

Sound Therapy

by Ellen F. Franklin, Ph.D.

“The knower of the mystery of sound knows the mystery of the whole universe.”

—*Hazrat Inayat Khan*

Shiatsu practitioner Elfi Six incorporates gongs, tuning forks, chimes, bells, singing bowls, rattles, hand drums and the Kalimba (thumb piano) into her clinical practice in the Berkshires in Massachusetts, and into her job at Canyon Ranch health resort in Lenox, Massachusetts. Six, who recently celebrated her 25th year in practice, believes that sound therapy beautifully supports her hands-on work.

“Imagine different ancient universal-sound qualities traveling along the acupuncture channels that in certain areas can be clogged—or if not dispersed, would lead to disease, pain or other discomfort,” she explains.

Six is among the many modern health-care practitioners who are putting the ancient practice of sound healing to a new rhythm of care.

Ancient cultural traditions and healing practices all over the world have utilized music, voice and sound to heal. In ancient Hellenic culture, the flute was played to ease the pain of gout; in the Christian Bible, David plays the harp to ease King Saul’s depression; and in spiritual traditions around the globe, chanting and prayer have been used for thousands of years to align body, mind and spirit.





SOUND-HEALING TOOLS

Many sound-healing practitioners speak of the critical role that intention—setting a clear energetic vision for each session—plays in their healing work. Intention is equally important in the selection of tools.

There are a wide variety of tools available, and price is not always the only indicator of quality. You need to hear them, feel them, and have some idea of the provenance. Where did the tools come from? Are they fair-trade objects—have craftsmen and merchants been fairly compensated for sound tools purchased from India or Tibet, or from the aboriginal people of Australia? The intention in the creation and sale of tools used in healing work are as important as the sound quality and harmonics.

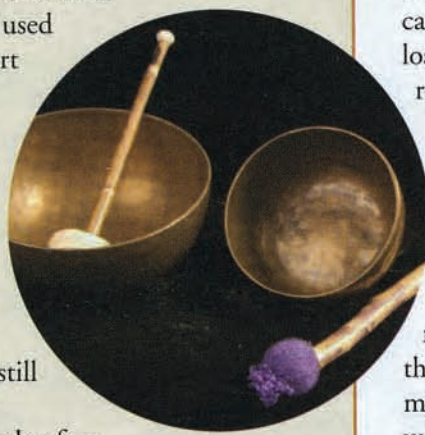
Resonance is also important. If you intend to incorporate several different tools, get a sense of how they resonate with one another. Also consider how the tools will work together. If you're selecting Tibetan bowls, for example, choose several sizes. A 12-inch bowl can be placed on the sacrum, but you would want a much smaller bowl for the heart area.

Most of the tools discussed below have been used for thousands of years, in celebration, ceremony, ritual and healing — from the drum that plays the heartbeat of the universe to the didgeridoo, which the Aboriginal people believe sounded the world into existence. Modern healing practices draw upon these traditional methods and honor their wisdom. Each tool can be used independently or in concert with other tools to bathe the body in sound.

• Tibetan singing bowls

Tibetan bowls were traditionally used by Buddhist monks in spiritual practice, and are still used as a meditation aide.

Traditionally they were made of an alloy of metals. The combination and proportion of the metals used, wall thickness and bowl size determined each instrument's unique harmonics.



Continued on page 90 ▶

Today, many health-care practitioners are integrating sound-healing tools into the therapeutic environment with profound results. These tools include the voice, harp, Tibetan bowls and bells, tuning forks, drums, rattles and gongs. There is a growing body of research that supports what people have known intuitively throughout time: Sound therapy works.^{2,3,4,5}

Vibratory motion

Sound therapy is a form of vibrational, energetic and harmonic healing. Our bodies function best when there is harmony, resonance and balance. As our hearts beat and our lungs regulate breath, our organs work in mutual support and resonance with each other.

