

DAVID AND THE LIFE VESSEL™: A HEALING PARADIGM



*Catherine Augustine
Michelle Campuzano
Nancy Lubeski
Barry McNew*

The Life Vessel™, a novel relaxation device, was first described in a paper by Barry McNew and Valerie Donaldson that was presented at the Science of Whole Person Healing 2003, First Interdisciplinary International Conference, Bethesda, Maryland.

Embracing a wide range of emotions is the state most mothers-to-be find themselves. Joy, fear, anxiousness, amazement, wonder, and worry are emotions that often dance through the mind during pregnancy. It was no different for Michelle Campusano, a very young mother to be. She became pregnant in high school and was married to an abusive husband. She delivered David, her new baby boy, at age 17 by an emergency cesarean section on November 27, 1996. He was born extremely premature at 27 weeks with birth weight of 2 lbs. 6 oz. and measured 14.5 inches.

All mothers-to-be anxiously await the first moments they can personally introduce themselves to their baby. After months of bonding with David from within, Michelle was ready to see him face to face.

After Hugo "David" Campuzano was brought into this world by cesarean, the nurses took him away immediately. David had been born very weak and fragile. He was so fragile that the nurses were not able to lift him without fear of hurting him. Michelle was immediately taken into recovery without seeing her new baby.



David at one day old

In fact, David was born with a number of developmental disorders, including cerebral palsy. In Europe and the United States, cerebral palsy occurs in about two to four of every 1,000 births. Babies born prematurely or at low birth rates are at even higher risk. The disorder is usually caused by brain injuries that occur early in the course of development. Cerebral palsy can cause muscles to be weak and floppy, or stiff and rigid, greatly affecting a child's ability to coordinate body movements.

Hydrocephalus, once known as "water on the brain," also affected David at birth. About one in 500 children are typically born with this disorder. The excess fluid can push excess brain fluid up against the skull, causing brain damage and even death – if left untreated.¹

Michelle recalls that "David was too frail for the nurses to lift him up onto my belly after his birth" so they were separated for their respective recovery time and so that the experiences of their new lives could seep in. Upon adequate recovery, Michelle's bed was wheeled into the neonatal unit where little David was already sensing his new life.

Michelle couldn't sit up because of the cesarean soreness so she couldn't maneuver herself to peek over into the bassinet to see her new baby. Frustrated, she lay there wondering how she might connect with him. Then, she noticed that he had lifted his little hand, reaching out to her. As if to say "Mommy I'm going to be okay, I'll fight through this." Michelle believes that was David's promise to her—that he was going to be okay. David did not move any of his limbs again for a month.

David Campuzano had been diagnosed with hydrocephalus, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, bronchial pulmonary dysplasia, failure to thrive, and hearing and vision loss. His growth was stunted and by the time he was seven years old he was wearing only a size 2T in clothing. At age 8 he weighed only 14.5 kg. (or 31.9 lbs.). He wore hearing aids to aid his bilateral hearing impairment. David's teeth had not yet grown in and he had very limited speech consisting of approximately 50 words of 2 to 3 words spoken together.

David has bilateral grade III intraventricular hemorrhage and hydrocephalus that includes 3 ventriculo-peritoneal shunts in situ, 2 on left and 1 of the right, with multiple previous revisions. He

suffers from respiratory distress syndrome and symptomatic epilepsy, with his first seizure occurring at age one. His seizures present as a generalized tonic-clonic seizure with a frequency of one every one or two months. David is described as developmentally delayed with mental retardation.

Doctors assessed that medicating David was the best protocol to control his monthly breakthrough seizures. David's mother thought the doses were too high for his young age. At that time David was taking as many as four different medications a day. On a number of occasions Michelle tried to wean David off the medication but was unsuccessful, "we just couldn't get him off the pills," she remembers. Due to David's scissor-legs he had a pony walker to uncross his tiny limbs. With standing and ambulation he toe walks with profound scissoring

In 2003, David was attending school in a self-contained special education classroom. He was receiving additional services in speech and language, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. In addition David required assistance with toileting, feeding and special wheelchair transportation. Vision support was also provided to school personnel. David was working on basic goals like responding to simple one step directions, recognizing his name when called and simple yes/no questions. David was receiving breathing treatments for his asthma and other respiratory conditions. The medications for his seizures often negatively affected his arousal/awake state at school. David was also trying to master basic hand strengthening activities, oral-motor activities, as well as pulling himself up and standing

In 2004, David is described by doctors as "well developed, well nourished and in no acute stress." Although he was admitted to the hospital in September for a shunt replacement, he was subsequently readmitted in October for an infection at the shunt site. His medical report states that "one of two shunts was removed and he was treated with external drainage for the left frontal shunt and underwent reinternalization."



