

Upledger Institute turns 20

With an on-site team of 75 people and more than 2,000 affiliates worldwide, the Upledger Institute, in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, has established itself as CranioSacral-Therapy central. This year the institute celebrates 20 years of giving and teaching the technique.

"In the beginning our mission was simple: to educate the public and health-care practitioners about the existence and value of CranioSacral Therapy, and to make it available to everyone who would benefit from it," said John Matthew Upledger, CEO of the Upledger Institute and son of John E. Upledger, D.O., developer of CranioSacral Therapy.

The technique uses light touch to release restrictions in the craniosacral system—the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround the brain and the spinal cord—and improve the functioning of the central nervous system.

In 1985, after eight years of researching and refining the technique at Michigan State University, Upledger opened the institute to teach CranioSacral Therapy to other health-care practitioners, outside the university setting.

"Before that there had been a small group of osteopaths doing cranial osteopathy, but no one was working with his meningeal model," said John Matthew.

The Upledger Institute began offering training in CranioSacral Therapy in a few U.S. cities and offering sessions in the Florida facility. Since then, modalities such as visceral manipulation and lymph-drainage therapy have been added to the roster, and more than 1,000 continuing-education classes on these techniques are taught each year worldwide.

"In CranioSacral Therapy alone we've expanded from offering about 100 hours of training to more than 500 hours, plus two levels of certification and electives like

CranioSacral Dissection and BioAquatic Explorations with Dolphin-Assisted Therapy," said John Matthew.

The technique has been in the spotlight a number of times throughout the years, including in publications such as *USA Today* and *TIME* magazine, which named Upledger one of America's "next wave of innovators" in 2001. In 1994 Upledger was appointed to the Alternative Medicine Program Advisory Council for the former Office of Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health.

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Therapy] has evolved in much the same way the perception of massage therapy has changed over the last couple decades," said John Matthew. "There's a lot more acceptance and understanding of complementary care today.

"I believe the future for [the Upledger Institute], CranioSacral Therapy and all practitioners of complementary care is extremely bright," he continued. "More than ever, people are wanting to better understand their own health issues and be more actively involved in the decisions that affect them."

—Brandi Schlossberg

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