** by identifying personal affinities and oddities.
- **3-level Karma exercise** – Moon, Sun, Saturn.
- **4-day Karma exercise** – observing life incidents.
- **Encounter and Affinity karma**.
- **Relationships to the 2 Thresholds**.

## Year 3

### Module BGO-31 – Mission and Meaning

Life as a spiritual journey.

*Supporting the Self in search for meaning.*

- Content builds on explorations that are part of the *Foundation Course* (collecting biographical facts), the *Typologies* Module (exploring interconnections and themes), and the *Life Encounters* Module (exploring life encounters and relationships).
- Again a biographical overview is created by exploring the inner journey - the individual search for meaning or the spiritual journey through life – the **fourth lens creating a life overview**.
- Content is inspired by the concept of **Karmic-Fulfilment** (the years after 42) or **Saturn or Direction Karma** which infuses one's life mission.
- Understanding the **Four Mystery Streams** and their relation to the Inner and Outer Threshold.
- Exploring individual Biographies to find pointers to **Spiritual Typologies** related to the Two Thresholds (Mystic or Shamanistic Initiation practices), the Four Mystery Streams, and the affinity to the Twelve Senses.
- Understanding that **meaning is the result of an individual's process of making sense**, how this relates to SOC – the Sense of Coherence – in Salutogenesis, and supports the healing potential of Biography Work.
- Exploring the associated vocational journey, the outer journey and reflecting on the **unique life mission**, the individual's contribution to life on earth.
- Sharing pivotal moments and spiritual gems (e.g. meaningful texts and practices) with fellow Trainees.

### Module BGO-32 – Mental Health Crisis and Spiritual Emergency

Understanding mental health crisis from a holistic, spiritual perspective.

*Understanding the relationship between physical symptoms and mental and emotional well-being.*

- Content builds on the **Mental Health Challenges** Module and strives to better understand more severe mental health phenomena. It is also prepared by the modules on **Trials and Thresholds** and **Mission and Meaning**.
- Understanding the concept that **Humanity having crossed the Threshold** and

becoming more open for super-sensible and spiritual influences, may lead to **Spiritual Emergencies**.

- Understanding that **Spiritual Emergencies**, which are part of spiritual developmental process are often misinterpreted as Mental Health Issues.
- Discriminating between a mental health crisis such as a psychotic episode, and a Spiritual Emergency related to a spiritual experience or spiritual growth.
- Exploring and sharing experienced or observed life experiences related to spiritual experiences or mental health crises.
- Understanding more serious mental health issues. Knowing when to refer someone for further support or intervention.
- Understanding ethical implications for Consultancy work, and those related to mental health and other crises.

### Module BGO-33 – Process Design

Three Ways of Learning: Learning for life, learning from life, initiation through life.

*Designing effective learning processes.*

- Understanding what makes group processes effective and how to design processes accordingly.
- Understanding that effective processes relate to an **Archetype**, a creative idea, and noting examples of such Archetypes.
- Reflecting on this Training Program to recognise how such archetypes have been implemented, e.g. oneness, polarity, 2-foldness, 3-foldness, 4-foldness, 7-foldness, 9-foldness and 12-foldness.
- Understanding the **7-step Learning Process** and the 7-fold Archetype behind this process.
- Understanding **Horizontal and Vertical Integration** as a tool for designing Integrated learning processes.
- Being able to implement the 3-fold archetype in the *Three Ways of Learning*, the *three levels of relating between educator and learner*.
- Understanding the **4-Levels of Teaching and Learning**.
- Creating processes to be shared in a learning group using an **Inter-vision**, or **Make me Better** process.

## Module BGO-40 – Core Module – Meeting Conflict

Learning to read and transform conflict patterns.

*Understanding conflict escalation and de-escalation.*

- This Module is inspired by Rudolf Steiner's concept of 9 **Sub-hierarchies** situated in the interior of the earth, and the **origins of adversarial entities in cosmic development**.
- Understanding **constructive and destructive forces that influencing conflict situations**.
- Being able to perceive the **Double as a Doorway** for potentially destructive influences.
- Using the concept of **Polarity and Double Progression** to understand and transform the energy in conflict situation into a creative potential. Using the **Hermitic Quadrant** as a tool.
- Understanding the Role of the **Manichean Stream** in the transformation of adversarial potentials.
- Being able to apply the **9-Level Conflict Escalation Model** developed by Friedrich Glasl, to assist with the de-escalation of conflicts.
- Pre-requisite is **Destiny Learning** core module, as the 7-step learning and transformation process is reintroduced, deepened, and applied.
- Exploring the **potential for self-development in challenging encounters** with others.
- Exploring individual patterns and personal styles of action and reaction in conflict situations as a **strategy to transform aspects of the Double**.

