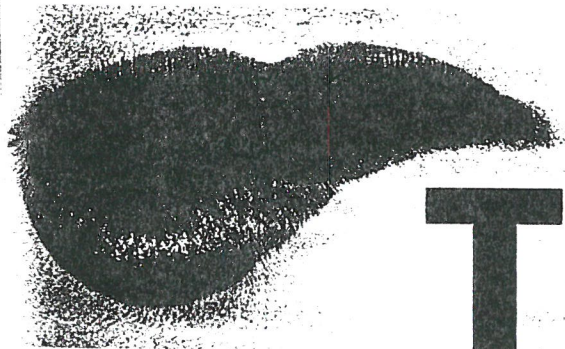
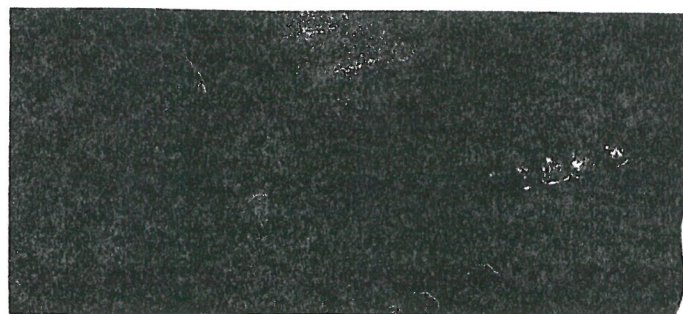




All about **SOUND THERAPY**



The power of sound can relieve stress,
improve your mood and even heal
disease – so go on, make some noise!



When we were children, we sang for joy, yelled if we were angry and wailed if we got hurt. And yet, as adults, we rarely use a fraction of our voices. We learn not to cry or groan; we hate having to speak in public and if, for any reason, we have to sing, most of us squeak like mice or simply mouth the words.

And yet a growing band of researchers believe that by refusing to vocalise we're missing out on a simple, free and easy way to release stress, improve our mood and even heal ourselves.

'Our voice is unique,' says Susan Lever, who teaches people how to rediscover their natural voice. 'It says so much about who we are, it's so personal that often people try to distort it. So many people try to copy other people's voices, have "telephone" voices or try to get rid of dialects. Often this is because they've been given a lot of early messages that it's not OK to be who they are.'

Simply making different sounds can affect your mind in minutes. 'If you feel low and you make happy sounds, it will lift you without a doubt,' says Susan Lever. 'Your breathing will automatically change and so will your physiological state. You'll find you have a lot more energy, a lot more confidence and a lot less stress.'

Singing in the bath will help no end, but researchers are now going even further: some believe that sound could be, quite literally, the medicine of the future.

The historical background

In earlier times, singing was a natural part of daily life: our predecessors sang during work, during worship and for pleasure. They probably never realised that they were following an age-old tradition of using the power of therapeutic sound. The ancient esoteric schools of India and Tibet, Greece and Egypt all taught the importance of the power of sound: vibration was held to be the basic creative force of the universe. And it's no coincidence that, in Ancient Greece, the god Apollo was responsible for both music and medicine; healing temples brought about cures purely by harmonising both body and spirit through the power of music.

Pythagoras formulated the idea that the universe

behaved like a vast instrument fitted with a single string which stretched from spirit to matter. According to his theory of the 'music of the spheres', the planets create differing, but harmonically linked, sounds as they move through the universe. Research by scientists today is beginning to vindicate his theory. In his school Pythagoras taught his pupils about harmonics; the mathematics of music; individual purification and mental self-control; and the secrets of healing with sound and music.

Such knowledge was later lost, and the science of healing through sound all but vanished for centuries. However, the 20th century has seen a resurgence of interest in the mathematics and science of sound. In the 1920s German scientist Hans Kayser worked out number ratios linking harmonics with a vast series of sciences: from chemistry and physics to astronomy and architecture. Meanwhile, Dr Hans Henny, a Swiss scientist, took the understanding of the intrinsic relationship between sound and form a huge leap forward. He put various substances (sand, dust, paste, water and other liquids) on steel plates and then vibrated the plates at different frequencies. An amazing thing happened: the blobs of paste or water began to move, not randomly, but as if given form. It's also said that if the sound of the mantra Ohm is vibrated around a dish containing sand, the sand is said to move into the shape of a mandala or sacred geometric pattern.

'Disease is our body vibrating out of time – every organ has a healthy resonant frequency'

How does sound therapy work?

