

# CranioSacral Therapy

**Sheryl McGavin (for John Upledger)**

CranioSacral Therapy is a gentle, hands-on method of whole-body evaluation and care that can have a positive impact on every system of the body. It was developed by osteopathic physician John E. Upledger in the mid-1970s after years of university research and clinical testing.

CranioSacral Therapy helps normalize the cranosacral system, which consists of the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the central nervous system, i.e., the brain, spinal cord and all related structures. Restrictions or imbalances in the cranosacral system may directly affect any or all aspects of central nervous system performance, which in turn can negatively affect the entire body. CranioSacral Therapy practitioners are trained to use gentle *palpation* to detect and address these problems by facilitating the inherent self-correcting abilities of the body.

Generally using about 5 grams of pressure, roughly the weight of a nickel, the CranioSacral Therapy practitioner palpates the *rhythmic* movement of cerebrospinal fluid circulating within the cranosacral system to assess the ease of motion and locate areas of restriction. This enables the practitioner to discover and work with the origin of the symptoms of the disease or dysfunction. Specific treatment *techniques* are then used to facilitate release of restrictions in fasciae, membranes and any other tissues that are found during the assessment to be influencing the cranosacral system. The result is an improved internal environment for the central nervous system allowing it to return to its optimal levels of health and performance.

The gentle touch used in CranioSacral Therapy is essential to work with the self-correcting abilities of the body— to facilitate rather than direct the treatment process. It enables the therapist to feel and respond to the subtle changes and movements that occur in the body when specific *techniques* are used and to gently initiate, follow and support release of restrictions. Because the body has no need to defend against this gentle, nondirective approach to treatment, there can often be significant, long lasting changes.

The focus on the origins of dysfunction and the gentle touch used have made CranioSacral Therapy an effective treatment approach for a wide variety of conditions. It has been found to be beneficial for brain and spinal cord injuries, migraines and headaches, chronic fatigue syndrome, motor-coordination impairments, neck and back pain, scoliosis, central nervous system disorders, emotional difficulties, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) syndrome, learning disabilities, stress and tension-related problems, post-traumatic stress disorder, orthopedic problems and many others.

**CranioSacral  
 Therapy**

**TouchAbilities®**

Technique	Component	Skill
Whole-Body Assessment	Breathing Cognitive Energetic Kinetic Gliding	Tracking Focusing, Intending, Inquiring Sensing Mobilizing Sliding/Planing
Still Point Induction	Kinetic Cognitive Energetic Breathing	Mobilizing, Letting Go, Holding/Supporting Focusing, Intending Sensing Tracking
Diaphragm Releases	Breathing Cognitive Energetic Compression Expansion Kinetic Gliding	Tracking Focusing, Intending Sensing Pressing/Pushing Pulling Holding/Supporting, Letting Go, Stabilizing Sliding/Planing
Direction of Energy	Cognitive Energetic	Intending, Focusing, Transmitting, Visualizing Sensing
Intracranial Membrane Techniques	Cognitive Energetic Compression Expansion Kinetic Gliding	Intending, Focusing Sensing Pressing/Pushing Pulling Mobilizing, Letting Go, Holding/Supporting Sliding/Planing

## CranioSacral Therapy (continued)

## TouchAbilities®

### Technique

### Component

### Skill

Dural Tube Techniques

Cognitive  
Energetic  
Compression  
Expansion  
Kinetic  
Gliding

Intending, Focusing  
Sensing  
Pressing/Pushing  
Pulling  
Mobilizing, Letting Go, Holding/Supporting  
Sliding/Planing

Positional Tissue Release

Cognitive  
Breathing  
Energetic  
Compression  
Expansion  
Kinetic  
Gliding

Intending, Focusing  
Tracking  
Sensing  
Pressing/Pushing  
Pulling  
Mobilizing, Letting Go, Holding/Supporting  
Sliding/Planing

SomatoEmotional Release®

Breathing  
Cognitive  
Energetic  
Compression  
Expansion  
Kinetic  
Gliding

Tracking  
Visualizing, Inquiring, Intending, Focusing  
Sensing, Intuiting, Balancing  
Pressing/Pushing  
Pulling  
Mobilizing, Letting Go, Holding/Supporting  
Sliding/Planing