

Teaching the Neuro-Vascular Point Strengthening Technique.

by Brian H. Butler.

1. Explain the history of the neuro-vascular points.

They were discovered in the thirties by Bennett, an osteopath who found that the circulation of blood to the organs could be influenced by touching certain points on the skin covering the skull, and also on some other parts of the body.

In his research, he used a machine called a "fluoroscope" to observe changes in blood flow. Those machines, now banned, unfortunately produced lethal amounts of radiation, and this probably accounted for Bennett's early demise.

It was not until George Goodheart, the chiropractor who discovered Applied Kinesiology, checked the effect of these points upon the inhibition and facilitation of muscles that these reflexes began to be widely used.

2. Demonstrate the effect of touching an N.V. whilst testing.

It is sometimes hard to believe that merely by just touching someone's head very lightly, that so much good can be done. It is very powerful to demonstrate just how immediate the effect of touching neuro-vascular points can be.

Ask for a volunteer, quickly go through the fourteen muscle tests until you find one which does not fire well. Show the class the difference between the left and right if the muscle is only inhibited on one side; or if not, show the difference between a strong test on another muscle, and the profound weakness of the one mis-firing.

Then have the person touch as lightly as possible the appropriate neuro-vascular point WHILST you re-test. If the N.V. is involved with that muscle being inhibited, there will be an immediate strengthening when you re-test. Do not let them touch it for long, or you will lose the weak indicator, just for the two or three seconds it takes you to do the test. Then have them remove their finger, and show that the muscle instantly reverts to being inhibited.

3. Then show it has to be the correct point.

Then do the same test procedure again and have them touch another N.V. which is not on the same circuit. I.E. if the muscle testing "weak" is the fascia lata, then touching the parietal eminences will make it strong if the N.V. is involved. Then test having the subject touch the N.V. just above the ear for the spleen circuit, and show that that does not have any effect. (If by any chance it does, tell them that there is a reason for that which you will cover in TFH II!!! and then show them that it does not strengthen with another point.)

Then either you hold the points for the person's fascia lata, or have them do it, and hold them long enough to balance the energy. Then re-test and show the muscle is now strong and able to respond properly to being asked to work.

4. Then explain the lightness of the touch.

I often say, "If you wanted to touch a butterfly's wing without damaging it, that is how lightly you want to touch. Or touch the skin of your closed eyelid without giving yourself any discomfort whatsoever. That is all the pressure that is needed to activate the point, and strengthen the muscle.

Show how to use the top of the pads of the fingers, not the point of the tip at the end where the nail is. The top of the pad gives the best energy exchange. Also suggest that they use their middle three fingers to touch N.V.'s, and to keep the centre finger bent a little so that the pads of the three all touch the skin evenly.

5. Explain that this is a technique you can use on yourself.

Like everything else in TFH, if you can reach it to touch it, rub it or press it you can do it for yourself. However, it is DEFINITELY more effective when someone else does it for you.

6. Next explain to the class the value of the "stretch reflex".

Now they understand how gently to touch, show on someone's frontal eminences how you can "tug" the skin lightly in an upwards direction. Just take up the slight springiness of the skin with enough pressure that you do not slip off. The finger stays in place on the skin, and an upward pressure of a fraction of an inch stretches the skin very slightly.

This "stretch" reflex seems to increase the effectiveness of the stimulation. It is not essential, it merely enhances the effect.

7. Warn the class not to use firm pressure, or rub N.V. points.

Activating N.V.s with strong stimulation has the reverse effect, it further inhibits the energy in the circuit, and to the muscle.

8. Explain what they might feel through their fingers.

Introduce the idea to the class that they may feel "pulsations" or "pulses" or a kind of "flickering" feeling beneath their fingertips. State that not everyone feels this at first, but that as people get more practice at touching N.V.'s, they usually are able to feel differences in the pulse sensations.