David at age 7

In 2005, doctors review David's case to see if he is a candidate for dorsal rhizotomy or tendon lengthening. Michelle informs the doctors that there is no reduction in his spasticity while taking the medication baclofen, one of four medications that he was taking. The additional medications included, Phenobarbital, tegretol, topamax. David presents with Ashworth grade 3 tone in his quadriceps and hamstrings with significant tightness in his hip adductors and hamstrings and heel cords. He cannot independently kick and his reflex test measured at 3+ throughout. Michelle requests selective dorsal rhizotomy for David.

Michelle is a public speaker and advocate for non-profits locally in Tempe, Arizona. During one of her speaking engagements, Sherry Lund was in attendance and immediately fell in love with David's story. It was obvious to Sherry that David was a bright spirit that illuminated the community room where his mother was delivering her talk.

After Michelle had completed her speech, Sherry stayed to meet Michelle and David and to tell them of a new, innovative technology that was located only two hours away that she believed might help David. "The Life Vessel™ is known to help others who have had chronic conditions that western medicine has been unsuccessful in stabilizing" she described. Sherry suggested that David try The Life Vessel™.

For Michelle, now a single mother, planning to travel two hours away for several treatments that each lasted an hour was a daunting thought. Sherry offered to pay for the treatments, thereby, illustrating her belief that The Life Vessel™ would be worth the trip.

The Life Vessel™ is best described as a therapeutic light and sound system that the client lies within. The Life Vessel™ apparatus is designed so that the client can be enclosed within the space allowing it to be as dark as possible. At least two separated acoustical speakers are positioned below the client's body that correspond

to the client's left and right sides. The Life Vessel™ stimulates and provides therapy to the client's brain and body via acoustical waves positioned along the left and right sides of the client's body. A light is positioned directly over the client's head thereby providing light directly to the eyes. The light accompanied with the acoustical vibrations establishes the relaxing environment that the individual is bathed in for approximately an hour.

Barry McNew, the inventor of The Life Vessel™, states that "the body does not know disease by name." He describes The Life Vessel™ as a "chamber system and method for creating a therapeutic and individually balanceable environment of resonate frequency, vibration, sound waves and light waves (FVSL). He refers to the field that The Life Vessel™ creates as a synchronized electro-magnetic atomic coherency field (SEMAC) that is created at the sub-atomic level.

By creating "synchronistic cellular coherency," the body's "cells and nervous system are brought into a deeply relaxed and regenerative state." Mr. McNew explains that "this state is needed for the body to heal on a cellular level, to enhance wellness, and stimulate automatic detoxification". This state also relieves distress of the mind, body, and spirit. He continues by stating, "this coherent field appears to stimulate a state of balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems which then allows the body to release toxins, including heavy metals, chemicals from chemotherapy, anesthesia from past surgeries that became 'locked up' in the body, and more". Some clients experience sensations that resemble "something" leaving their body through their feet at some point during the one hour The Life Vessel™ treatment. The Life Vessel™ clients are also required to drink at least a gallon of water a day for at least two weeks following the treatment.

The Life Vessel™ is an environment created so that the client can lay down on a mattress and be enclosed within a private enclosure as two doors close around the client. Underneath the mattress two rows of audio speakers are placed from the feet to the head. Directly over where the client's head would lay is a light that can be focused into an array of fractal-like projections. It's from the projection of music through the speakers and the fractal array of light creating vibration and resonate frequencies that the body is able to return to a balanced state. Scientifically, we have observed the frequencies of light and sound as they create a resonant state. It's the resonant state that has an effect on the body and from this resonance the body returns to a balanced state.

Michelle and David agreed to try The Life Vessel™ treatments with Sherry's financial help. They began with an initial cluster of four sessions over the first two days and then continued with two sessions a month. They continued consistently to make the trip to The Life Vessel™ for over a year.



David in The Life Vessel™ at age 9

Michelle admits that she was the biggest skeptic and had no expectations. However, after David's first The Live Vessel™ session she was amazed at the changes in David immediately. On their drive home from his first series of four treatments they stopped at a restaurant to grab a bite to eat. David's mother pointed out a cat to him from the restaurant window and he opened his mouth and said, "C-A-T." From this "limited-word" child came the spelling of the word CAT! Subsequently, David's teeth began to emerge, within six months he began walking with less scissoring and his multiple prescriptions were cut back to just one. "I never thought the change we needed would come in the form of a wooden box with sound and light," exclaimed Michelle. After David's first The Life Vessel™ series in August of 2005 his following doctor's visits were more positive.

