

hand

“There were a number of reasons why Jasper wouldn't go into that box but I was ready to try anything. Maureen treated Jasper there and then and said how stressed he was. There was also incredible tension in his poll, an area I had never really been able to touch — he always had to be twitched even to be plaited. The basic concept of craniosacral therapy is that everything stems from injuries or trauma to the head and transfers down the body causing various areas to be tense and tight.

“The results of CST have been phenomenal for Jasper. He is much looser and softer throughout his body. He felt instantly different to ride, too, and he had amazing results after that Badminton in 2009, for which CST is definitely partly responsible.”

Sharon became such a convert that she now uses CST on her entire yard.

“I've also been taught how to use trigger points to soften muscles which makes an enormous difference to my horses, especially at three-day events when they can become stiff or sore. I haven't needed to use any

other treatment since 2009 but every horse is different and I'm happy to try new ideas.”

But while Sharon is so keen on CST that she would one day like to learn how to use it, Rossdales vet Andy Bathe takes a more cautious approach.

“While you have to train for years to practise CST on humans, there are people offering weekend courses for horses and that worries me. While I'm sure there are roles for skilled craniosacral practitioners — and I don't feel that they are able to do any harm — it concerns me that some people may spend a lot of money without first getting their horse properly evaluated by a vet.”

While there is a CST Association in the UK for human treatment, there is no such body for horses, a basic Google search or Maureen Rogers' website being the best options for locating a training course or UK practitioner — the latter having been approved by Maureen herself.

“The CST Association has yet to come up with an animal course and there are no links on the site to horse therapists,” says Shastra Raven. “There is certainly room for equine CST to be better governed.”

■ *Contact details: Maureen Rogers, www.equinecraniosacral.com; Shastra Raven, www.ravenherbals.co.uk; Bente Hardman at Equivita, tel: (07892) 789 221.*

CST IN A NUTSHELL



DR William Sutherland, an American osteopath, developed CST at the turn of the 20th century. Discovering intrinsic movements of the bones in the head — and later different rhythms in the body — he was able to demonstrate that these movements are completely intertwined with mental and emotional health. Therefore restricted movement means that the body has a reduced ability to heal itself. Today's therapists mirror Dr Sutherland's work — on both humans and animals — by placing their hands on their patient and 'tuning in'.



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