As the circuit's vascular energy comes into balance, it will be possible to detect changes in the pulsations. Sometimes they get faster or slower, sometimes they may seem to stop altogether for a while. This demonstrates that the pulsations are not heart beat pulses, but are functioning independently of the heart rate.

The ideal is to hold the points until the sensation at the finger pads feels calm, smooth and even. If you are holding with both hands, then the sensation will eventually feel the same both sides, if you are holding the fontanel, the pulsations will give way to a gentle "breathing" surge. Hard to describe, but once you have felt it you will never be in doubt about how it feels. Do not feel badly if you do not feel it to start with, just hold the points, and you will be doing a wonderful job of stimulating blood flow and strengthening muscles!

The ADVANTAGES of RUNNING AROUND IN CIRCLES

One of the most powerful techniques in class management I learned from Gordon Stokes in 1976, was to run circles regularly.

This simply means setting aside time in the classes to give the group some opportunities to express their ideas and feelings. Everyone attending a class or a lecture, or indeed any gathering, has a few moments to speak in turn on a specific or general point. Each person has the choice of making a comment, or not

Arrange the chairs for your class into a circular or horseshoe shape as much as it is possible to do in the room. In this way each person can see the other as they speak.

At the start of the class, it is a good idea to explain the few ground rules that ensure running the circle will be a success:

1. Everyone is asked to address exactly the same subject. For instance: "Will you tell us your name, and how you came to hear about Touch for Health?" Or, "What decided you to spend this time and money to take this particular course, and what do you hope to get out of it?"

2. Everyone gets the chance to express freely what they wish to say without interruption or comment from anyone else. This is of vital importance. It is unfortunately true that most of rarely get a chance in our everyday life to have this freedom!

3. Anyone may "pass" if they wish, and if they do, it is nice to go back to them after the conclusion of the circle, and offer them the chance once more, and if they still say "pass" - fine.

4. It is important that the facilitator of the circle makes no response, either to agree or disagree with the contributor. Simply wait until they have finished and then say: "Thankyou", simply and sincerely, without any tonal bias which may be construed either as agreement or criticism.

5. Then the facilitator says, "Next" or "next please", or makes an encouraging gesture to the next person in the group to begin their contribution. This way, the circle proceeds in a smooth and orderly way.

6. Very occasionally, someone will interrupt, agree, or disagree with something being said. At this point, it may be necessary to re-state the framework of the circle: "Thankyou, and may we hear "x"'s comment now, and we would like you to have an opportunity to speak in a moment." If the instructor makes the groundrules clear at the outset when the class is still totally unformed as a group entity, the chances of having to do this are rare. However, one of the great values of running around in circles, is that everyone gets to feel safe to say what they really feel without fear of interruption or contradiction.

7. When everyone has had their say, you may want to say something yourself. Be careful not to invalidate anything anyone has said, or support or reject any one particular view. Difficult, yes, and essential that the leader of the circle merely gives their own opinion just like everyone else, without any particular reference to anything anyone else has said. If some of the comments have been somewhat emotive, maybe the best thing to do is NOT to comment except to say "Well, I would like to move along now with our first/next topic..."

Here are some suggestions collected from classes when brainstorming the value of circles during Instructor Training Workshops. If you can add to the list, please write to me.

BENEFITS OF CIRCLES

Focusses the group's attention.

Enables participation from shy ones.

Helps everyone to be on the same level

Introduces and familiarises individuals with the group

Builds a group identity

Obtains different points of view, and we learn from each other.

Instructor receives feedback

Opportunity to speak without fear of contradiction

Speak without fear of interruption

Discover individual needs in group

Punctuates the class segments

Forces group to address topics

Gives group an exercise in listening

Stimulates creative contributions

Eases tension, , it is "OK" to say what you really feel

Opportunity to air "grievances"

It is nice to let people "pass"

Helps people discover confidence in themselves

Gets everyone involved

You can see everyone else

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