Michelle remembers that when she went to The Live Vessel™ she was desperate for change. "I'll never forget that it was August of 2005 and David was eight years old. He was very small for his age. He wore size 3-4 toddler, he was still in diapers and developmentally about 18 months. Immediately after David's first treatment everyone around us noticed the results. It was funny how it all played out. A single mom's act of desperation (to try anything) brought the hope and relief that David and I had been long awaiting. One year after The Life Vessel™ Treatments began, David's developmental level doubled to approximately age 3. David had grown into wearing clothes of a size 6 and has gained 10 pounds and 4 inches. To our surprise his vision has increased requiring a lesser prescription on his glasses."

"Socially David has always had been amazingly interpersonal. He has always smiled and laughed

a lot. Now, with language, he is always singing to the nurses in the hospital. David morphed from being a baby to being a little boy. He can follow directions and actually focus his attention and follow conversations," recalls Michelle.

Michelle shares that developmentally, "David can now notice things that he never noticed before. Almost like his vision has become more refined and specific. He is now able to focus on tiny spinning objects and you can see his mind working in new ways, trying to figure out how things are working or trying to identify new things. He is enjoying identifying colors and is working on his counting".

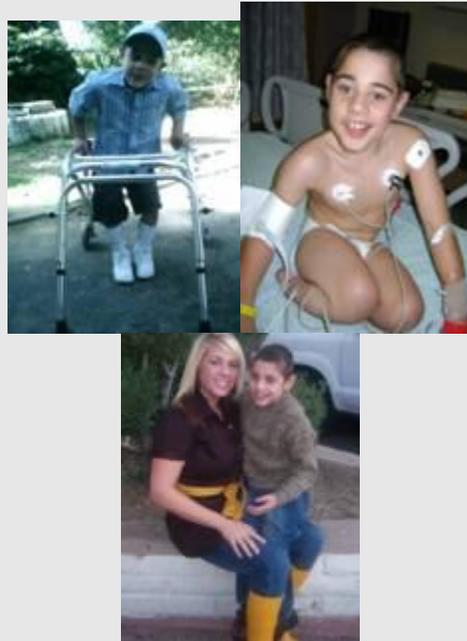
David's mother reports that his health has increased as well. He has not had any further shunt surgery since April of 2006. Previously, David has had 27 brain shunt surgeries. He still experiences seizures but they have not increased and they are now under control. His hydrocephalus cysts are still present but they are not interfering or causing a problem.

The school reports now confirm that great progress has been achieved by David. He is learning to use the toilet, is able to feed himself and can verbally express his wants and needs. He is able to maneuver his wheelchair to transition from place to place upon request. He is also able to scoot/bunny hop on the ground. Although David still scissors his legs, he can separate them with minimal assistance (and sometimes independently) to take one or two steps. His fine motor skills are improved as evidenced by his ability to manipulate a variety of learning tools including puzzles, shape sorters, activating mechanical learning tools, and uses writing tools. He no longer requires physical therapy services at school.

Michelle will never forget that "in May of '06 we made a follow up visit to the orthopedic doctor who told me there was no hope my son would ever walk into another room. When she reentered the room they had a new prognosis. She said 'looks like your son is going to walk.'" I replied, "a year ago you told me he would never walk" and the doctor replied, "I guess you should never say never." Today, David is a thriving little boy who has been given a second chance at life. He is potty training, he says his colors, his vocabulary has doubled and he is now walking. For me the burdens I have carried for many years are much lighter. I now anticipate doctor's appointments and the puzzled looks on the doctors faces as they watch my son do everything they said he never would."

References

1. Mayo Clinic (2009). Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/cerebral-palsy/DS00302> and <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/hydrocephalus/DS00393>



L to r: David's 1st steps in 2007; in Phoenix Children's Hospital September 2008; David and Mommy in November 2008

Photos supplied by Michelle Campuzano
Special thanks to Sherry Lund from Michelle and David

...for supporting them throughout their journey
"She has been their angel."

Catherine Augustine, Ph.D.
The Pennsylvania State University
Michelle Campuzano
Arizona State University
Nancy Lubeski, M.A.
Michigan State University
Barry McNew
The Life Vessel™, Cottonwood, AZ
Email: caugust@psu.edu