

BENEFITS AND RESULTS

CRANIOSACRAL BIODYNAMICS

An international survey conducted with 237 participants highlights the benefits of **craniosacral biodynamics (BCS)**

* all participants recieved a minimum of 5 to 10 sessions



75%

Yes - it improved significantly



Did your specific condition improve?



91%

Yes - it improved significantly



Did your general health improve?



89%

Yes - it increased significantly



Do you feel that thanks to BCS you have greater body mindfulness and awareness of your feelings-sensations?

How does Craniosacral Biodynamics work 8 keypoints:

- ✓ Increases vitality and improves stress management
- ✓ Helps attuning sensory awarness skills
- ✓ Facilitates self healing at an energetic-fluid level
- ✓ Facilitates physiological and emotional self-regulation
- ✓ Increases concentration and non-judgmental awarness
- ✓ Orients to stillness and expansion in dynamics of suffering
- ✓ Connects to the intrinsic blueprint for health present in nature
- ✓ Helps develop a mindful connection to inner and outer resources



An integral version of the survey and complete results are available at:



www.centro-craniosacrale.it



94%

Reports that recieving *craniosacral biodynamic* sessions has improved ones ability to **cope with stress**



218

of 237 interviewees reports that the practice of BCS has improved their **relationship** with their condition



96%

Reports that recieving *craniosacral biodynamic* sessions has improved ones sense of **general tension**



215

of 237 interviewees reports that the practice of BCS has positively influenced their **personal growth**



**This interview was conducted by the Centro Biodinamica Craniosacrale in Italy directed by Paolo B. Casartelli. The center offers a Mindfulness based Biodynamic Craniosacral training, and has developed a 12 step model for the Mindfulness based Biodynamic Craniosacral session, informations on the 12 steps available in poster and textbook format.



C.B.C. - Bologna
Centro Biodinamica Craniosacrale
Tel: 389 494-8892
www.centro-craniosacrale.it



Na.Me. - Firenze
Centro Studi Discipline Bio-Naturali
Tel: 392 987-1762 / 339 772-9960
www.centroname.it



facebook.com/craniosacraleitalia
youtube.com/craniosacraleitalia

BENEFITS OF BIODYNAMIC CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY

RESULTS OF AN INTERNATIONAL CLIENT SURVEY

*Author Paolo B. Casartelli
Data Analysis Annamaria Grandis
Coordinated by the Centro Biodinamica Craniosacrale C.B.C.*

Introduction

In 2013 we conducted a survey to assess the efficacy of craniosacral biodynamic treatments amongst a large group of clients and students. We were interested in receiving feedback regarding efficacy as well as the effects on stress, personal growth, general health and well being. We conducted 237 interviews, over a 6 month period, of people that had received a minimum of 5 sessions of biodynamic craniosacral therapy.

The field of biodynamic craniosacral therapy (CST) is a rapidly growing and evolving field of practice. One of its principal benefits is improving client's wholistic sense of well being. Over the years, biodynamic practice has radically shifted its methodologies from traditional biomechanical osteopathic and craniosacral models to a practice emphasizing the quality of the relational field, mindfulness, stillness, compassion and a special non-directive awareness of touch. Through the creative application of biodynamic principles of treatment, positive results have been achieved with regard to the client's sense wellness and its ability to self-regulate both physically as well as emotionally.

The intention of our CST survey was to explore in a broad way the client's perception of the benefits of CST sessions. In particular we were interested in monitoring their perceived ability to cope with stress, their perception of joyfulness in life, the level of stress reduction, the increase in body mindfulness and awareness of feeling sensations, as well as the overall effects on their main complaints and health.

Our study was a simple informal interview and as such it did not possess the character of a scientific study. However, it pooled a representative sample of subjects and it opened up a window onto the public perception of biodynamic craniosacral therapy. In this report we will summarize and discuss our most relevant findings. The detailed data collected in the survey can be found on our website (www.centro-craniosacrale.it) or by contacting us.