Ancient Oriental medicine physicians discovered a system of cyclic energy that flows along specific pathways, or points, in the body. Each pathway is associated with a particular physiological system and internal organ. Disease arises when there is imbalance, or disharmony, along the body's energetic pathways.⁶ These pathways (meridians) of energy can be accessed therapeutically through touch and sound to relieve chronic conditions.

The system of sound healing that I work with draws heavily on this Eastern perspective, as well as contemporary cell biology and quantum physics, which provide increasing evidence that the vibratory motion of energy is found throughout nature and the universe, and contained within our cells.⁷

I was first exposed to sound therapy when I was suffering from a serious health condition and reluctantly went to see an acupuncturist who also worked with tuning forks, Tibetan bowls, bells and gongs. After the first treatment I could feel my body readjusting, my breath came more easily, and some of the pain and musculoskeletal problems that I had experienced were greatly reduced.

The primary treatment consisted of the application of tuning forks to key acu-points, Tibetan bowls placed on my body, and gongs sounded; few acupuncture needles were used. By the third session I was able to stop using an inhaler for asthma, and was taught to use tuning forks for self-care to open up my airways. The work was so profound that it changed the course of my life. Now, more than 15 years later, my life's work is focused on education, research and writing about the beneficial effects of sound healing.

Resonating with the core essence

Everything around us is in a state of constant vibratory motion, generating sounds both audible and

inaudible that can be harnessed to assist the healing process.

Polarity practitioner Micah Dobush, of Mt. Shasta, California, uses voice—vocalizing, toning and chanting seed mantras (a single syllable sound like *aum*)—and Tibetan bowls and tuning forks in his sessions. “The voice is the perfect instrument,” he says. “I have sung to clients while holding certain chakras or blocked areas, and used singing bowls for many years for balancing, clearing and vibrational alignments.”



Tuning forks can be applied to points on the body, for vibratory hands-on healing.


Sound vibrations impact us both positively and negatively. It is easy to recognize the physical impacts experienced from sounds such as fingernails scratching a blackboard, a jackhammer in the street, honking horns in a busy intersection, the steady beat of rock music at the gym. Now imagine the impact of gentle, healing sounds on the body.

“One of the things I love most about working with sound is that each session is a unique creative collaboration between the client and

Sacred Lomi™

Awakening Spirit in the Physical Being


Tom Cochran



Four Day Intensives
Earn 32 CEU's

Austin, TX • April 26-29 '07
Tampa, FL • July 16-19, '07
Miami, FL • July 24-27, '07
Orlando, FL • August 13-16, '07
Las Vegas, NV • Fall, '07

Donna Jason



Hawaii Retreat on Maui
Earn 48 CEU's


June 8-15, '07 Residential Retreat
Feb. 23-March 1, '08 Residential Retreat

Early Registration is Recommended
Workshops Provide
NCBTMB & FLORIDA CEU's

NCBTMB APPROVED PROVIDER
FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Sacred Lomi Workshops
teach all of the fundamentals of Temple Style Lomi Lomi - Hawaiian Temple Bodywork

- Flowing Forearm Techniques
- Hawaiian Shamanic Exercises
- Conscious Stretching & Self Care
- Principles & History of this Sacred Art



Hawaiian Temple Bodywork
866-817-7582 • 818-865-8813
www.SacredLomi.com • aloha@SacredLomi.com

Call or fax for a free sample.
phone: (909) 595-5177
fax: (909) 869-0033
www.biometricsintl.com

Bio-Medics
MASSAGE PRODUCTS

**5-Oil Blend
Therapeutic Oil
Massage Lotion
Cooling Muscle Rub**

"Non-Staining" on most linens 5-Oil Blend Massage Oil is \$21.50 /gallon.
Medium weight Therapeutic Oil is \$22.50 /gallon.
Extra moisturizing Massage Lotion is \$23.50 /gallon.
Cooling Muscle Rub - in 4oz, 8oz, and gallons.
Please call or see our Web site for more information.

SOUND-HEALING TOOLS

Today singing bowls are used on and over the body to align and balance energy in the physical and subtle-energy, or etheric, fields. New and antique bowls are commonly used in healing, although the metal alloys and techniques traditionally used to make the bowls are difficult to replicate in modern manufacturing.

