

Changing the World One TTouch at a Time -- Abridged Version

by Robin Bernhard and Sandy Rakowitz

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TTouch has been changing the course of therapeutic healing with animals and people around the world for over thirty years now. This ground-breaking work, developed by pioneer, Linda Tellington-Jones, is being studied by Robin Bernhard, LCSW, a psychotherapist who owns and runs the Virginia Neurofeedback, Attachment and Trauma Center in Charlottesville, Jessica Eure, Med, Ed.S., a new counselor who specializes in neurofeedback with Bernhard at VNATC, and by Sandy Rakowitz, a practitioner of Energy Healing Medicine and TTouch, who owns and runs One Heart Healing Center for People and Animals, also in Charlottesville.

Both Bernhard and Rakowitz have over twenty years of experience in their areas of practice, and together, they are making headway in the use of this specialized touch to help with people who have suffered from brain injuries. Bernhard and Rakowitz would like to see Charlottesville become a center for TTouch research and training. Just last year, they did a study which showed exactly what they and others have been concluding all along - that this specialized work can improve brain function.

So, what exactly is TTouch and how does it work??

TTouch is a gentle non-invasive system of bodywork comprised of specialized circular touches, lifts and slides that promotes communication throughout all levels of one's being. Linda Tellington-Jones states that the intent of TTouch is to activate the healing potential of the body at the cellular level.

Last year in Scottsdale, Arizona, Bernhard and Rakowitz used an EEG to study the brains of volunteers applying these specialized TTouchees to themselves. At first they weren't sure what they would find. They knew from earlier EEG studies done by Linda Tellington-Jones and Anna Wise in the 1980 's that both horses and humans developed an "awakened mind" while experiencing TTouch.

Anna Wise describes the "awakened mind" as a specific activation of delta, theta, alpha, and beta brainwaves, and a particular kind of mental processing that enhances intuition, creativity and insight, that can only occur while the body is completely relaxed. Amazingly, TTouch simultaneously relaxes the body, helping to release muscle tension, aches and pains while activating the thinking mind so that new information is readily absorbed.

In the Arizona study, volunteers agreed to have a total of three EEG assessments to record the effects of TTouch. The first EEG established a baseline of brainwave activity for each person. The second EEG evaluated the effects of the circular TTouch called the Clouded Leopard TTouch, and the third EEG evaluated the effects another TTouch called the Heart Hug. All assessments were completed at one sitting through out a two-hour period. The practitioners performed the TTouchees on themselves.

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The baseline EEG of some volunteers showed brainwave patterns that were likely the result of horseback riding falls. Brainwave patterns are altered by injuries, and show different activation patterns than healthy tissue. Even so, the results of the study demonstrated that the Clouded Leopard and the Heart dug TTouches helped to re-balance and normalize brainwave patterns for these individuals with prior head injury.

Over all, the TTouches also appeared to reduce the destabilizing effects of the areas suspected of brain injury. When an area of the brain is injured, EEGs may show spikes of activity, general over activity or suppression of activity, as the brain attempts to work in spite of the injury. Neurofeedback practitioners have been using brainwave biofeedback to improve the cognitive function of brain injury survivors for a number of years, and have found that brainwave patterns following injury are not so easy to change. When the Arizona study suggested that both TTouches could change the chaotic, out of sync patterning typical of brain injuries, and bring them closer to a balanced state in which the brain could function more efficiently, both Bernhard and Rakowitz were elated.

And Rakowitz, having such familiarity with TTouch, immediately saw the potential for TTouch to improve the lives of those suffering from brain injuries. Only a few months after returning from Arizona, she put together another small pilot study for individuals with brain trauma and asked Bernhard and Eure to assist in the EEG assessments. The participants learned TTouches they could do for themselves to reduce the impact of many common symptoms associated with brain injury such as:

problems with pain, mobility, motor function and coordination, concentration and memory. People with head injuries often feel isolated by the invisible effects of the neurological difficulties, so each participant was asked to bring a helper who would learn the TTouches along side the participant and help them to practice at home. This study is underway, and so far there have been many exciting changes with pain reduction, improved mobility, focus, concentration and emotional well being.