'Disease is simply part of our body vibrating out of time,' says Jonathan Goldman, pioneering sound therapist and author of *Healing Sounds* (see How can I find out more?, over page). 'Every organ, bone, tissue and other part of the body has a healthy resonant frequency. When that frequency alters, that part of the body vibrates out of harmony and that's what is termed disease. If it were possible to determine the correct resonant frequency for a healthy organ and then project it

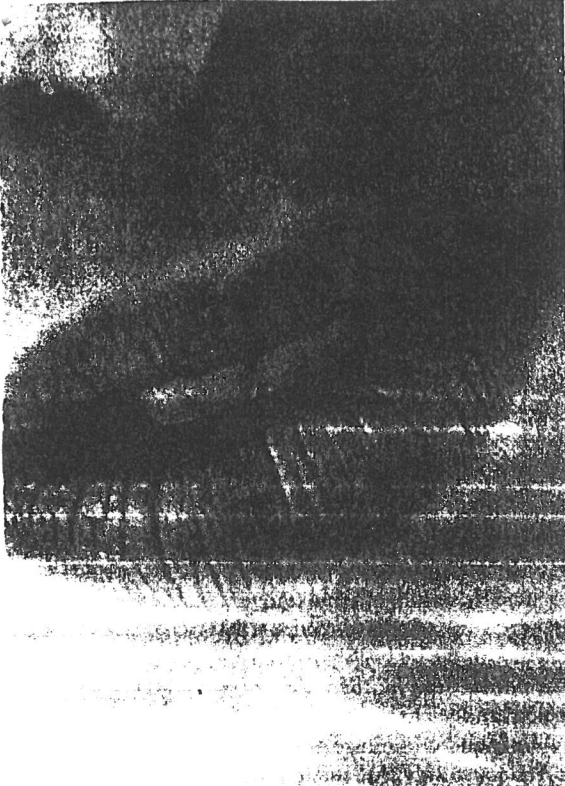
Photographs/ Tony Stone

HERE'S HEALTH
40th
BIRTHDAY TREAT

40 BOTTLES OF QUEST SUPER ONCE A DAY
TABLETS worth £10.99 each

...the nutritional balance of your diet. Quest Once A Day Timed Release is a multivitamin and mineral product that helps balance your intake of vitamins, minerals and essential nutrients. It's equivalent to a complete daily ration of essential nutrients. Being a Timed Release product, it releases its nutrients slowly over 24 hours, ensuring you get the most out of every tablet. We recommend 40 bottles of Quest Once A Day 60 to 90 days.





By creating harmonious sounds we can learn how to heal ourselves and bring our bodies back into balance

high-frequency harmonics, which most of them share, could have profound affects on both the mind and body.

Dr Alfred Tomatis, a French physician and sound researcher, believes that Gregorian chants could actually have a neuro-physiological effect which charges the brain. On researching sacred chanting round the world, he discovered that many of the chants were employing very high frequencies (around 8000 Hz) capable of stimulating the central nervous system and the cortex of the brain. Dr Tomatis himself says that he manages with less than four hours of sleep a night purely as a consequence of listening to four hours a day of harmonic sounds. Dr Mark Ryder of the Southern Methodist University in the US has discovered even more benefits. By merely listening to music that was high in harmonic content his subjects reduced respiration and heart rate, calming and relaxing the entire brain and body. If you actually make the sounds yourself, the effects are even greater.

Goldman believes that in sound healing a process

into that part which is diseased, the organ should return to its normal frequency and healing should occur.'

Goldman believes that by creating sounds which are harmonious with the 'correct' frequency of the healthy organ, we could all learn how to heal ourselves, bringing our bodies back into balance. He and other sound researchers have been focusing most of their attentions on the sacred chants of varying traditions, believing that the

known as 'entrainment' occurs: everything within the body that has a rhythm (the heartbeat, respiration, brain-waves, movement in the intestine etc) starts to change in order to synchronise with the rhythm of a more powerful body – the healer.

What happens during a session?

During a session the healer directs specific sounds at certain parts of the body. Journalist Jane Merer tried a session with Jonathan Goldman. She was asked to stand with her back to a wall, eyes closed, while Goldman made 'loud, strange noises directed at various parts of my body'. He sounded, she says, like a Buddhist monk. 'I start to feel some odd sensations,' she continues, 'an echoing hum in the bones and, finally, what feels like a small explosion in the centre of my forehead. I open my eyes and Mr Goldman is sitting on the floor shouting into my feet. Surprisingly, the headache that has accompanied me all day has gone.'

What's sound therapy good for?

Stress relief; headaches and migraine; increased energy. In the future, it's believed that sound healing will have a far wider range of applications.

Is it suitable for everyone?

Yes. People who feel they can't use their voice would, in fact, benefit enormously from experimental workshops. There are no contraindications.

Is it possible to practise sound therapy on your own?

Yes – easily. Susan Lever suggests you start off by finding your natural voice and relearning how to speak and sing without strain or effort. Often this involves relaxing and teaching yourself to let the voice come naturally from the whole body, rather than holding it tight in the throat. Learn to resonate. Once this happens, she warns, you might find some surprising side effects. 'Often it starts to release long-standing blocks and tensions,' she says. 'If you've always spoken or sung from your throat, it's probably a protection

Real people

Health journalist **Jane Alexander** (who wrote this piece) tried out Jonathan Goldman's *Harmonic Journeys* tape.