• Tinchas

Tinchas are hand-held cymbals traditionally used in Buddhist and shamanic traditions. The clear sound made when the cymbals are struck together was used to begin or end meditation or ritual. Today they are used as a sound-healing tool to lift and transform dense energy patterns in the etheric field. They come in different sizes, and are either smooth or decorated with sacred symbols.

• Crystal singing bowls

Unlike Tibetan singing bowls, crystal bowls are made from pure crushed quartz heated to about 4,000 degrees in a centrifugal mold. They are used for healing in the etheric field and to work with the chakras. They have a bright, resonant tone and a more watery quality than Tibetan bowls.

• Bell and dorje

The bell and *dorje* are used in Buddhist ceremony, and symbolize the duality (yin and yang nature) of life. In Shamanic traditions, the sound of the bell represents the element of air, the realm of the spirits, and the ether that transmits and is the transmitter. In contemporary healing practices, the bell can be used over the chakras or in the etheric field, and is sometimes rung over a singing bowl.



Continued on page 92 ➤

the practitioner," says Carmen Cicotti from Lopez Island, Washington. She practices shiatsu, massage, cranialsacral therapy and Acutonics (a trademarked form of sound healing).

"By adding sound-healing tools, I am not just releasing tension and disharmony in the physical body but am able to access the deeper emotional levels to unlock the stores of memory lodged in the muscles," she adds.

The beneficial effects of music for relaxation and stress reduction have been heavily researched,^{8,9,10,11} and many practitioners already integrate music into their bodywork sessions. The human body is more than 70 percent water—even our bones and marrow are 25 percent water—and because sound travels more than four times faster in water, the body acts as a perfect resonator.^{12,13}

New York-based oncologist Mitchell Gaynor, M.D., believes that sound-based therapies are one of the most

"I believe sound and music are the next important integrative tools."

—Oncologist Mitchell Gaynor, M.D.

powerful healing modalities, and that when we are attuned to the delicate vibrations of the universe, we are better able to resonate with our core essence, or true self.

He incorporates a variety of sound-healing techniques in his support groups for cancer patients, including guided meditation and crystal and Tibetan healing bowls.¹⁴ Gaynor's new CD set, *Meditations and Music for Sound Healing* (Relaxation Co., 2006), was featured on *Oprah* and Friends Radio.

"I believe sound and music are the next important integrative tools, which will facilitate bringing healing to seriously ill patients as well as those suffering from chronic illness," Gaynor says. "As a cancer specialist, I see the miracles of healing every day; awakening each patient's healing wisdom and potential is a doctor's critical task."

Sound healing and bodywork

In her massage and reflexology practice, Maren Good of Westfield, New Jersey, integrates a range of tools, including Tibetan bowls, the Tibetan bell and *dorje*, and hand chimes.

"I use a Tibetan bowl at the beginning of a massage session as a diagnostic tool. By scanning the

SOUND-HEALING TOOLS

• Tuning forks

Tuning forks are versatile tools that can be applied directly to acupressure, trigger or pain points, in order to access the chakra- and meridian-energy systems. I work with forks tuned to the frequencies of the Earth, Moon, Sun and planets¹⁵ to help bring people into alignment with the sounds of the cosmos, known since antiquity as the music of the spheres.^{4,5,16}

Susan Myers, a neuromuscular therapist in Taos, New Mexico, says, "When I work with specific muscle fibers and find a trigger-point nodule, I will use the tuning fork to shift the contraction when palpation pressure is not releasing the fibers of the muscle."

• Planetary gongs

These symphonic gongs are rich in overtones and undertones. Tuned to the frequencies of the planets, they resonate harmonically with the cycles and rhythms of the cosmos. Their complex vibrations support the body's natural frequencies and promote healing at a deep level.

• Didgeridoo

The *didgeridoo*, an Aboriginal healing instrument, is played using a complex breathing-and-humming technique, and positioned at the client's feet or over his solar plexus. Its deep, resonant sound grounds and connects the client to his physical body.