Brain Maps that show the remarkable balancing effects of TTouch in the left and right temporal lobes of a volunteer in the Arizona study, can be requested from ltik@kona.net since they are in color and do not show up in black and white.

Photo 1. Injury on the right seen during baseline study shows activity in the right temporal lobe is almost 7 times higher than on the left side.

Photo 2. After two minutes of Clouded Leopard TTouch, movement begins to occur in the left hemisphere bringing the brain closer to a balanced state. Now the activity in the right temporal lobe is only 3 times higher than on the left.

Photo 3. After two minutes of the Heart Hug TTouch following the Clouded Leopard, the left and right temporal lobes are almost completely with a left right differential of only 1.2 7.

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All of the promising results from both the Arizona study and the group for people with brain injuries have encouraged Bernhard, Eure and Rakowitz to continue additional TTouch and brainwave research with head trauma survivors. They are looking for grants to fund these projects.

Using Self-Applied TTouch to Reduce Pain Resulting from Brain Injury - Sandy Rakowitz' Report

We had our second follow-up for our Brain injury group today. Once again, amazing things are occurring. People are continuing to find great usefulness with the TTouches as time passes.

One woman commented that she was able to go away last week on a short vacation for the first time since her accident three years ago. She feels that TTouch is what has allowed her to be able to travel, and to enjoy herself!

She also continued to comment that TTouch has dramatically changed the quality of her life in the last months. Her head does not hurt nearly to the extent that it used to. She said the pain used to be so intense she wanted to bang her head against the wall.

That has only happened once since she began TTouch.

Another person fell recently and ended up in the hospital. She was strapped down on a stretcher for five hours while they waited for the results of the x-rays. She was claustrophobic, panicky and in intense pain during this time. She realized that she could imagine doing the TTouches on herself. So, she imagined doing TTouches over her whole body for two hours. She said that this helped her deal with the situation and the pain.

The all do TTouches before they go to bed. Two of them use the head wrap and find it very helpful. All use the Heart Hug at various times for calming and comfort. All use the TTouches around the head to help reduce head pain, and continuously find this helpful.

We spoke about and did Ear TTouches. One woman reflected afterwards that the heat in her head redistributed and things quieted down in her head. We all continued to notice that her speech patterns have improved since last month.

We also discussed and did Mouth TTouch. Everyone loved how this felt. We had a lot of fun, joking about all sorts of things. They came up with the idea of doing Ear work and Mouth work before they go into the supermarket to help them deal with the over stimulation that they find in going into the market place.

There is a great sense of community and connection that has developed among us all. It is quite a gift.

- Heart Hugs, Sandy

Follow-Up from Robin Bernhard

Dear Linda,

Sandy's group has ended, and I am speechless. I feel so blessed to have been a member and to have a role in offering such a gift to our group members. Our last meeting was so moving, to hear what this group has meant to everyone. One member said that a worldwide online Apraxia support group is listening to hear about the project's outcome because the medical community has not given them anything to assist in their mobility since their initial rehabilitation following head injury.

Jessica will be doing the post group assessments, and we have tons of videotape. The taping was absolutely essential to show the beyond amazing changes in people from the beginning of the entire group, and simply from the beginning to the ending of each session.

After we allow the members to spend a number of months integrating the TTouches and adding to what they have learned, we will introduce the Low Energy Neurofeedback. I feel the combination of TTouch and LEN for this population may be worthy of a Nobel Peace Prize (my son suggested that). I am not kidding. To see phenomenal changes in people who've been told by their physicians that their stuck-status is what they can expect for the rest of their lives, which was literally a death sentence, and to see how TTouch has empowered them, and offered new hope and happiness for a future. It is beyond amazing to have been involved in this project. We will definitely be making another DVD.

Robin and Sandy's DVD of their neurofeedback study with Robin's Arabian mare, Grace, is ready to order!! Call 1-800- 854-8326 or email info@ttouch.com.