

Compassionate Touch

On Monday, 22 November 2004, an informal gathering of staff members and supervisors of the Rural Development Institute (RDI), HHHT, sat for tea and a video presentation of a new programme known as 'Compassionate Touch' presented by Mrs Eileen Diorio, who has completed a training course in *Cranial Sacral Therapy* in Tampa, Florida, USA.

Children are naturally flexible and eager to play, stretch and run. They enjoy their bodies and love to learn new ways to experience them.

The 'Compassionate Touch' programme was developed by Dr John E. Upledger of the United States, as a means to encourage and support the attitude of kindness and caring for others. According to Dr. Upledger, "When the feeling of compassion increases, the level of violence decreases".

Dr Upledger is best known throughout the world as the founder of *Cranial Sacral Therapy*, a method for treating many health problems by adjusting the membranes that cover the brain and spinal column using a very gentle manipu-

lation of the hands on the affected part. This method requires a therapist who has received extensive training and a good knowledge of anatomy.

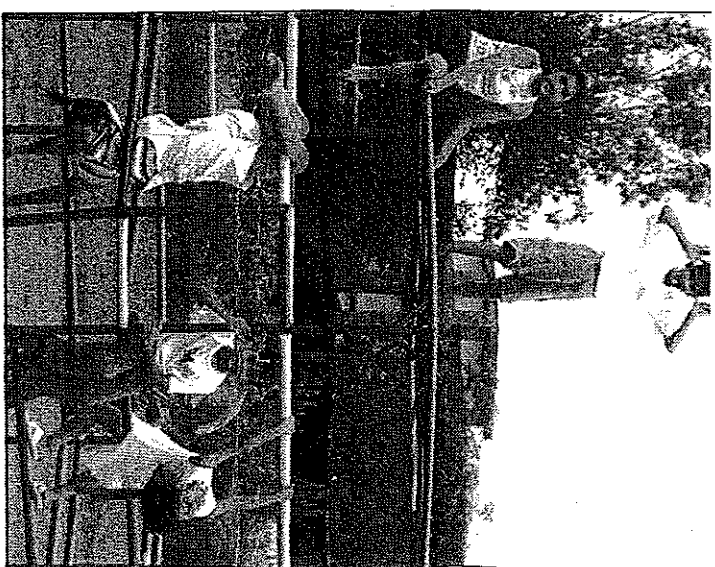
'Compassionate Touch' however, is a method of comforting and easing the pain of someone who has been injured or has some chronic problem like headaches or arthritis. It is a method that can be easily learned by anyone.

According to Dr Upledger, everyone can learn to use their 'Helping Hands' to comfort and ease the suffering of another. By reaching out to help, a greater feeling of compassion is developed in the heart of both giver and receiver.

When this method was taught to children in schools, it was quickly accepted by them, and teachers have observed a dramatic decrease in violent and unkind behaviour among the children. Some children had applied this 'Compassionate Touch' at home and were happy to report that they had helped their parents and other family members.

Dr Upledger has created a non-profit foundation to supply teaching materials at no cost, to groups willing to learn and teach this method to children and adults alike. A package of this teaching materials, which include a video presentation, a training manual, and an illustrated children's story book about 'Helping Hands', has been presented to the RDI by Mrs Diorio. Earlier this year, Mrs Diorio, a long time student of Sri Swami Rama, also gave a short talk about her personal experience of the benefits of *Cranial Sacral Therapy* and *Compassionate Touch*.

She also commented on how she had learnt of a direct connection between Dr Upledger and Sri Swami Rama. Dr Upledger, she informed, was present at the Meringer Foundation Clinic and had observed the testing process on Swami Rama's yogic abilities, the results of which were then presented in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.



The Faculty of RDI is currently studying the possibility of offering the programme of 'Compassionate Touch' to the children of the villages they serve.

Editorial

This is the first monthly supplement for medical practitioners and healthcare workers which is part of HHHT News. It is hoped that medical practitioners and healthcare workers, both at HHHT and elsewhere, who receive this publication will contribute to its continued success by submitting their opinions, findings, experiences and other contributions (humour, human interest and of course spiritual issues) either in English or Hindi.