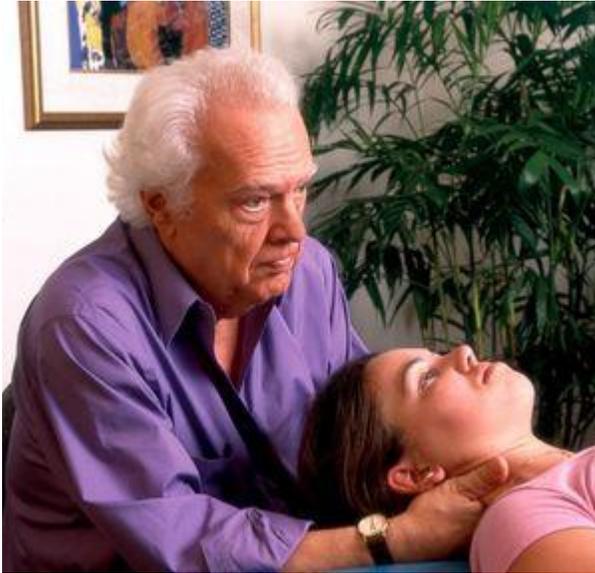




What if



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Craniosacral Therapy was pioneered and developed by osteopathic physician John E. Upledger following extensive scientific studies from 1975 to 1983 at Michigan State University, where he served as a clinical researcher and professor of biomechanics.

According to Upledger, “Craniosacral Therapy is a gentle, hands-on approach that releases tensions deep in the body to relieve pain and dysfunction, and improve whole-body

health and performance. Using a soft touch generally no greater than 5 grams – about the weight of a nickel – practitioners release restrictions in the soft tissues that surround the central nervous system.”

Craniosacral therapy works with the membranes and fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. It influences lymphatic fluid and connective tissue. The craniosacral therapist encourages the body to let go of restrictions and improve the flow of fluid.

A craniosacral therapist learns to listen and feel for the faint dural pulse of the craniosacral rhythm. It’s a pulse that doesn’t match the beat of the heart or the rhythm of respirations. It’s smooth and full, like the ebb and flow of gentle waves pushing and pulling on a sea shore. Feeling too hard for it can crush the rhythm; too soft and you miss it.

Once you find it, you follow the rhythm to flow from the top of the head to the bottom of the feet and back again. It also flows from the front midline of the body around the outside of the body to the back of the spine and back around to the front again. I’ve seen pictures of electrical currents making a similar pattern.

The therapist is looking for any restrictions, interruptions or blockages that prevent the rhythm from flowing smoothly and completely. It feels similar to a dance in slow motion. The therapist gently urges the pulse to and fro along the spine and along the path encircling the body and back again. In Craniosacral Therapy the therapist is gently encouraging the rhythm to go out a little further, or come back a little closer, to complete and improve the flow of fluid.

The client's body seems to respond to the positive good will and encouragement of the therapist. An understanding develops that the therapist is seeking to help the body heal itself. The encouragement and support gives permission to stretch a little with the understanding that the therapist is here to guide and support the client.

Upledger states that "by complementing the body's natural healing processes, Craniosacral Therapy is increasingly used as a preventive health measure for its ability to bolster resistance to disease, and is effective for a wide range of medical problems associated with pain and dysfunction, including:

- migraine headaches
- chronic neck and back pain
- motor-coordination impairments
- colic
- autism
- central nervous system disorders
- orthopedic problems
- concussions and traumatic brain injuries
- spinal-cord injuries
- scoliosis
- infantile disorders
- learning disabilities
- chronic fatigue
- emotional difficulties
- stress and tension-related problems
- fibromyalgia and other connective-tissue disorders
- Temporomandibular Joint Syndrome
- neurovascular or immune disorders
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and
- post-surgical dysfunction.

SomatoEmotional Release is a therapeutic process that uses and expands on the principles of Craniocacral Therapy to help rid the mind and body of the residual effects of trauma.”

Sometimes difficult memories created under stress cause a restriction that is trapped in the connective tissue. When these restrictions are released the memory is also released and may let go in an emotional wave that may be as vividly painful as when the memory was first created. However, the client has the realization that he or she is safe now. The actual trauma is past and it's okay to let go of the memory. Sometimes passive muscles react to the signals and stretch and twist and turn to further improve the flow of lymphatic fluid. The client might feel that his or her body has taken on a mind of its own, moving with unknown intent or purpose. The person might walk away feeling like he or she has had an internal massage, or feeling out of balance, not realizing the person may have walked in out of balance and might be leaving more attune with his or herself.

How does Craniosacral Therapy work?

According to Upledger, the central nervous system is heavily influenced by the craniosacral system – the membranes and fluid that surround, protect and nourish the brain and spinal cord. Everyday stresses and strains can cause body tissues to tighten and distort the craniosacral system. The distortions can then cause tension to form around the brain and spinal cord, resulting in restrictions – similar to high blood pressure in the vascular system.

The restrictions can create a barrier to the healthy performance of the central nervous system, and potentially every other system it interacts with. With a light touch, the Craniosacral Therapy practitioner uses his or her hands to evaluate the craniosacral system by gently feeling various locations of the body to test for the ease of motion and rhythm of the cerebrospinal fluid pulsing around the brain and spinal cord. Soft-touch techniques are then used to release restrictions in any tissues influencing the craniosacral system.

Visit www.upledger.com for more information or to find a craniosacral therapist.