

SOUND THERAPY WITH TIBETAN BOWLS FOR DEEP RELAXATION

For thousands of years, sound and rhythm have been used in indigenous, shamanic and religious practices in nearly every culture around the world to achieve deeper states of relaxation and inner connection. Tibetan Bowl sound therapy has the ability to encourage deep states of physical relaxation, as well as alpha and theta brainwave states, where relaxation, restoration and even creative insights can occur. Sound Therapy with Tibetan Bowls are useful for simply releasing stress and physical tension, or as a prelude to a deeper meditative states. I like to describe Tibetan Bowl Sound therapy as Meditation or Mindfulness on “training wheels”, encouraging rapid access to mental stillness and relaxation.

study: Effects of Singing Bowl Sound Meditation on Mood, Tension, and Well-being

National Institutes of Health--<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27694559>

from the study—“Poor mood and elevated anxiety are linked to increased incidence of disease. This study examined the effects of sound meditation, specifically Tibetan singing bowl meditation, on mood, anxiety, pain, and spiritual well-being. Sixty-two women and men (mean age 49.7 years) participated. As compared with pre-meditation, following the sound meditation participants reported significantly less tension, anger, fatigue, and depressed mood (all Ps <.001). Additionally, participants who were previously naïve to this type of meditation experienced a significantly greater reduction in tension compared with participants experienced in this meditation (P <.001). Feeling of spiritual well-being significantly increased across all participants (P <.001). Tibetan singing bowl meditation may be a feasible low-cost low technology intervention for reducing feelings of tension, anxiety, and depression, and increasing spiritual well-being. This meditation type may be especially useful in decreasing tension in individuals who have not previously practiced this form of meditation.”

Journal of Evidence Based and Complementary medicine — full text of study

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2156587216668109>

Other possible Mechanisms of Action:

Brainwave Entrainment - [Entrainment](#) is when two systems come into synchronization with each other ([see video](#)). This was first noticed by Christian Huygens, the inventor of the pendulum clock. He noticed that the pendulum clock in his shop would always "sync up" to each other. This phenomena was later studied and the idea of Entrainment came into being. This type of entrainment also happens with our brainwaves. Because the brain, the heart and the breath are all connected via the parasympathetic nervous system, Tibetan Bells have the ability to entrain our brainwaves and this helps to relax our entire body and essentially allow us the space to find a new level of harmony within the body.

With sound therapy, our brainwaves are entraining to an existing oscillation that is contained in the sound or musical background. Our brains do this naturally. This occurs because of a phenomenon called the [Frequency Following Response or FFR](#). The repetitive nature of these oscillations encourage our brainwaves to entrain with the oscillation. Accessing these different mental states not only give the mind a rest, but because the mind the heart and breathing are all connecting via the Parasympathetic Nervous System, they also give our body a rest. [Binaural beats](#) and Monaural Beats are sound oscillations that give us a window into accessing these mental states. Instruments like **Tibetan Singing Bowls** also produce these types of oscillations.

Melatonin Release - Music Therapy and Sound Therapy with Tibetan Bowls also seems to help release melatonin. Melatonin is produced by the Pineal Gland. This may also be partially responsible in helping to achieve alpha and theta and delta brainwave states, as this is the natural occurrence each day as we cycle down from waking states to sleep states in response to the release of melatonin as we are entrained to the natural circadian rhythms of with the Sun cycles. Melatonin has many powerful benefits from sleep aid to cancer prevention ([see link here](#)).

articles— *Music therapy increases serum melatonin levels in patients with Alzheimer's disease.* (link next page)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10550905>

Brain Music: Turn on, feel better

<https://helix.northwestern.edu/article/brain-music-turn-tune-feel-better>

Vagus Nerve Stimulation - Tibetan bowl sound therapy as well as singing and chanting, also seems to activate vagus nerve. Vagus Nerve stimulation has a host of benefits from improving mood, and memory to relieving anxiety and depression.

articles:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vagus_nerve_stimulation

<http://www.medicaldaily.com/new-headphones-vagus-nerve-dopamine-music-379666>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-athletes-way/201602/mindfulness-meditation-and-the-vagus-nerve-share-many-powers>

Nitric Oxide release - Sound Therapy with Tibetan Bowls may also release Nitric Oxide which has a host of benefits including expanding blood vessels, lowering blood pressure, and fighting pathogenic bacteria.

article:

Sound therapy induced relaxation: down regulating stress processes and pathologies.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12761468>

Why Nitric Oxide is Good for you.

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2007/09/22/why-nitric-oxide-is-good-for-you.aspx>

Right Brain Activation - Because of the random nature of Tibetan Bowl sound therapy, it can also encourage right brain activation. The left brain is designed to recognize and react to patterns. The right brain is seen as being more open to seeing the “whole” without attachment or expectation. This can also help facilitate deep relaxation.

article: <http://sonicyogi.blogspot.com/2013/02/the-ego-mind-left-brain.html>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3354373/>

*“The simultaneous left and right brain action maximizes learning and retention of information. The information being studied activates the left brain while the **music activates the right brain**. Also, activities which engage both sides of the brain at the same time, such as playing an instrument or singing, cause the brain to become more capable of processing information.”*

The Relaxation Response - In summary all of the mechanisms described here, Sound Therapy (like traditional meditation) helps to encourage the relaxation response. This is the body’s natural defense against stress.

By relaxing consciously, we encourage the body’s natural self healing and stress reducing mechanisms and encouragement of the positive production of calming brain chemicals. The term “relaxation response” was coined by Dr. Herbert Benson of the Harvard medical school over twenty five years ago. His best selling book by the same name explores simple methods to releasing stress, including many mindfulness techniques (including sound) that are commonplace today. <http://www.relaxationresponse.org/steps/>

For downloadable recordings and contact info: <http://sonicyogi.com>