'Although they take a bit of getting used to, DIY tapes have a very interesting effect on your energy levels. Jonathan Goldman's book and DIY tape are also a very useful introduction.

'I tested out his tape *Harmonic Journeys* (see How can I find out more?, right) while I was sitting at my desk very late at night, feeling wide awake and in a somewhat

sceptical mood. I followed his instructions on the tape and joined him in toning different vowel sounds, imagining the sound coming from varying parts of the body. It started with a deep "uuh" sound, resonating at the base of the spine, and moved right through the body, ending with a high "iiiiii" from the top of the head. Within minutes, I was deeply relaxed and it soon began to feel as though the sound was resonating me rather than I resonating the sound. Afterwards, I went straight to bed and had the best night's sleep I'd had in months.'

mechanism. Start singing from your heart or your abdomen and you might find something else coming up – old grief, hurt, anger...

Tapes of harmonic singing and overtone chanting are readily available by mail order. Also see our panel on DIY sound techniques, right.

How much does it cost?

Prices vary according to location. Workshops are usually quite reasonable. Individual sessions range between £15-40.

How many sessions are required?

No set amount is prescribed. One workshop can set you up for DIY practice.

How can I find out more?

Jonathan Goldman has set up a sound healing centre in New York and is planning more but, at present, there are very few people who actually use sound directly as a healing mechanism. This situation, however, is sure to change. For the time being, there are plenty of workshops that will teach you how to get back to using your voice, or you can take one-to-one lessons if you're shy about unleashing your voice in public. In practice, inhibitions tend to fly out of the window. Remember, the aim here is not to sing a perfect aria but to make sounds with a healing vibration. And you don't have to have a brilliant voice to do that – it's something that anyone can do!

Susan Lever runs sound healing workshops and individual sessions. She also distributes Jonathan Goldman's book *Healing Sounds*, (Element, £9.99) and tape *Harmonic Journeys* (Spirit Music, £11.45 including p&p, available from Rainbow Express – for address see below) together with other healing sound tapes, and can give information on workshops run by Jonathan Goldman. For more details send an sae to Susan Lever, Rainbow Express, 2 Woodlea, 111 Newham, Middlesbrough TS8 0QJ (tel: 01644 590000). **01287 636350**

Jill Purce is another well-known workshop leader who specialises in the healing power of sound. For details of her workshops, contact Inner Sound and Voice, Flat 3, 117 Church Road, Richmond, Surrey TW10 6LS (tel: 0181 948 5161).

Susan Lever
"Harmony"
1A Railway Cottages
Pinchinthorpe
nr GUISBOROUGH TS14 8HH
Tel: 01287-636350

HUM YOURSELF HAPPY, SING YOURSELF SANE

Humming is a good way of calming yourself. If you're feeling stressed, anxious or nervous, just sit quietly and hum very gently. Feel the hum resonating through your body. Where can you feel it? Does it change if you alter the note of the hum?

Exaggerated yawning is ideal if you're feeling tired. We hold a lot of tension in our jaws and mouths and stretching the mouth releases tension.

If you're feeling irritable and tense, try an elongated, noisy sigh. Chris James, the Australian workshop leader, recommends deep groaning as well to release any negative emotions. The key is to forget about being polite and really let go.

Take every opportunity to sing. Sing along with the radio, while you're doing the housework, while you're in the bath or, even better, while you're driving in your car. Don't worry about what your voice sounds like, simply enjoy really belting it out.

Try singing the different vowel sounds – aaah, eeeh, iiiii, oooh, uuuh. Where do you feel them in your body? How do they make you feel?

Play with mantras. You don't need to do 'Ohm' or anything spiritual – simply try singing positive statements, repeating them with different tunes. If you're feeling tense, try singing, 'I'm calm, I'm calm'.

Experiment with listening to different music and work out what effect it has on your moods. Try listening to some of the sacred chants available on tape for deep relaxation and a profound sense of peace.

Taken from
Supertherapies
by Jane Alexander
(Bantam, £6.99),
which outlines
around 40
natural therapies.

HERE'S HEALTH
40th
BIRTHDAY TREAT

10
worth £34.95 each

To ensure you're getting your recommended daily boost of vitamins, you need the Hinar JEP311 model juice extractor! It has two speeds, slow for soft fruits and fast for hard fruits and vegetables. An attachable lid allows you to choose how the fruit and veg is guided into the feeder. All removable parts are dishwasher proof and a cleaning brush is also supplied.

CALL 0839 401 303 TO WIN!

Calls are charged at 39 pence per minute cheap rate, 49 pence per minute at all other times