## BGO-34 – Training Component

Project 3: Biographical Study

- **Preparing and advertising a Biography Work consultancy process** to find someone interested in being in the 'client' role for such a process.
- **Collecting life data** of 'client' to create an **overview** of the person's biography; and applying the **Life Panorama Chart**.
- Ideally the person has a **question**, which can be approached using biographical theory and methodology.
- Working with a person older than 42 years to allow the **exploration of mirrorings**.
- **Analysing the life data** using tools and methodology of Holistic Biography Work introduced during the 3 years of the Training.
- **Present analysis** to a group of fellow students or colleagues.
- **Reflect on the processes used and noting good practice** for Biography Work with a client.
- **Reflecting on** what was learnt about the **process and personal resonance**.
- **Submitting a written assignment:** Life Overview, Analysis, Process Reflection, Self-reflection.

### Personal and Spiritual Development

- **Karmic Demands, Karmic Encounters, Karmic Fulfilment.**
- **4-day Karma Exercise** – revised.
- Steiner's **6 Subsidiary Exercises** (or Basic exercises) applied in everyday settings.
- **Affinities and Oddities** – awareness deepened.
- **Transformative Strategies.**
- **Learning is Universal** and even possible in dissent.
- *The 'I' or the Spirit within me is the universal potential for transformation and change.*

## Resources

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### Website

[www.holisticbiographywork.com](http://www.holisticbiographywork.com)

Provides background information on Biography Work, as well as our courses, and our International Training Program.

Has a comprehensive Web Shop.

### Web Shop

[www.holisticbiographywork.com/shop](http://www.holisticbiographywork.com/shop)

Has access to free downloadable resources, *Interactive Septennial Charts* and *Life Panorama Chart*.

Able to purchase the Learning Packs, the Biography Log-book, register for special events such as the annual International Online Biography Gathering.

### Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/HolisticBiographyWork](http://www.facebook.com/HolisticBiographyWork)

Provides links to interesting information, and updates on activities.

### Regular free newsletter

Often monthly, keeping subscribers up-to-date with our courses and special events.

Subscription available via Website.

### Learning Packs

On Themes related to the Training Program.

*Available for personal and professional development.*

Each Module in our *Training Program* is available for guests. Each has a *Learning Pack* available for self-paced study. Includes: Study Guide, lectures, reading and activities.

Participation in online sessions, with the guided group-work is optional, and available for an extra fee. Tutor support is available as needed.

Recommended for those interested in Holistic Biography Work, but unable to commit to the 3-year *Training Program*.

To have individual questions answered, contact Karl-Heinz Finke and Laura Summerfield via:

[mail@holisticbiographywork.com](mailto:mail@holisticbiographywork.com)

## Recommended Reading

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### Biography Log-book

*Resources for work on an individual biography or life story.*

Optional *Companion Guide*, provides assistance in use.

*Authors and publishers: Karl-Heinz Finke and Laura Summerfield*

May be purchased separately for work on an individual life story. Available as a print edition, or as a personalised interactive eBook. Main text for our *Foundation Course*. May be included with any of our *Learning Packs*. Available in different languages – German, Hungarian, French, Hebrew, simplified Chinese, Traditional Mandarin, Japanese, Vietnamese.

Check our Web Shop for further details.

### Taking Charge

*Your life patterns and their meaning.*

Gudrun Burkhard

A good introduction from the ‘mother’ of Biography Work – a medical doctor, art therapist, nutritionist. Describes the basic approach with biographical examples.

A more in-depth look at the Anthroposophical basis for Biography Work is found in her book, *Biographical Work: The Anthroposophical Basis*.

### Phases

*Crisis and development in the individual.*

Bernard Lievegoed

An early book on life phases and their meaning from the ‘father’ of Biography Work – a respected Dutch Psychiatrist, Academic and Director of the NPI (Netherlands Pedagogical Institute).

His spiritual perspective becomes clearer in one of his other works, *Man on the Threshold: The challenge of inner development*.