

Biodynamic Craniosacral THERAPY

by Wendy Wood Ordway, OTR, CST

Being present, connecting to the earth with grounding, finding my midline, noticing my breath. This is the beginning of a biodynamic craniosacral session.

My hands become my head and my heart.

Marc has positioned himself on his back slowly and gently. His back is stiff and sore. His midline is rigid. Marc has come for a craniosacral session after hearing that it can help you relax and become more flexible. He is open to trying something new, to step out of the box. I am present, grounded and looking inward to my midline for support and guidance. When I touch Marc at his feet I am able to connect with his midline, the central nervous system, his whole body. I feel his fluid body, all of the fluids.

Our fluids bathe our internal world, the cerebral spinal fluid bathes our nervous system.

One side of Marc's body moves with fluidity while the other does not. I feel his breath as it deepens and his heart. It is an honor to be here now with this person. His body will tell me what to do. I listen through my hands and feel his "primary respiration", the slow and steady movement of life. It is the long tide that stretches to reach every part of us inside our skin, it is the body's rhythm.

I move to Marc's sacrum. It is pulsing and rocking. I move with it connecting with its rhythm. My mind is present with Marc and his sacrum. I stay here until the movement changes, slows and I am drawn to another place. I move up Marc's midline to his sternum, one hand there and the other under him connecting with his spine.

The respiratory area is so important for working with the breath, digestion, circulation and the emotions.

At Marc's head I cradle it and connect with his cranial base where the spine connects with the skull. I use my fingers and my intention to move into that space, opening it to connect with Marc's "river of light" the cerebral spinal fluid that is so important in keeping us in the flow, moving and learning. As I feel that dynamic fluid movement I know that I can relax and let Marc's inner wisdom guide me to the places that could use some healing. I hold his head gently and notice what is going on here and also down his body.


A strong craniosacral impulse is felt as the cerebrospinal fluid is produced and moved through the central nervous system. The fluid movement is felt to be more mobile on his right side. The left side of his body is not moving with equal fluid flow. I connect with the vertebrae from the top, the atlas, to the bottom, the sacrum. I connect with each vertebrae and feel what is happening with the fluid movement through the dural tube which encases the spinal cord and connects with the spinal column from the inside.

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“A restriction in the vertebrae could mean a concern right there, in an organ located near the vertebrae, in the connective tissue or an emotional “pocket” from a trauma the body has experienced”

At the junction of the cervical and thoracic spine I feel a restriction. Marc’s fluid movement in this area has stopped. I wait with the intention of releasing this restriction.

A restriction in the vertebrae could mean a concern right there, in an organ located near the vertebrae, in the connective tissue or an emotional “pocket” from a trauma the body has experienced.

After a few minutes I move my thoughts away from Marc’s body and connect with my surroundings which are wonderful since my new working space is located in an art gallery. The art takes me to colorful, joyful places. My eyes also move outward through the windows to the trees that are starting to change from green to their fall colors. I find some sky that is a dynamic blue and connect with the horizon. My breathing is deep and relaxing.

Keeping my body in good posture is very important in craniosacral work. If I am uncomfortable when I am working on a client, that discomfort can be transferred. I bring my focus back to Marc, first to his whole body and then to where my intention is at the vertebral junction. I sense some movement and so now there is the opportunity to move on, on with the fluid tide to guide me on my continued journey to Marc’s sacrum.

Craniosacral work utilizing the biodynamics, the biology of movement, the life force, inner wisdom, you are there in the body, both yours and your client’s. You are connected to your working space, the earth as it moves and the universe. The embryo, the beginning of all human life, can guide you to places in the body where healing is needed. Taking the mind and the

body on a journey of discovery is what can facilitate responses in the body toward health and healing.

Craniosacral therapy dates back to William Sutherland (1873-1954), an osteopath whose research and teachings have impacted every style of cranial work practiced today.

Craniosacral therapy is helpful in working with a variety of health conditions. Anyone who would like to become more tuned in to their bodies and what is going on with their movement and overall health is a candidate. Stress-related conditions including anxiety, insomnia, depression, PTSD, digestive problems, breathing difficulties, TMJ and headaches can be helped. Also head injuries and any disorders related to the spine. Infants with difficult births, feeding difficulties and colic can benefit greatly from receiving craniosacral work. Children with developmental concerns especially autism can often be helped live more in their bodies so they can develop mobility and functional skills for daily life at home and in school.

Wendy Wood Ordway is a certified CranioSacral Therapist with the Upledger Institute. She studied with Upledger for 10 years. She is a licensed Occupational Therapist with 34 years of experience primarily working with infants and children with developmental disorders including sensory integration limitations. She is currently in her 2nd year of studying Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy with Margery Chessare, LMT, BCST. Wendy is the owner of The Body’s Rhythm-Craniosacral Therapy located at The Feneex Center, 30 Beekman Street, Saratoga Springs. Wendy is also connected with A Peaceful Place Massage and Wellness in Clifton Park and True North in Glens Falls.