

healingways

SOUND THERAPY

Good Vibrations for Health and Well-Being

by Linda Sechrist

"Sound can energize us when we are tired, soothe us when we are upset, lift our spirits when we are depressed, comfort us when we are grieving, heal us when we are sick and relax us when we are tense. It can also redirect our innate, divine healing energy to wherever it is needed most, in an exacting way."

—David Hulse, SomaEnergetics founder

Sound therapy is an ancient and noninvasive form of healing that contemporary health practitioners and researchers are finding highly effective. Pioneered for use in modern times during the 1950s, Dr. Alfred Tomatis, an ear, nose, and throat specialist, found that sound could enhance auditory pathways and improve brain function. His research was based on the premise that the human body is ideally designed to entrain (when one source of energetic vibration resonates with a second source) with the healing sounds of media.

There are many forms of sound therapy, such as using the human voice for toning or chanting, crystal bowls and gongs and metal Tibetan and Himalayan singing bowls. In the Chicago area, sound therapy practitioners such as Marian McNair, Kenny Kolter, Christine Moses and Louise Cloutier are experienced with how individuals are able to naturally entrain with the octaves or harmonics of a sound.



Marian McNair, Cellular Harmonies
McNair, a crystal bowl practitioner and founder of Cellular Harmonies (847-234-0193, CellularHarmonies.com), often refers to

a favorite quote from *Sounds of Healing*, a book by Dr. Mitchell Gaynor, a board-certified medical oncologist and former medical director of oncology and integrative medicine at New York City's Strang Cancer Prevention Center. "If we accept that sound is vibration and we know that vibration touches every part of our physical being, then we understand that sound is 'heard' not only through our ears, but through every cell in our body. The sound of our voices, entrained with the sound of the singing crystal bowl, permeates our entire being. Our pulse rate slows and our health is restored to its normal rhythm," says Gaynor.

A 20-year veteran of sound therapy, McNair has volunteered for more than 10 years at the Cancer Wellness Center, where she plays her bowls and demonstrates for cancer patients how they can use their own voice for toning. "I believe that Dr. Gaynor's observation is important because it shows that even the conventional medical community recognizes vibrational medicine and its meditative effects of a slowed heartbeat and slower brainwave activity," advises McNair, who trained with Tom Kenyon, another internationally respected sound healer.



Kenny Kolter, Gong Meditation
For nearly seven years, Kenny Kolter (847-858-5679, GongMeditation.com) has been facilitating gong meditation sessions and therapeutic drum circles at Cancer Treatment Centers of America and other facilities throughout the U.S. For two consecutive years, he contracted with The Elgin Mental Health Center, a minimum-security

prison, to conduct gong meditations in the forensics treatment program. "I have done more than 700 events in various clinical and university settings and feel privileged that I can share my passion for cadence and sound as a tool for relaxation and rejuvenation," says Kolter, who began playing for friends and family after buying his first gong in 2008.

Kolter, a former resident of Chicago who still performs regularly in the area, describes what he does as a new approach to ancient technology. "I provide sound therapy with gongs, drums and rattles to create a sonic backdrop for people to meditate. While I do much of my work in clinical settings, I feel blessed that I can illustrate how sound therapy has a powerful effect on physiology," advises Kolter.



Christine Moses, Feather-heart Holistic Paths
When Moses (847-525-2600, ChrisFeatherHeart.com) isn't providing percussion therapy with a drum or

rattle, she's working one-on-one with tuning forks. Quoting her teacher, Francine Milford, Moses explains that the use of tuning forks is based on the belief that as the vibrations of sound waves pass through the body, they elicit responses within the cells, organs and systems, thus restoring them to their healthier and more harmonic state. "As a shamanic practitioner, I've been using sound healing in conjunction with other energetic healing modalities for eight years. My clients always mention how the sessions leave them feeling less stressed and more peaceful and calm," notes Moses.



Louise Cloutier, Voiceborne
Voiceborne (VoiceBorne.com) founder Cloutier's specialty is teaching individuals how to "sound" into their body using the voice. "We sound

with an 'ah' or 'hum,' because the goal isn't to sing a melody, which activates a part of the brain that judges. What matters is that the client moves into a receptive and listening state, so they can feel the vibration in the body. This is powerfully cathartic and deeply transformative," says Cloutier, who has been a sound healer and holistic voice teacher for nearly 32 years, as well as a vocalist and composer.

In a holistic healing lesson, Cloutier asks the client to sound into a part of the body where they are feeling an emotional or physical issue. She then asks open-ended questions from an intuitive perspective. "Generally, visual images and colors surface, or sometimes it's colors or kinesthetic sensations. Deep down, everyone has their own answers, which I help them unearth and interpret," explains Cloutier. The process is very self-regulating and never brings up things that the individual is not ready to deal with.

Kolter and McNair believe that sound therapy will inevitably be accepted for use in prevention and wellness. "We are waking up to the fact that everything around us vibrates and is organized by waveforms and frequencies. We are also learning that as powerful beings, we play an important role in our wellness by using sound and vibrational therapy to help every cell in our body harmoniously take part in the symphony of health and well-being," enthuses McNair.

Experience Sound Healing AT EVANSTON YOGA STUDIO

Heaven Meets Earth Yoga Studio & Center for Conscious Living, in Evanston, hosts monthly sound healing workshops and supports a network of practitioners in the Chicago area. The curious may come at first just to hear the mystical, healing tones of exotic instruments, but many decide to explore the potential for clearing and balancing the energies in the body that they offer.



The gongs and singing bowls, both crystal and metal, can do their work at the cellular level to help remove negative vibrations of stress, fatigue, depression, anger and fear, as well as blocked energies, for a cleansing, deep release.

At Heaven Meets Earth, vibrational classes, workshops and special events help people obtain a deeper and warmer sense of themselves. "I personally recommend these sound healing experiences for your healing, growth and evolution," says founder and Director Lisa Faremouth Weber.

June 7 and every new moon – New Moon Celebration of Earth Gong Vibrational Healing with Oliver Seay and Shu. A brief guided meditation will initially accompany the Reiki-infused Earth Gong to optimize objectives of relaxation, clearing and recalibration.

June 9 and the second Sunday of the month – Marian McNair will practice restorative yoga using the vibrational sound of her crystal bowls. Unwind, relax and restore, while benefiting from the support of yoga props, McNair's voice and the sounds of the crystal bowls.

June 21 – Summer Solstice Celebration of Shree Sacred Sounds, with Chuck Frenkel and Polly Liontis. Enjoy the luminous, sacred sounds of the gongs and ancient Tibetan singing bowls for a meditation experience like no other.

Heaven Meets Earth Yoga Studio & Center for Conscious Living is located at 2746 Central St. For more information, call 847-475-1500 or visit HeavenMeetsEarthYoga.com.

See ad on page 43.

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