

CranioSacral Therapy Intensive

A Team Approach
to Trauma

by Tad Wanveer, LMT

It was a privilege for me to co-lead a team of CranioSacral therapists—thirty-seven volunteers from the United States, England and Ireland—who offered an intensive program to New York City residents suffering from post-traumatic stress in the aftermath of the events of September 11. Held for six days in December 2001 at the Swedish Institute, the sessions were offered free of charge to the many people who came.

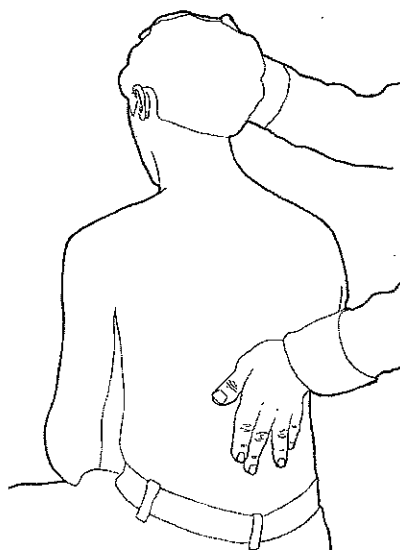
The New York sessions took place in a large room where several therapists worked simultaneously. Sharing a treatment room allows each therapist-patient team to work in synergy with the others. This creates an environment in which each individual's process supports and enhances that of everyone else. A unique aspect of this particular program was that there was a common event which linked all of the participants: September 11.

The approach was suggested by John E. Upledger, D.O., developer of CranioSacral Therapy. It is the model used at the Upledger Institute HealthPlex Clinic in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida for intensive therapeutic interventions, such as the ones conducted for Vietnam veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome.

Though the sessions provided were modeled after a particular program, there is no set protocol. Every CranioSacral Therapy session is an individualized process. As CranioSacral therapists we focus on releasing restrictions in the craniosacral system—the membranes and

—Intro to CranioSacral—

A five-week introductory course in CranioSacral therapy is offered as part of the current Massage Therapy elective sequence. School of Massage Therapy graduates can take this, or any of the other electives, as a Continuing Education course. Other elective options are introductions to Polarity, Reflexology, Tuina, Thai Massage, and more. Call Trey Gilbert (ext. 117) at the school for further information.



Reprinted, by permission, from *Craniosacral Therapy* by John Upledger, D.O., F.A.A.O. and Jon D. Vredevoogd, M.F.A. (Seattle: Eastland Press, 1983) p. 252.

cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord—but the work involves the whole body. The therapist uses gentle palpation to assess the rhythmic flow of cerebrospinal fluid and whenever it feels restricted the practitioner attempts to facilitate a release.

Sometimes the practitioner asks questions of the patient while holding an area of the body. In this respect, CranioSacral Therapy is very much a mind-body approach. While the involvement of the conscious mind is important, the process connects to deeper, non-conscious aspects. These techniques are learned in advanced training.

There was an overwhelmingly positive response from participants, many of whom said they experienced relief from pain and grief. One participant, expressing a common response, said, "I felt somehow lightened or released, like what crying or mourning can do for you. I felt stuck before, but now feel I can move forward."

It was with profound honor and respect that we offered CranioSacral Therapy for trauma relief in New York.

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