• Rattles

The rattle is one of the oldest healing instruments, and has been used around the world by many cultures. It is used in contemporary healing to loosen negative energies and emotional patterns.

• Drums

Drums represent the heartbeat of the Earth. Their intense reverberations help ground energy in the body. Drumming and rattling can be used together to disperse blocked energy in the chakras and awaken the entire energetic system.

—Ellen F. Franklin, Ph.D.

body with the bowl and observing where sound is reflected or absorbed, I have a clear indication of where the body needs to be balanced," she says.

Good also uses tuning forks directly on tissue to break up muscle spasms, to balance the chakras, and for grounding at the beginning and end of a session. She integrates tuning forks into her reflexology work as well. "[Tuning forks have] helped to save my hands," she says.

Six often starts a session with the planetary Earth gong, and has the client stand in front of the instrument when it is struck. The vibrations of the gong travel deeply into the body and can be extremely effective in reducing stress. If a client is not responding to other methods, she will use the rattle or play the didgeridoo to loosen any stuck energy and bring relief. Tuning forks also provide a noninvasive way to access sensitive areas.

"Through the application of tuning forks, the layers of resistance just melt away," Six says. "The common denominator for both shiatsu and sound therapy is the goal of harmonizing the energy flow. Once the person feels balance, the shoulder problems, sciatica or back pain often lessen or resolve, as do many other uncomfortable emotional states and body symptoms."

When you begin to integrate sound-healing tools into your practice, start slowly and engage your clients in a discussion of what you would both like to accomplish in the session. Remember that sound is a powerful healing tool; a little goes a long way. If you are unsure of where to begin, I encourage you to take a class and learn more about the incredible transformational power of sound therapy.

Ellen Franklin travels throughout the world teaching the Acutonics system of healing and education. She is CEO of the Kairos Institute of Sound Healing, co-founder of the International Institute of Harmonic Living, and co-author of the forthcoming books Acutonics From Galaxies to Cells, Planetary Harmony, Science, and Medicine and Equine Acutonics, Balancing Horse & Rider. For further information about sound healing tools or classes, visit www.acutonics.com.

FOOTNOTES

1. Khan, H.I., *The Music of Life*. Bear & Co., 1988.
2. Gerber, R., *Vibrational Medicine: New Choices for Healing Ourselves*. Omega Publications, 1983.
3. Nakash, S., *Music Therapy at the End of Life*. Jeffrey Books, 2005.
4. Carey, D., de Muijnck, M.,

Acutonics: There's No Place Like Ohm, Sound Healing, Oriental Medicine, and the Cosmic Mysteries. Devachan Press, 2002.

5. Carey, D., Franklin, E., MichelAngelo, Ponton, J., Ponton, P., *Acutonics: The Planets: From Galaxies to Cells, Planetary Science, Harmony and Medicine.* Devachan Press, 2007.

6. Kendall, D.E., *DAO of Chinese Medicine Understanding An Ancient Healing Art.* Oxford University Press, 2002.

7. Groleau, R., *Resonance in Strings.*

Nova *The Elegant Universe* (Available from: www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/elegant/resonance.html), 2006.

8. Salamon, E., Kim, M., Beaulieu, J., Stefano, G.B., *Sound Therapy Induced Relaxation: Down Regulating Stress Processes and Pathologies.* *Medical Science Monitor*, 2002.

9. Mornhinweg, G.C., *Effects of Music Preference and Selection on Stress Reduction.* *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, 1992, Vol. 10 (No. 2): pp. 101-109.

10. Stadley, J., Ph.D., R.M.T., Hanser,

S.B., Ed.D., R.M.T.-BC, *Music Therapy Research and Applications in Pediatric Oncology.* *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing*, 1995, 12, No 1 (January): pp. 3-8.

11. Hanser, S., *Music Therapy and Stress Reduction Research.* *Journal of Music Therapy*, 1985. 22: pp. 193-206.

12. Maurer, J.A., *Research in Underwater Sound.* (1998) <http://ccrma.stanford.edu/~blackrse/h2o.html>.

13. Watson, P., Watson, I.D., Batt, R.D., *Total body water volumes for*

adult males and females estimated from simple anthropometric measurements. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 1980. Vol 33, 27-39.

