



Craniosacral Therapy

An Introduction



What is Craniosacral Work?

Craniosacral work is a holistic healing practice which uses extremely light finger pressure to optimize a movement pattern within the body which is known as the "cranial wave." Craniosacral work differs from most other modalities by its lightness of touch, and the long, attentive duration of each contact. It believes that focus and gentleness are the foundations of healing.

Craniosacral work is one of the most respectful of all bodywork techniques. While Craniosacral work focuses on helping the cranial wave flow freely through the head, spine and pelvis, it is not limited to those areas, and may be used to work with painful or restricted conditions anywhere in the body. In fact, many practitioners find that Craniosacral work helps the client access their own clarity and insight, and hence it is used not only to relieve pain, but also to help empower the client deal successfully with many different life situations.

What is the "Cranial Wave"?

When we breathe, the movement of our body is obvious. Each time our heartbeats, we can feel the movement of blood along the superficial arteries. But the cranial wave is so subtle that it takes trained hands to feel it, and we usually cannot feel our own wave at all. A sheet of writing paper is 100 microns thick; the average movement of cranial bone (our heads are composed of 22 bones) is 40 microns. The normal frequency

of the cranial wave cycle is from 8 to 14 per minute. The quality and frequency of the wave as it passes through (or is unable to pass through) different bones and tissues in the body is assessed by the Craniosacral practitioner, who "listens" to it in order to gauge the need for treatment. (Practitioners also listen to it to sense the effectiveness of their work.)

Different conditions, such as whiplash injury, trauma to the head, or migraine headache produce different qualities in the cranial wave. The trained practitioner can recognize these qualities. The frequency of the wave can also be dramatically affected by illness – for instance, in coma it slows to 2 cycles per minute. And in meditative states, it may calm down to 3 or 4 cycles per minute, which unlike coma is a time great inner nurturing: It is a return to the source.

Why is Cranial Work Effective?

In simple terms, if the cranial bones are not in the "right place", then the brain and central nervous system cannot be in the "right place". The hormonal system cannot perform optimally. Even though the cranial bones only move half the thickness of a sheet of writing paper, the human head is so delicate, and so suffused with vital nerve pathways, that even slight deformations of a bone's movement or position can produce physical or psychological symptoms, and often both. When the cranial wave is distorted it also consumes or diverts a disproportionate amount of "chi " or energy, lowers the strength of the immune system, and increases the likelihood of chronic states like depression becoming intractable. When the cranial wave is optimized, we feel "all of a whole," we feel wonderful.

The optimum fluctuation of our energy field optimizes the functioning of our nervous system,

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and has a profound influence on our immune and hormonal systems. That is why some people whose conditions seem to be quite unrelated to the Craniosacral system do feel much better after receiving their work with jaw joint or temporomandibular dysfunction (TMD). Dentists find that a cap or filling that is even 3 microns too prominent (the thickness of fine dental carbon-paper) can cause jaw, neck and head pain – feels immediate and dramatic relief. Craniosacral work is the only modality that specifically works with impacted sutures that can result from trauma to the head, releasing them through skilled and patient attention.



Why Such Delicate Pressures?

The head works at extremely fine tolerances – during quiet conversation, for instance, the eardrum moves less than the diameter of a hydrogen atom, and there are 100 billion hydrogen atoms in one drop of water. Because the joints between adjacent cranial bones (the "sutures") are so finely balanced, and move so little, the practitioner must focus

intently on the movement that he or she is "listening" to.

Any rushed or hard pressure tends to distort the normal movement of the bones, and also frightens the client: it feels like an earthquake. There is a similarity here to homeopathy – the minutest dose is capable of creating the greatest transformation. In the Western world we are accustomed to being impressed by size, speed, power, noise. We think that the bigger the dose, the more powerful it is. In Eastern countries, they have an older, quieter understanding. They say, "It is amazing how much how little will do."

Is Craniosacral Work Scientifically Proven to be Effective?

In the ninety years since William Sutherland first began documenting the effectiveness of cranial osteopathy, there have been more than 40 scientific papers published documenting various aspects of its effectiveness, and at least 10 authoritative textbooks published. Notable amongst scientific papers are Viola Frymann's work documenting the successful treatment of 1,250 newborn children with birth defects, Edna Lay and Stephen Blood's work on temporomandibular joint disorders (TMD), and John Wood's work on psychiatric disorders. Many of the osteopathic medical schools in the USA teach it. The American Dental Association has found it to be an effective adjunct to orthodontic work.

Its effectiveness has also been clinically proven by more than 20,000 Craniosacral practitioners in this country alone. They use it because it is effective. Sir Thomas Padgett, the British physician after whom Padgett's Disease is named, noted "That which is clinically proven needs no evidence."

What Conditions does Craniosacral Therapy Address?

Craniosacral therapy strengthens you body's ability to do what it does best...take care of you. In that way it helps alleviate a range illness, pain and dysfunction, including:

- 👉 Infantile Disorders
- 👉 Traumatic Brain and Spinal Cord Injuries
- 👉 Migraine Headaches
- 👉 Chronic Fatigue
- 👉 Motor-Coordination Impairments
- 👉 Chronic Neck and Back Pain
- 👉 Scoliosis
- 👉 Central Nervous System Disorders
- 👉 Emotional Difficulties
- 👉 Temporomandibular Joint Syndrome (TMJ)
- 👉 Learning Disabilities
- 👉 Stress and Tension-Related Problems
- 👉 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- 👉 Orthopedic Problems
- 👉 And Many Other Conditions

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