Summary of Results

The following table n.1 summarizes, in percentages, the answers of the 237 interviewees that where rated on a scale from 0 to 5. We took (0) to mean the lowest score or nothing and (5) to mean the highest score or very much. For the purposes of writing our discussion we considered a "significant positive percentage" to be the sum of answers with the highest scores, of 4 plus 5.

Table 1 – Benefits of biodynamic craniosacral sessions

Survey questions	Percentage of answers rated from 0 to 5					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Do you feel that you improved the condition for which you consulted biodynamic craniosacral therapy (CST)?	1%	0%	2%	12%	47%	38%
Do you feel that due to CST your relationship to these issues or problems has improved?	0%	0%	0%	9%	33%	58%
Do you feel CST has facilitated an overall process of improvement of your health ?	0%	0%	1%	8%	27%	64%
Do you think CST has influenced your personal growth ?	0%	2%	0%	6%	28%	64%
Do you feel that thanks to CST you have greater body mindfulness and awareness of your feelings-sensations?	0%	0%	2%	9%	21%	68%

The following table n.2 summarizes, in percentages, the answers of the interviewees, regarding those questions that had a yes-no-not-relevant multiple choice answer.

Table 2 – Further benefits of biodynamic craniosacral sessions

Survey questions	Percentage of answers rated yes / no		
	Not relevant	No	Yes
Do you feel biodynamic craniosacral therapy (CST) influences positively the ability to cope with stress ?	4%	1%	94%
Do you feel CST influences positively on the sense of general tension ?	3%	1%	96%
Do you feel CST influences positively on the sense of happiness ?	10%	2%	88%
Would you recommend biodynamic craniosacral therapy to others?	0%	0%	100%

NOTES: complete results of the survey and data analysis are made available by contacting us or for download on our website: www.centro-craniosacrale.it

Discussion

One of the main questions we asked was about efficacy. Do people feel that biodynamic treatments help improve their conditions and complaints? The issues for which people sought craniosacral treatment were very diverse. The data may suggest that our clients have a wide variety of needs and that regardless of the symptomatology, they have a wholistic motivation for seeking treatments, and they identify in biodynamic craniosacral treatments the possibility for a broad spectrum of healing.

We discovered that **85%** of these clients felt that their conditions in all three categories had **significantly improved** and we were surprised to discover that as many 91% felt that their relationship to their problems had also significantly improved. This means that people receiving treatments not only feel better, but even when they don't "feel better" they have better relationships with their difficulties. This second result is particularly interesting for biodynamic craniosacral practitioners because it highlights just how much our modern clients are becoming aware of the nature of their relationship to their inner worlds, and how important it is to keep working at the level of mindfulness and of being a non-judgmental, receptive witness.

One of the most discussed problems of our society today is stress, which is known to have a very negative impact on health. We asked our clients if they perceived that craniosacral treatments influenced positively their **ability to cope with stress** and **94%** answered yes. We discovered that 96% of clients felt that the

treatments had eased their sense of general tension and as many as 89% felt that they had gained a greater body mindfulness and awareness of their feeling sensations. This finding highlights that biodynamic sessions successfully create a secure and nurturing environment in which the client can learn to better self regulate and release stress and trauma. We believe that the client activates these self-healing abilities, in part, by mirroring the therapist's nervous and cardiovascular system in its capacity for autonomy. The therapist engages in affect self-regulation and co-regulation maintaining grounding, a mindful three-dimensional body perception, observing emerging phenomena and orientating to stillness and the slow-subtle-breath-like rhythms perceived in the field. The perception of these slow-subtle-breath-like rhythms (*primary respiration*) is also associated with maintaining a sustained orientation to present time and space with a wide perceptual field. The perception of primary respiration phenomena facilitate affect regulation and has been observed to have a coherency generating effect.

We were also interested in finding out how people felt regarding their personal growth process during treatment. In individual sessions, the client is invited to settle down and become aware of, without reacting to, emerging inner phenomena such as felt sensations, images, feelings and thoughts. Over the last decade of practice, we have observed how treatment can also be a training for the client in being a non-reactive presence, which, coupled with the specific qualities of touch, stillness and of the relational field offered by the therapist, can facilitate profound transformations. We wanted to understand to what degree clients were aware of this and through this survey we discovered that 92% of people felt that the sessions had an influence on their **personal growth** and **88%** answered yes to the question of whether they felt an improvement in their sense of happiness. We feel that this information may be useful for understanding how the healing process occurs and it may suggest a positive correlation between personal growth and healing through the biodynamic context. In fact **91%** of interviewees reported that the process significantly facilitated the **improvement of their health**.