14. Gaynor, M.L., *The Healing Power of Sound.* Shambhala, 1999.

15. Cousto, H., *The Cosmic Octave.* (Baker, C., Trans.). Life Rhythm Publications, 1988.

16. Godwin, J., *The Harmony of the Spheres: a Sourcebook of the Pythagorean Tradition in Music.* Inner Traditions International, 1993.

M



Take My Registration

Register for Success!

TakeMyRegistration.com is a one stop shop for all your educational needs. Choose a course from AIS to Zen Thai Massage.

Register for Success...

www.TakeMyRegistration.com

or call **800-766-1942**

TO REGISTER FOR UPCOMING SEMINARS

Continuing Education Seminars

TakeMyRegistration.com promotes the top educators in the massage & spa industry and provides easy online registration for massage therapists, chiropractors and assistants, physical therapists, personal trainers, estheticians and spa personnel at our website for seminars across the country.

April 14 - 15

Alice Belusko
Lomi Lomi (Advanced)
16 CE • \$425
Tampa, FL

April 21 - 22

Karyn Chabot
Ayurveda for Therapists
14 CE • \$325
Portland, OR

April 21 - 23

Anita Shannon
Massage Cupping
22 CE • \$395
Hartford, CT

April 28 - 30

Anita Shannon
Massage Cupping
22 CE • \$395
Boca Raton, FL

April 28 - 29

Bruce Baltz
Art of Stone Massage
16 CE • \$360
Kansas City, MO

May 5 - 6

Martin Misenhimer
Zen Thai Massage
15 CE • \$350
Colorado Springs, CO

May 5 - 6

Alice Belusko
Lomi Lomi (Beginners 1 & 2)
16 CE • \$425
Seattle, WA

May 5 - 7

Anita Shannon
Massage Cupping
22 CE • \$395
Cleveland, OH

May 12 - 13

Karyn Chabot
Ayurveda for Therapists
14 CE • \$325
Orlando, FL

May 18 - 21

Aaron Mattes
Active Isolated Stretching
52 CE • \$545
Boca Raton, FL

May 19 - 20

Bruce Baltz
Art of Stone Massage
16 CE • \$360
Chicago, IL

May 19 - 20

Don McCann
Cranial Structural Soft Tissue Release 1
16 CE • \$395 • Denver, CO

June 2 - 3

Martin Misenhimer
Zen Thai Massage
15 CE • \$350
Hartford, CT

June 2 - 3

Karyn Chabot
Ayurveda for Therapists
14 CE • \$325
Colorado Springs, CO

June 8 - 10

Erik Dalton
Myoskeletal Alignment
24 CE • \$375
Indianapolis, IN

June 9 - 10

Alice Belusko
Lomi Lomi (Advanced)
16 CE • \$425
Seattle, WA

June 9 - 10

Anita Shannon
Massage Cupping
22 CE • \$395
Tucson, AZ

June 16 - 17

Karyn Chabot
Ayurveda for Therapists
14 CE • \$350
Chicago, IL

June 16 - 17

Martin Misenhimer
Zen Thai massage
15 CE • \$350
Costa Mesa, CA

July 14 - 15

Martin Misenhimer
Zen Thai massage
15 CE • \$350
Kansas City, MO

July 21 - 22

Bruce Baltz
Art of Stone Massage
16 CE • \$360
Birmingham, AL

July 21 - 23

Anita Shannon
Massage Cupping
22 CE • \$395
Reno, NV

MANIPULATE YOUR FUTURE

Vivian Mahoney
Insurance Billing & Practice Building
24+3 CE - \$203.95 Incl. S/H • Home Study Course
www.TakeMyRegistration.com



Aaron Mattes



Anita Shannon



Don McCann



Bruce Baltz



Karyn Chabot



Erik Dalton



Alice Belusko



Vivian Mahoney

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY

