OSTEOPATHY

What is Osteopathy?

An American, Doctor Andrew Taylor Still founded osteopathy in 1874 on the basis that the body had an innate ability to heal itself. He emphasised unobstructed movement in all fluids, tissues and joints. Dr Still felt that in both health and sickness the neuro-muscular system interacts with the rest of the body including the organs (and vice versa). When part of the structure is altered through for example physical trauma, strain or stress or emotional trauma, a chain reaction may take place, which is often mediated through the communication networks of the body; the blood supply, the nervous system and hormonal systems which may affect the structure and function elsewhere.

What do we do?

Although osteopaths are best known for treating muscular and joint pain, we actually treat much more than that. We aim to address the underlying cause. For example, most back and neck problems tend to result from a combination of disturbed body mechanics, poor posture, stressful living and working habits, gradual loss of strength and flexibility and a general decline in physical fitness. Sometimes, over the years, a combination of these factors may result in an actual problem occurring, often from a small event. So although the osteopath aims to relieve the new acute symptom, they’ll also, by looking at the underlying pattern, enable you to find a better balance and reduce the likelihood of reoccurrence.

The osteopath will use a variety of techniques to promote the healthy functioning of the whole body, such as rhythmical joint movement, stretching and soft tissue massage. Some osteopaths include the well known adjustments that produce the “click” sound in the joint (although Diane tends to no longer use these). They may also use the balancing techniques known in the trade as the ‘functional’ techniques. These ‘functional’ techniques are very subtle in approach and can be highly effective re-balancing procedures (Diane has huge experience in using these and has found over her years of practice that they can have a profound effect on symptoms with no treatment discomfort). Cranial Osteopathy is but one of these techniques but is the most well known.