

## **The Privilege of Being a Witness**

By John Upledger, DO, OMM

"If you're not smart enough to know that it can't be done, you may be able to do it."

I first said that in 1975 at Michigan State University, shortly after I joined the faculty as a clinician-researcher in the department of biomechanics.

I was embarking on research that would document what I was subjectively feeling when I worked on patients with my hands - the movement of the skull bones, one in relation to the other. The motion I was sensing was rhythmical, pulsing at a rate of about eight to 10 cycles per minute, yet the anatomy department was telling me it was all in my mind. To prove it, they showed me microscopic views of human skull bones taken from bodies in the anatomy lab. Sure enough, their slides showed skull bones that were calcified and fused to each other.

Fortunately, I was too "dumb" to accept that as proof that skull bones fused together. Instead, I chose to trust my own hands and senses. I kept on working until I finally decided to look at microscopic views of skull-bone sutures taken from brain-surgery patients. A neurosurgeon agreed to assist me with the project. He took the bone specimens during surgery, quick-froze them to preserve their architecture, and sent them to me by Federal Express.

Lo and behold, these specimens showed skull-bone sutures that were neither fused nor calcified. In fact, the spaces in the sutures were chock-full of arteries, veins, nerves, nerve receptors, elastic and collagen fibers. Nature doesn't structure things like that without reason. These sutures were designed to move. The original fused specimens from the anatomy lab were indicative of post-mortem changes and the effects of embalming fluids and preservatives, not of live patients.

My research at Michigan State University eventually led to my development of CranioSacral Therapy. But if I had simply accepted the premise that skull bones couldn't move in relation to each other, the

craniosacral system might never have unfolded at all. And there would be many children and adults today who would never have received CranioSacral Therapy as a means of reaching a higher potential.

For instance, a man in his 60s showed up at The Upledger Institute with a left arm and hand that were developmentally infantile. He was born with a condition called Erb's palsy, which means there is something wrong with the function of the nerves and blood vessels to the arm. The arm just doesn't grow properly. After three unsuccessful surgeries to relieve the unrelenting pain in his left shoulder, he finally came to us for help.

Initially we were able to reduce the pain significantly using a variety of bodywork approaches. But I thought we might also be able to help the function of his arm. We worked on his craniosacral system to help release any restrictions that might be causing the problem. Soon he was able to use his thumb and fingers, which he had never done before.

As our work proceeded we could see his arm and hand begin to grow. We even had x-rays taken and compared them to those from before his first visit to us. Sure enough, the bones were growing in length and width. Once again we were witnessing the impossible.

From my perspective, science is just starting to scratch the surface of the biological miracles that can occur. Yet science is often skeptical. It doesn't understand, or seem to want to understand, the powers of intention, faith and love. I am so pleased that my intellect serves my intuitive side rather than inhibiting it. As a result, "impossible" dreams often do come true.

All of this has helped shape two of my own personal credos: (1) Before we try to change nature we should understand her; and (2) Man's ego is a major cause of disease. These beliefs, coupled with the fact that I refuse to recognize the impossible, have resulted in some wonderful things happening - incidents for which I am extremely thankful to have been given the privilege of being a witness.

---

Click [here](#) for more information about John Upledger, DO, OMM.



Page printed from:

[http://www.massagetoday.com/archives/2001/05/03.html?no\\_b=true](http://www.massagetoday.com/archives/2001/05/03.html?no_b=true)