In this survey we also tried to assess which elements of the biodynamic setting most significantly determine the outcome of a treatment process. We evaluated factors such as the benefits of deep relaxation, energy changes due to contact, the quality of human relationships and empathy, the placebo effect, the quality of presence of the practitioner and one's own willingness to change. We found that all of these factors were significantly relevant to our clients with the exception of the **placebo effect** which only **6%** thought was significantly relevant. Almost everybody (98%) reported thinking that the therapist's quality of presence played a significant role.

After receiving and analyzing all the surveys we decided to separate those filled out by regular clients and those filled out by clients who were also craniosacral students. We realized that the sample may not be objective, since students filling out a survey may be biased in relationship to the efficacy of the therapy. We found out, however, that the responses were very similar and within standard deviations between the two groups. Actually the analysis showed that regular clients tend to be a little more positive and enthusiastic about results than students themselves. These extremely positive results may also be influenced by the fact that clients that had a negative experience would not take the time to fill out a lengthy survey regarding something they felt was not useful. The survey had many questions and we would have had a definitely higher response rate by asking less questions and giving fewer answer possibilities.

Conclusion

This study, in spite of the limits of its form, has revealed some significant trends in our field and has given us some strikingly positive indicators. People receiving biodynamic craniosacral therapy are enjoying very beneficial effects. They have a better sense of well being, feel less stress and perceive that their health is improving. We want to emphasize that the qualities of therapist's presence, the stillness, those of the emphatically resonant relational field, and the mindfulness practice on which the biodynamic process is based upon, play an important role in the outcomes of treatment. More information on our current practice methodology can be found in our poster and book "*Biodinamica Craniosacrale in 12 Passi*" (Craniosacral Biodynamics in 12 Steps).

We suggest that further research is conducted to deepen the understanding of these topics that have emerged from our survey. The results warrant continuing effort to quantify the motivation of the client which is clearly wholistic and to find out more details about the quality of the results and satisfaction. Biodynamic

craniosacral therapy is at its core a mindfulness practice conducted in pairs. Research and investments should be made to understand how mindful stillness and mindful perception of primary respiration - while in relationship and within physical contact – specifically influence the function of our nervous system, our cardiovascular system and in general our physiology and metabolism.

Notes on Methodology

An initial version of the survey was launched in Italian in May of 2013, compiling a long list of questions proposed by Paolo B. Casartelli and discussed within the Centro Biodinamica Craniosacrale C.B.C. team. A second, and shortened, version of the survey was produced in English and launched in July 2013 with the editing of some questions by Michael Shea Ph.D. The results presented in this article take into account the questions included in both the long and short versions of the survey.

We collected data over a period of 6 months, until end of December 2013 and interviewed 237 subjects which had received as clients a minimum of 5 sessions of biodynamic craniosacral therapy. All Italian subjects that participated had actually received a minimum of 10 sessions.

The surveys were collected inviting clients to fill out printed forms and online Google questionnaires, maintaining secrecy in client identity. Approximately half the clients participating to the survey were located in Italy, the other half came from England, United States, Sweden, South Africa, Denmark, France, Spain, Germany, Australia and a few other countries. Several teachers, associations, and practitioners around the globe helped distribute the survey, either by hand and or by mail, inviting their contact base to participate without discrimination in regards to the choice of the subjects. Some people participated spontaneously to the online interview following the links on our website and Facebook pages. The forms were sent in anonymously through the use of a nickname to the Centro Biodinamica Craniosacrale C.B.C. and the results were progressively analyzed by Annamaria Grandis using common statistical models.

If you want to collaborate on research projects, participate in our next survey or simply share suggestions please don't hesitate to contact us (mail: info@centro-craniosacrale.it). To view an infographic summary of interview results please visit our website www.centro-craniosacrale.it